

Elements of the Fantasy Genre



What is the fantasy genre?

The fantasy genre is a type of fiction. Fantasy stories are imaginative. They are entirely made up and include events that could not occur in real life. Authors write fantasy stories to entertain the reader often transporting them to another world.



The Magic

Magic is often included in the fantasy genre. Creatures or characters can have special powers and will learn how to use or to master their powers. Sometimes it's an object that is magical, like a precious gem, cup, wand or sword and an item may be linked to the creature or character who uses it.

The Characters

There are usually several character types in the fantasy genre:

- **The hero (male) or heroine (female)** is the main character. They are considered the 'good' character. The reader supports and gets behind this character. The reader feels empathy for the main character as they battle against the villain of the story. Generally, the main character will be a young boy or girl with positive traits. They are kind and gentle with an inner strength to work hard to overcome the problem or conflict they face.



- **The villain** is the one who is causing the problem or conflict. They tend to be described as being ugly and having negative traits, which matches their nature. They can be bossy and horrible to others.
- **The side-kick** is essential to the story and helps the hero or heroine reach their goal. This character shows true friendship and is often very funny!
- **Other characters**, like mythical creatures, dragons, elves and unicorns, are often in fantasy stories. Sometimes they help the hero or heroine on their journey and have special powers, like being able to talk.

The Quest (or Journey)

The hero or heroine will need to go on a quest or adventure in a fantasy story. This is usually linked to the problem or conflict that needs to be overcome.

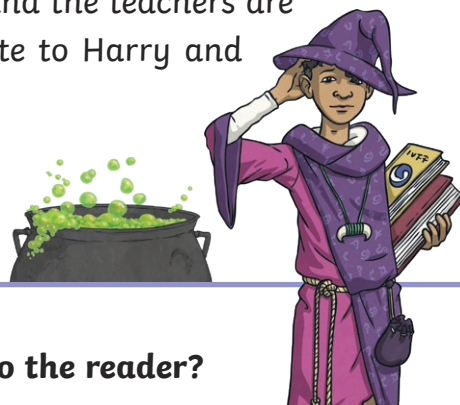
The lead character will physically need to move from one point to another, like searching for a secret cave that holds a special elixir or journeying into a scary, dark forest to find the wise witch who can solve their problem.

Often the character's personality will change during the journey. At the beginning of the story, they may be timid or downtrodden, but by the end of the quest they are brave and confident. The main character will go on a personality journey and would have mastered their special ability and new found strength.

The Setting

The setting, in the fantasy genre, can be an imaginative place, an outdoor setting like the woods or somewhere familiar to the reader, like a school.

The setting in Harry Potter is an excellent example of a fantasy setting, being a school. Most readers can relate to this setting having experienced it themselves, but this school is different. It has talking portraits and moving staircases, the subjects are very different, like 'potions class', and the teachers are witches and wizards. Still, the reader can relate to Harry and his friends having to do homework!



Can you think of other examples in the fantasy genre where the setting is familiar to the reader?

Examples of fantasy stories:

Harry Potter

by J.K. Rowling

The Chronicles of Narnia

by C.S. Lewis

Charlie and the Chocolate Factory

by Roald Dahl

Peter Pan

by J. M. Barrie

Princess Bride

by William Goldman



Please note: the listed books above are not endorsed by Twinkl, they are simply examples of how the fantasy genre can be used when teaching this topic.

Questions

1. What is a fantasy genre?

- ☐ A type of non-fiction
- ☐ A type of fiction
- ☐ Factual
- ☐ Real-life experiences

2. Look at the first paragraph. Write the words that explains what 'fiction' means.

3. Fill in the gaps.

The fantasy _____ is a type of _____. _____ stories are _____, which means they are _____ made up. These _____ will include _____ that could _____ in real _____.

4. List the main four elements of fantasy.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

5. Why is the villain usually 'described as being ugly'?

6. The hero or heroine will physically go on a journey or quest, but often something else changes in them along the way. What is it? Find an example in The Quest section.

7. Draw three lines to match each element to its description. One has been done for you.

The Magic	<p>The hero or heroine will need to go on a quest, adventure or journey in a fantasy story. This is usually linked to the problem or conflict that needs to be overcome.</p>
The Characters	<p>Creatures or characters will have special powers and learn how to use their powers. Sometimes it's an object that is magical, like a precious gem, cup, wand or sword.</p>
The Quest	<p>The setting, in the fantasy genre, can be somewhere completely made up, an outdoor setting like the woods or somewhere familiar to the reader, like a school.</p>
The Setting	<p>The hero (male) or heroine (female), villain, side-kick and perhaps mythical creatures are part of this element.</p>

8. Why is Harry Potter's school an excellent example of a familiar setting in the fantasy genre?

Answers

1. What is a fantasy genre?

- ☐ A type of non-fiction
- ☒ A type of fiction
- ☐ Factual
- ☐ Real-life experiences

2. Look at the first paragraph. Write the words that explains what 'fiction' means.

Imaginative, entirely made up, could not happen in real life.

3. Fill in the gaps.

The fantasy **genre** is a type of **fiction**. **Fantasy** stories are **imaginative**, which means they are **entirely** made up. These **stories** will include **events** that could **not happen** in real **life**.

4. List the main four elements of fantasy.

1. The Magic

2. The Characters

3. The Setting

4. The Quest

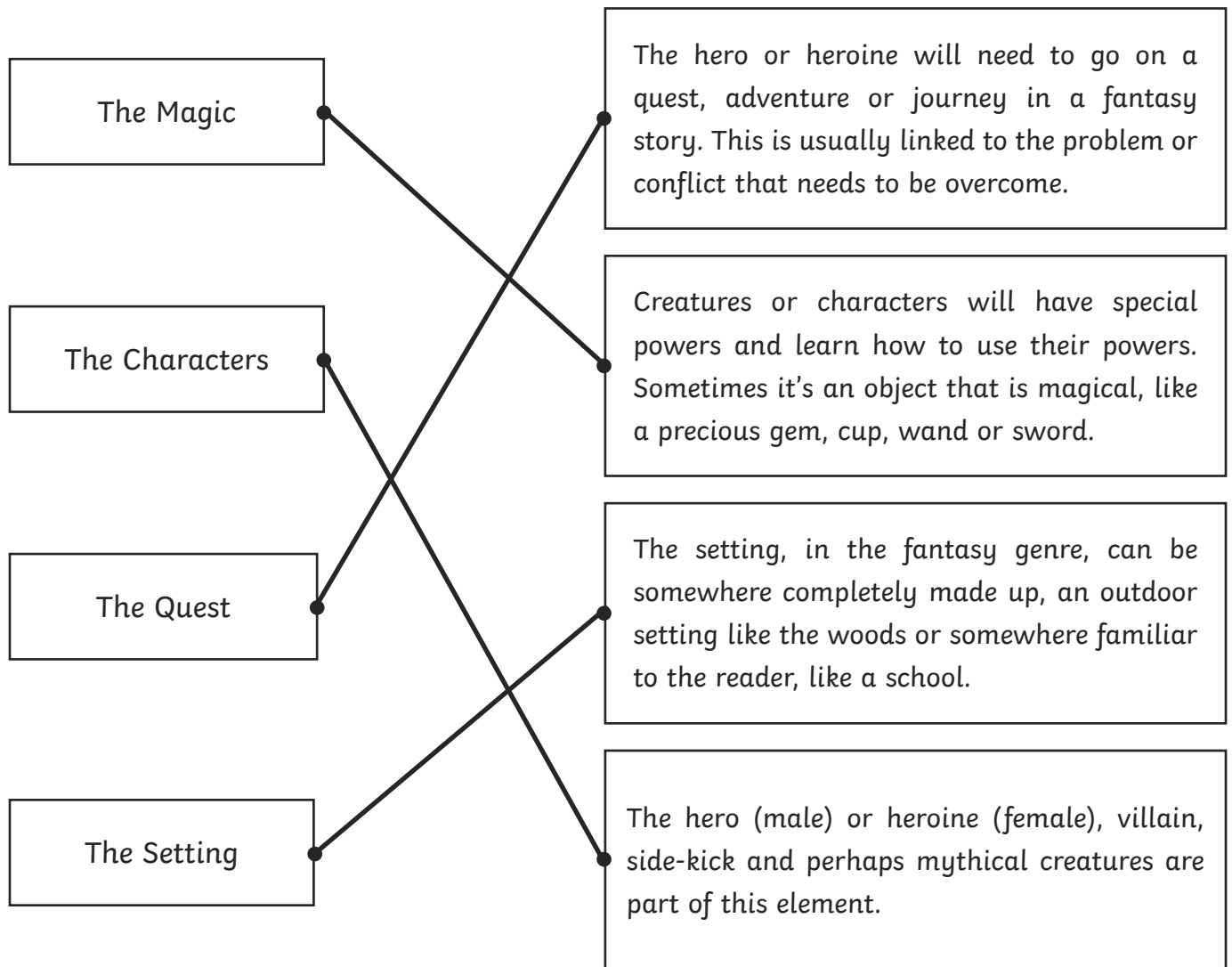
5. Why is the villain usually 'described as being ugly'?

The villain is usually described as being ugly on the outside to match their mean inner nature.

6. The hero or heroine will physically go on a journey or quest, but often something else changes in them along the way. What is it? Find an example in The Quest section.

Personality changes from shy and nervous to brave and confident.

7. Draw three lines to match each element to its description. One has been done for you.



8. Why is Harry Potter's school an excellent example of a familiar setting in the fantasy genre?

The school in Harry Potter is an excellent example of a familiar setting because most readers can relate to the setting of a school, having experienced it themselves. However, this school is different. It has talking portraits and moving staircases, the subjects are very different, like 'potions class' and the teachers are witches and wizards.