

Elements of the Fantasy Genre



What is the fantasy genre?

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. Authors write fantasy stories to entertain the reader.



The Magic

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

The Characters

There are often different types of characters 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 wants the main character to win against the villain of the story. Generally, the main character will be a young boy or girl. They are kind and gentle with the strength to work hard to overcome the problem.
- **The villain** is thought of as the 'bad' character. He or she is the one who is causing the problem. They tend to be described as being ugly, 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, adventure or journey in a fantasy story. It is linked to the problem or conflict that needs to be overcome by the main character.

The lead/main character will go on a journey facing a difficult time as they search for something valuable, like a special potion in a secret cave.

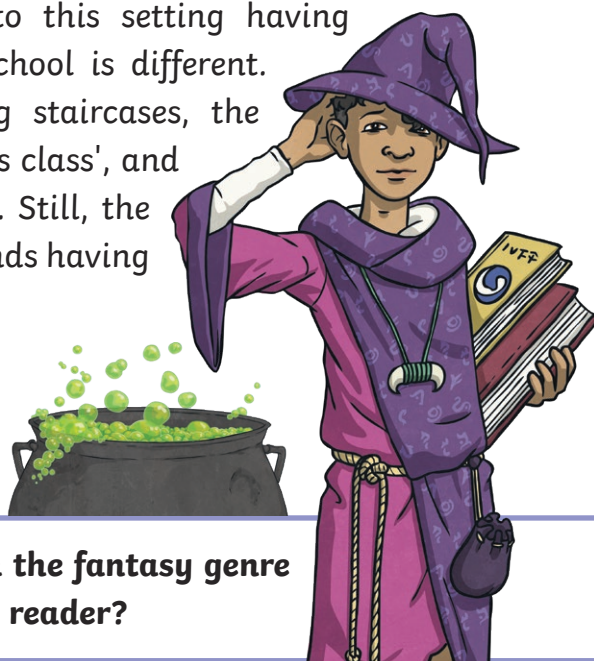
The main character's personality will change during the journey. At the beginning of the story, the hero or heroine may start as shy and nervous. By the end of the quest, the central character overcomes the problem, and they are brave and confident.

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. Fiction means 'something that's invented or untrue'. (true / false)

3. Fill in the gaps.

The fantasy _____ is a type of _____. Fantasy stories are _____, which means they are entirely made up. These _____ will include _____ that could not happen in real _____.

4. List the main four elements of fantasy. One has been done for you.

1. The Magic

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

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

6. Look at the paragraph under The Quest that starts with 'The main character's personality...' Find one trait word used to describe the personality of the main character.

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

The Magic

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

The Characters

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.

The Quest

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.

The Setting

The hero (male) or heroine (female), villain, side-kick and perhaps mythical creatures are part of this element.

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. Fiction means 'something that's invented or untrue'. (true / false)

True

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. One has been done for you.

1. **The Magic**
2. **The Setting**
3. **The Characteristics**
4. **The Quest**

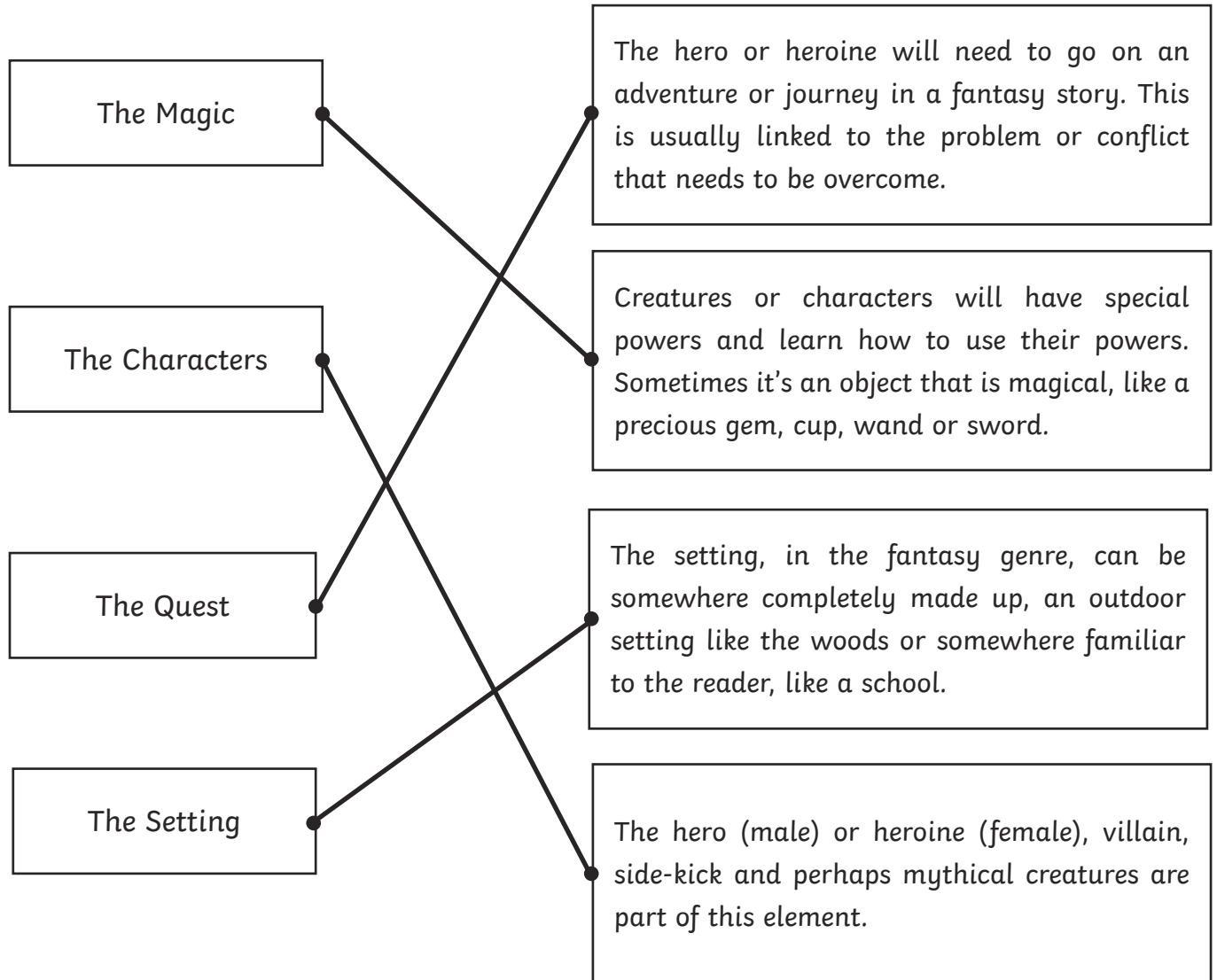
5. Why is the villain usually 'described as being ugly'?

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

6. Look at the paragraph under The Quest that starts with 'The main character's personality...' Find one trait word used to describe the personality of the main character.

Shy, nervous, brave or confident (any of these).

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 a good example of setting because most readers can relate to the setting having experienced it themselves, but this school is different.