



J. K. Rowling: The Wizard Behind Harry Potter

By Marc Shapiro

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Harry Potter is loved throughout the world-so is his creator. Joanne Kathleen (J.K.) Rowling is a true wizard, a woman who has the ability to recall vividly her days as a child and capture those wild, wonderful, difficult times-an ability that helps make her creation, Harry Potter, seem so real. In this revealing look, fans of the Harry Potter series will get to see their favorite author as they never have before. From a child with a wonderful imagination who didn't quite fit in, to a single mother with almost overwhelming responsibilities, the J.K. Rowling story is a wonderful chance for adults and children to enjoy a heartwarming, magical story...together.

Inside are the answers to some of the most frequently asked questions:

- * Where did the idea of Harry Potter come from?
- * What was J.K. Rowling like when she was younger?
- * What kind of student was she?
- * Which of the characters does J.K. Rowling most identify with?
- * Where does the name "Harry Potter" come from?
- * What is J.K. Rowling's simple rule about writing?

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Grade 4-6-This book has just one thing going for it. It's the first biography for youngsters about the popular author. The only other sources of information are articles in newspapers, magazines, and on the Internet. Unfortunately, the text reads like a rough draft of a junior-high research paper. Incomplete and fragmented sentences abound as Shapiro rambles on in a confusing manner. Quotations are loosely traced to articles and interviews in their sentences, but are not properly documented ("'It was a little like having the Beatles here,' said an excited, out-of-breath bookstore representative to *Entertainment Weekly* after the event"). The author writes in absolutes without noting sources, e.g., "Her eyes were always wide in amazement at the world around her-." Events appear out of nowhere as if they'd been previously mentioned. It's a shame that the book is too inaccurate, unsubstantiated, and poorly written to be suitable for research purposes. Do your kids a favor and direct them to Scholastic's Web site (scholastic.com) for information on Rowling.

Kathleen Simonetta, Indian Trails Public Library District, Wheeling, IL

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From [Booklist](#)

Gr. 5-8. This is a cut-and-paste job with a couple of glaring errors. But at the moment, there are only one or two books available on Rowling, and older kids won't be ashamed to carry around this book (actually published by an adult imprint) because of its paperback format. The fact of the matter is that Rowling's life was not all that interesting until she started writing about Harry: normal upbringing, a graduate of Exeter University, a year in Paris, a string of undistinguished jobs, and a brief marriage, which left her with a daughter. The book must have been in production before the name of the most recent Harry Potter was changed from the *Doomspell Tour* nament to *Goblet of Fire*, but the mistake will jump out at readers. There also seem to be missteps in the chronology. Keep this for report writers and Harry lovers until something better comes along, which should be soon. *Ilene Cooper*

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About the Author

Marc Shapiro is the author of numerous books of interest to children and teens including biographies of Gillian Anderson, Jennifer Love Hewitt, Goldie Hawn and James Cameron. He lives in California with his family.

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