

JOANNE KATHLEEN ROWLING

Joanne Kathleen Rowling was born on 31 July 1965 in England. She has always wanted to be a writer and wrote her first "book" at the age of six – a story about a rabbit called Rabbit. She still remembers when she was a little girl and her father told her fantastic adventure stories, which she really enjoyed. She also remembers when, together with her sister, she played with a group of children in the neighbourhood. Two of the children she played with, had surname Potter, a name she liked very much. Her parents were both Londoners but they wanted to live in the country and in 1974 the family moved to a village in the Forest of Dean. Joanne liked wandering across the fields and beside the River Wye with her sister.

Her favourite subject at High School was English while her favourite activity was telling stories to her friends over lunchtime. At Exeter University Rowling took a degree in French and spent one year studying in Paris.

After college she moved to London to work for Amnesty International. During this period, on a particularly long train ride from Manchester to London in the summer of 1990, that idea came to her of a boy who is a wizard and doesn't know it. Four hours later, when the train arrived at King's Cross Station, many of the characters and some parts of the story were fully formed in her head.

In 1992 Rowling moved to Portugal where she taught English. There she got married and she had a baby, then, she returned to Britain with her little daughter and a suitcase full of Harry Potter notes and chapters.

She settled in Edinburgh to be near her sister and worked hard to finish the book. She lived in a very tiny flat and wrote 'Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone' at the table in a café. The book was published in June 1997 and it achieved almost instant success both in Britain and America. The story of the boy wizard, his sad childhood and his adventures at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry caught the imagination of readers of all ages. The title of the seventh and final *Harry Potter* book was revealed on 21 December 2006 '*Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*' and was released on 21 July 2007. This last book broke its predecessor's record as the fastest-selling book of all time. It sold 11 million copies in the first day of release in the United Kingdom and United States. She has said that the last chapter of the book was written "in something like 1990", as part of her earliest work on the entire series. The series, totalling 4,195 pages, has been translated, in whole or in part, into 65 languages.

The *Harry Potter* books have also gained recognition for sparking an interest in reading among the young at a time when you thought children abandon books for computers and television.

What is the secret of Rowling's remarkable success? As Rowling herself said, 'It's the power of the imagination'

J.K Rowling still lives in Edinburgh, with her daughter Jessica.

Ex n°1

READ THE BIOGRAPHY AND WRITE THE ORDER IN WHICH YOU FIND THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION

Harry Potter's series	
Her first job	
Her present life	
Her school memories	
J.K Rowling's childhood	
J.K Rowling as a mother	
The reason for the success	
When she got the idea of writing Harry Potter	

Ex n°2

WHAT DO THESE DATES AND NUMBERS REFER TO ?

65 - 1992 - "something like 1990" - 21st December 2006 - 11 million - June 1997

Ex. N°3

READ THE PASSAGE AGAIN AND DECIDE IF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS ARE TRUE T OR FALSE F. THEN CORRECT THE FALSE ONES.

- 1 J.K Rowling is a British famous writer
- 2 She has always liked writing or telling stories
- 3 She worked for Amnesty International in France
- 4 She was a French teacher
- 5 She had the idea of writing Harry Potter when she was 25
- 6 When she left Portugal she moved to Scotland
- 7 The sixth "Harry Potter" had the record of the fastest-selling book of all time
- 8 Her last book sold 11 million copies in the first day of release

Ex n° 4

READ THE TEXT AGAIN AND ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS. GIVE FULL ANSWERS!

1. What was Rowling's first book about? (1p)
2. How old was Jeanne when her family left London to a village in the forest of Dean? (1p)
3. What did Joanna Kathleen like when she was at the high school? (1p)
4. How does the idea of the surname Potter come to her? (1p)
5. What did she do after taking a degree? (2p)
6. Where did Kathleen have the idea of a story of a boy who is a wizard? (1p)
7. Why did she move to U.K? (2p)
8. When was the seventh book published? (1p)
9. Why are the Harry Potter books so important among the young? (2p)
10. Where does she live now? (1p)
11. Talk about the last book you read. Write some information about the author, the plot, the main characters and express your opinions about it. (no less than 80 words)