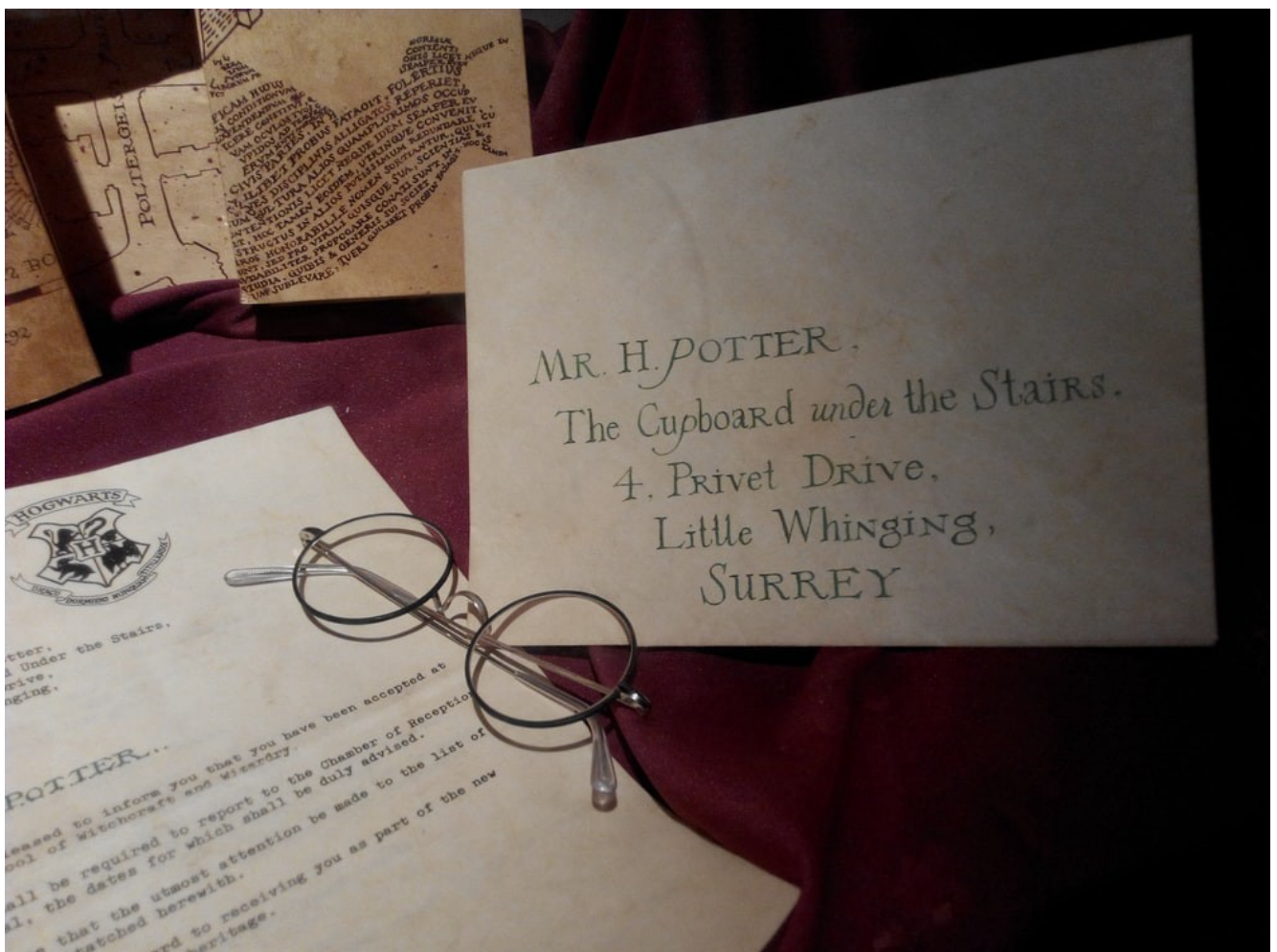


Top Lessons for Writers From J. K. Rowling's Success

Her success-story holds several gems for you

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Who doesn't feel at home with Harry Potter? // Image by [Rae Tian](#) via [Unsplash](#)

[J. K. Rowling](#)'s name is known worldwide. Even though she [graduated](#) from college with a degree in classics — not literature — she managed to be a successful author. Her [Harry Potter series](#) has [sold](#) more than 500 million copies!

After reading her books and analyzing her life, I made a list of the lessons we can grab.

From her life, you can learn...

You don't need a "posh" start

Several tyro writers complain they don't have the right environment for writing and hence are stuck with writer's block.

This is a ridiculous excuse.

J. K. Rowling didn't have an air-conditioned noise-free room, a Dell laptop to type in, or a Cappuccino at her side while she worked. Rather, she penned her ideas [on](#) spare scraps of paper and tissues while also managing her newly born daughter, sometimes in her house, sometimes in a bustling [café](#).

A peaceful surrounding always helps, but not having one too should also not be detrimental.

Your grit, more than your possessions, shows whether you will be successful.

Execution matters more than the "grand idea" you are waiting for

J.K. Rowling first had the [idea](#) for *Harry Potter* while delayed on a train traveling from Manchester to London

King's Cross in 1990.

After hearing this incident, people wait for their "golden moment" when a grand idea will strike them out of the blue. After a few months, their names will appear on the best-selling authors' list.

As said, the grass is always greener on the other side.

Getting the "idea" isn't the end of the deal. It is the start of a grueling journey. It is also overrated. Even the most lackluster of ideas can be turned into a 5-star book by the execution.

Imagining witches and wizards studying in a school do seem silly except that Rowling proved it wrong with her handiwork.

So can you.

Even if your idea seems as stupid, you can learn to make the necessary routine and write better by penning it down.

From her books, you can learn...

Nobody considers oneself a villain

This is more apparent in her lesser-known book, [*The Casual Vacancy*](#).

While I found its plot just fine, what won my heart was the

character making.

When you look closely, you realize that nobody is a true villain in the world. Your school nemesis might be the best part of her best friend's life. *You* can be loved by some and hated by others, playing the part of both hero and villain.

The novel ran on exactly this idea.

I loved *and* hated every character just because a POV changed. You would pity each, resent each, relate to each — they were *that* complex, and the more complex a character is, the more realistic it is.

Everybody is painted in shades of grey.

Even in *Harry Potter*, we were shown the reason why Voldemort became evil. Severus Snape got his redemption which blew my mind. Previous heroes like Dumbledore lost their purity and whiteness.

Little moments matter the most

Neophyte authors often wonder how to set their books apart.

They want extraordinary and unthought magic systems. They want violet-haired, pointed-eared, and silver-eyed characters. They want their protagonist to have a lavish lifestyle that nobody can ever dream of.

But, can you find yourself relating to the person above?

Likely not. It is because these humongous things actually don't matter to us as much as the "little" things do.

People like the magic system in *Harry Potter*, but more than that, what mesmerizes us and pulls both adult and young readers to the series are the little moments.

The time when Harry and Ron fought, or when Hermione burned with jealousy as Ron dated, or when Hagrid felt ashamed because of his identity, or when Tonks professed her feelings for Lupin—*those* won over the readers more.

Insignificant things hit our hearts much more than a description of how vast the magic system is.

Add new elements to your book, but don't forget to connect with your readers.

Characters must have flaws to add life into them

A shortcoming of *Harry Potter* was that how the main character (Harry) didn't evoke any hard emotion in me.

Rather, the side characters like Snape and Luna held more appeal.

Harry started and ended as a good-natured boy. Ron stayed his best shoulder. He was envious in book three and learned his lesson, but guess what—he didn't cut his jealousy in the last book. Hermione was brainy throughout.

How starkly bland they are from—take [George R. R. Martin's *Game of Thrones*](#).

Jaime's redemption blew my mind as a writer and won my heart as a reader. Tyrion's complexity, him being both cunning and considerate, is what made him so popular. Sansa's maturity phase taught me a thing or two about the world.

Still, giving Harry minimal character development worked because Rowling made him realistic by giving him **flaws**.

Harry didn't like to put his trust in authority which put him in trouble. Ron's envious nature at times made us bite our nails over his stupidity. Hermione's pride is what kept her away from being a goddess.

These imperfections are what made the characters likable, relatable, and human.

To sum up

If you want to learn from her example, here are some takeaways you can apply to your writing habits.

Your determination matters more than your vicinity. Don't wait for the "grand idea" —start writing with whatever you have in your head *now*. Try to not make the bad guy mean just for the sake of it. Little moments touch the readers' hearts intensely. Characters should not be cardboard cut-

outs and should have flaws.

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