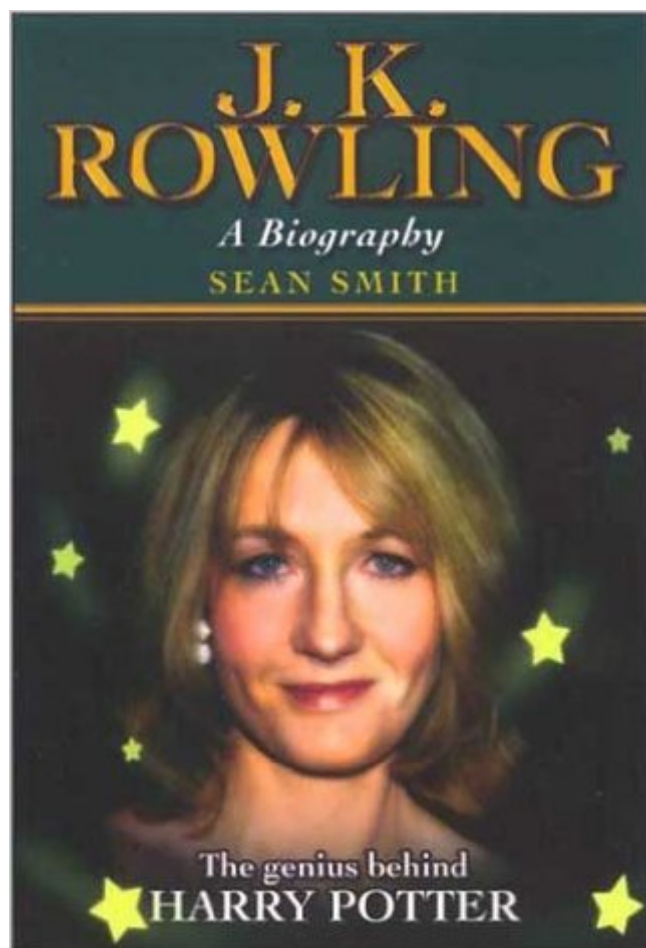


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J. K. Rowling A Biography



Synopsis

She is the creator of probably the most famous - and certainly the best-loved - character in contemporary fiction. She is also the author of her own escape from an existence on the brink of poverty, with no job and few prospects. On the one hand there is J.K. Rowling, who wrote, and continues to write, the Harry Potter novels, a literary phenomenon. On the other, there is Joanne Rowling, a quiet, dreamy, rather shy woman whose brilliance in translating her dreams into prose transformed her own life. JK - The Story of J.K. Rowling details her life from her childhood and schooling in the West Country; the effect upon her of the wasting illness that struck down her mother; her time at Exeter University; her long-term relationship and her career and marriage, which collapsed after thirteen months, leaving her to return to Britain with her baby daughter. The Harry Potter novels are more than fantasy: there is a toughness to the writing, a sense of realism and a questioning morality that go beyond mere adventure, magic and the battle between good and evil. How those books came to be written, and the influences that shaped both them and their author, form the core of this inspirational biography.

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Customer Reviews

I've read all the HP books and am a big fan so I was pleased to find a good biography of JK Rowling as Marc Shapiro's from last year was too thin and not very enlightening. This one is much more interesting and follows JK's life through from when she was little girl all through her education and the subsequent creation of Harry Potter on a train up to the present day. It's a pleasure to read a

good rags to riches story - and in case you've read all those articles about her writing in cafes you can find out here that there is a lot more to JK Rowling than that! I recommend this book if you're a Harry Potter fan, especially if you like the game of spotting where all the inventive names in the books come from - you might not agree with Sean Smith but it's fun to play!

Sean Smith's brilliant biography of J.K. Rowling was a must read for me. Joanne Rowling was a gifted and talented writer in one of the English classes I taught as a student teacher abroad at Wyedean School in the late seventies. Naturally, I wanted to learn as much as possible about what she had been doing in the intervening years. Smith's book did not disappoint. He tells the story of the development of this major talent much in the way J.K. Rowling hooks and holds the reader's attention. He combines a compelling subject with his clever and very readable prose to produce a book that is sure to satisfy Rowling's legion of fans at home and abroad. His tireless research and intelligent insights into connections between his subject's life and the mythology she creates in her fiction are highly credible. There are many surprises here, even for those already familiar with Rowling's amazing rise to the top of the publishing world. Smith's writing entertains without sensationalizing. He remains true to his subject just as she maintains fidelity to the workings of the adolescent imagination which informs her writing. Ultimately this literary jewel sparkles like J.K. Rowling eyes on the cover photograph. Smith describes her in the conclusion as a woman who looks rich. I would add that Smith's writing feels rich in its detail and insights into the formative experiences and major events of J.K. Rowling's inspiring life. Just as with a Harry Potter book, I was saddened to find the last page come all too soon. Fortunately, there is much more to come from J.K. Rowling, which should make for further updates to her biography. Smith will remain my biographer of choice.

I found this book very entertaining. JK Rowling's life has been a bit of a rollercoaster ride but the downs like her messy marriage and her mother's long term illness made me want to turn the pages all the more to see how it all turned out for her. It's an unpretentious read packed with facts about the author that I had no idea about. You can't always believe what you read in the newspapers! It's fun joining the author in trying to find Harry Potter references in her own life story and this book doesn't take itself too seriously. JK Rowling is a good writer but her own story is a great one. Thoroughly recommended.

I ordered this for a biography for school, and was very disappointed. the author does not tell the

story in chronological order, and doesn't specify who people are. He does not say that Joanne is J.K. Rowling's name as well as her mothers, and does not specify which is which. In the bibliography, He includes *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* and *Quidditch Through the Ages*, which are included in the Harry Potter School Book collection. To make the collection look more realistic, she does not display her own name on the cover, but the authors that wrote the books in the Harry Potter series. But Sean Smith, the biography author, does not credit J.K. Rowling for the book, but the fictional authors, proving his research unthorough. I will not be buying Smith's work again, and I highly recommend not buying this. I would recommend *Who is J.K. Rowling* instead. It is a book meant for younger children, but has complete information and is easier to understand. posted by A.P. (age 12)

This is a very pedestrian piece of writing. Sean Smith substitutes solid knowledge of her life and experiences with endless speculations about which individuals in her life were converted to characters in the Harry Potter books. The pace picks up a bit a little more than halfway through, when there is more solid history available. Nevertheless, there is nothing in this book that provides any surprises or insights into the amazing woman and author that is Joanne Rowling. Really, I was so disappointed and wouldn't recommend this to anyone. There is currently no "authorized" biography available, but this writer strains to create a biography out of all too scanty information.

This is a poorly written book. The author never even interviewed J.K. Rowling. The book is full of unattributed quotes. The author attempts to tie some part of Rowling's life directly into the Harry Potter series at least three times in every page - whether it makes sense or not. Here's an example from Chapter One: "Her father provided her first memory of books when he read her the *Wind in the Willows* while she was stuck at home with the measles. Joanne has yet to reveal how she thought up the name of Weasley for Harry Potter's best friend but it does sound rather similar to measly."

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