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# Who Is J. K. Rowling?



by  
Pam Pollack  
and Meg Belviso

An Unauthorized Biography

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An Unauthorized Biography

By Pam Pollack and Meg Belviso  
Illustrated by Stephen Marchesi

Grosset & Dunlap  
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To Meg, my partner, whose creative genius I will always respect—PP  
To all the great friends I've made in Harry Potter fandom—MB  
For Chris and Alex, ten years on—SM

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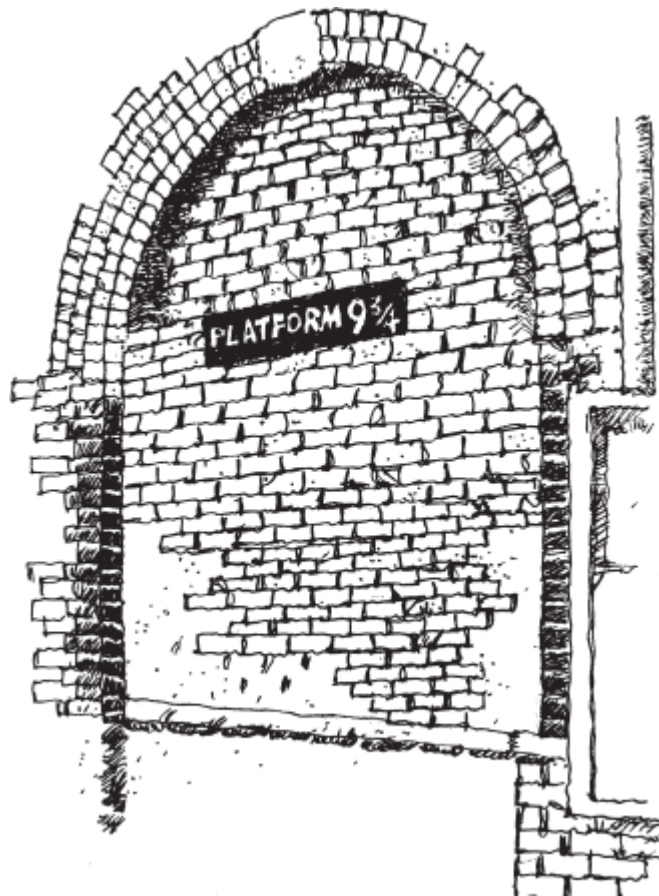
## Who Is J. K. Rowling?

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Do you know what a Muggle is? Do you know how to get to Platform 9  $\frac{3}{4}$ ? Do you have a favorite Bertie Bott's Every Flavor Bean?

Muggles, Platform 9  $\frac{3}{4}$ , and Bertie Bott's Every Flavor Beans were all created by one person: J. K. Rowling.

Jo, as she has been called since she was little, always wanted to be a writer. But being a writer would not be easy. What if no one wanted to buy her stories? So after she finished school in her early twenties, she got a job as a secretary in London, England. Jo made enough money to pay her bills.



Every day she filed papers and made copies. The next day was always the same as the last. But in her heart, she was still a writer. In her spare moments, she typed stories on her computer. She scribbled the names of imaginary people and places on the backs of papers. The stories didn't earn her any money. Still, she couldn't stop writing them.



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Writing stories also let Jo forget about the sad things in her life. Like her mother being very sick.



One weekend Jo took a trip to Manchester, a city in northern England. She was going to move there, and she needed a place to live. She had a long train ride back to London. She stared out the window, thinking of nothing.

Suddenly a picture of a boy popped into her head. He had round glasses and a scar shaped like a lightning bolt.

Jo reached into her bag. She wanted to write down everything about him. But she didn't have a pen. She turned back to the window and thought more about the boy. He was a wizard, but he didn't know it. He lived with a family who was not his real family. They kept his magic a secret. They hoped to squash it out of him. But the boy's magic was too strong.

As the train sped through the English countryside, more people crowded into Jo's head. They were people the boy knew. There was a ghost named Nearly Headless Nick. And a best friend with red hair. And a clever girl named Hermione.

By the time Jo reached London, she had a whole new world in her head. One day, she hoped, she could write a book about it. When she got home she found a pen. She pulled out a notebook. On the first page she wrote the name of the boy with the lightning bolt scar.

His name was Harry Potter.