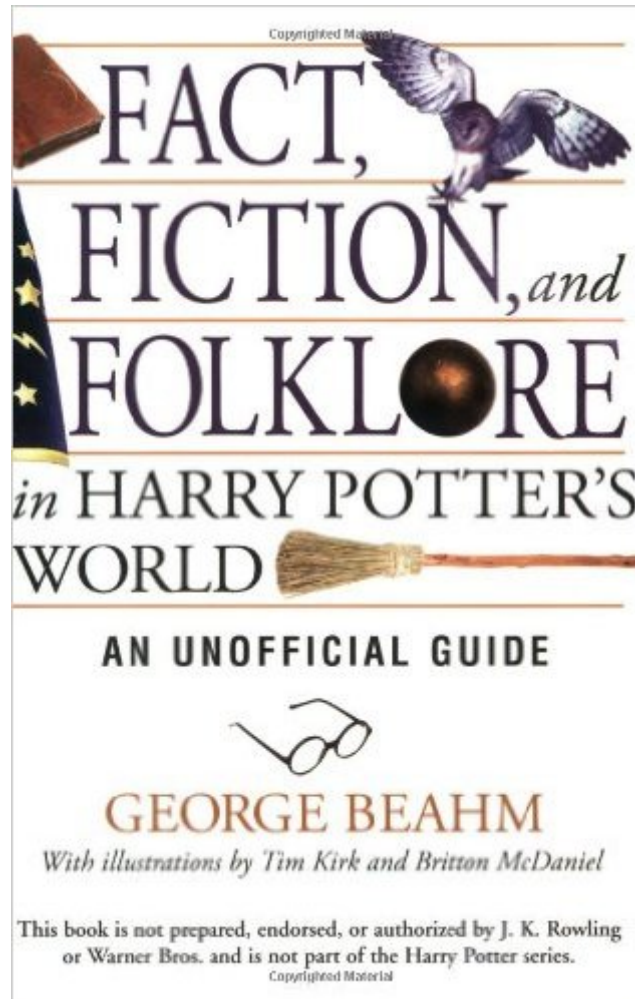


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Fact, Fiction, And Folklore In Harry Potter's World: An Unofficial Guide



Synopsis

Did you know that J. K. Rowling's characters share a lot in common with J. R. R. Tolkien's characters? Many of the magical items in Harry's world actually have equivalents in ours? Some of Rowling's beasts have been around for hundreds of years? Find out the stories behind the stories! With more than 300 entries, from bite-sized appetizers to meaty entrees, this book provides fun and fascinating facts behind the world myths, legends, literature, and history embedded in the Harry Potter novels by J. K. Rowling, who holds a degree in French and the classics. Arranged alphabetically in four sections: the fabulous beasts, the prominent wizards, the magical artifacts, and the places where the wizarding world hangs out; this comprehensive resource is entertaining and educational: Abominable Snowman to zombies, wizards Falco Aesalon to Bowman Wright, amulets to the wizard's wireless, and the apothecary store to Zonko's Joke Shop; it's all covered here. With seventy illustrations by five-time Hugo award winner Tim Kirk and newcomer Britton McDaniel, this Harry Potter companion is a visual and narrative treat that belongs on the shelf of every fan. With Fact, Fiction, and Folklore in Harry Potter's World you can explore the fascinating connections in the enchanting world of Harry Potter.

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Customer Reviews

Much like his previous book, *Muggles and Magic*, this newest work by George Beahm is packed with interesting information and insights. Most of us, having general knowledge about mythology and folklore (and therefore understanding some of the clever connections and allusions Rowling makes in the naming of characters and items), sense that there are likely many references we don't

quite get. Fortunately for us, Beahm has done all of the work required to make reading Harry Potter a far richer, more complex experience. From his exploration of the significance of names to his thorough catalog of the various attributes of the fantastic creatures that appear both in Harry Potter and world mythology, Beahm gets it all down in an extremely comprehensive and easy-to-read way. One of the best things about this book is its layout. For example: this Guide has one of the best tables of contents that I've seen in a reference book of this sort, and the index is equally wonderful. If it's mentioned in a Harry Potter book and Beahm's explored its deeper meaning and connections to our world, a reader will easily find any creature, item, term, or character she's looking for. In Beahm's last book, I found myself somewhat distracted by the numerous sidebars and inserts. In *Fact, Fiction, and Folklore in Harry Potter's World: An Unofficial Guide*, the sidebars and inserts are perfectly placed--they are unobtrusive but won't get overlooked, which is all to the good: they're wonderful asides to the main text and only help to enhance the reader's understanding of the connections between Rowling's world and the more fantastic aspects of our own. The illustrations are also wonderful, offering the eye a place to rest and setting off the main text in a whimsical manner.

When I picked up George Beahm's new book, *Fact, Fiction, and Folklore in Harry Potter's World*, I had just finished reading the first five books in J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter series in preparation for the publication of book six. This was perfect timing. This is not a book to read start to finish in one sitting, as it is necessarily repetitive in the four sections (*Fabulous Beasts*, *Wizards through the Ages*, *All Things in the Magical World*, and *Enchanting Places*). It's better sampled in pieces at will, or used as a reference guide by clueless relatives or friends of rabid Harry Potter fans. Sometimes the explanations wander off topic a bit, but this does not prove to be too distracting, especially if one browses through the book instead of reading it in order. *Fact, Fiction, and Folklore* might just as well be called *Fact, Fiction, Folklore and Fantasy Literature*. Beahm frequently refers to the works of J.R.R. Tolkien and to other fantasy works as well. If a Harry Potter fan is seeking suggestions of other books to read while awaiting book seven, this book could be mined for titles. The artwork is delightful. I find Tim Kirk's whimsical drawings alone worth the price of the book. I had made some of the real world connections to folklore and language that Beahm makes, but I learned many new things as well. I learned, for instance, that Nicholas Flamel was a real historical alchemist who lived six hundred years ago. It is sometimes difficult to tell when the text about Rowling's fantasy world ends and the description of real world parallels begins, and my one real issue with the book is that it can't decide who its audience is. Devoted fan? Someone who hasn't read the books but might?

Clueless friends and family of fans?

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