ESL News Stories

Level-graded English lessons with reading, listening, activities, and discussion.

Lesson Info

Type
Review

Level
2 / A2

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Title
Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone: A Book Review

Webpage
https://eslnewsstories.com/reviews/2026-04-27-harry-potter-and-the-philosophers-stone/

Lesson Content

- Warm-up, Vocab List, Reading and Audio
- Understanding: True or False, Review Breakdown
- Language: Vocab Match
- Use It: Discussion Builder, Sentence Unscramble, Discussion Questions
- Answers

Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone: A Book Review

(1) Do you like reading? Why or why not?

(2) What do you know about Harry Potter's story?



Reading Harry Potter.

Vocab List

wizard (n.) — A person with magic powers.

cruel (adj.) — Very unkind.

rushed (adj.) — Done too fast.

plot (n.) — The main story in a book or movie.

return (v.) — To come back.

ending (n.) — The last part of a story.

series (n.) — A set of books, films, or shows with the same story.

adventure (n.) — An exciting and sometimes dangerous experience.

Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone: A Book Review

Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone came out in 1997, almost thirty years ago. The story is about a young boy who learns he is a wizard. He lives with his cruel aunt and uncle, but everything changes on his eleventh birthday. Harry goes to a magic school called Hogwarts and makes two best friends, Ron and Hermione. Together, they try to stop a bad wizard from returning.

Many readers love this book. The characters are interesting, and the magic world feels real and exciting. The story is easy to follow, and there are many funny moments. However, some readers think the writing is simple and the story is slow at the start. Harry is also very lucky, and some readers do not like this. The ending is exciting but a little rushed.

The book started a huge series. There are eight popular movies, many video games, and a new TV series is coming soon. These have made the story famous all over the world.

For English learners, this book is best for B2 level. The plot is not difficult, but there are long descriptions and made-up magic words like "Quidditch." A2 and B1 learners will find it too hard without help. Overall, Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone is a fun book with a few small problems. It's great for readers who love magic and adventure.

1. True or False

1. Harry learns he is a wizard when he is eleven. TRUE FALSE

2. Harry and his friends work together to stop a bad wizard from returning. TRUE FALSE

3. Some readers think the story is slow at the beginning. TRUE FALSE

4. The review says this book is best for A2 learners. TRUE FALSE

2. Review Breakdown

Read each statement. Write the letter in the correct group below.

a. The characters are interesting.

b. The magic world feels real and exciting.

c. The story is slow at the start.

d. It is a book about a boy who learns he is a wizard.

e. The book has no funny moments.

f. The review says the movies were not popular.

g. Harry goes to Hogwarts and makes two best friends.

h. This is a fun book for readers who love magic and adventure.

What it is: _____

Good / bad points: _____

Final opinion: _____

Not in the review: _____

3. Listen and Fill Gaps

Listen to the audio on eslnewsstories.com and complete the gaps below:

Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone came out in 1997, almost thirty years ago. The story is about a young (1) _____ who learns he is a wizard. He lives with his cruel aunt and uncle, but everything changes on his eleventh (2) _____. Harry goes to a magic school called Hogwarts and makes two best friends, Ron and Hermione. Together, they try to stop a bad wizard from returning.

Many readers love this book. The characters are interesting, and the magic world feels real and exciting. The story is easy to follow, and there are many (3) _____ moments. However, some readers think the writing is simple and the story is slow at the start. Harry is also very lucky, and some readers do not like this. The ending is exciting but a little rushed.

The book started a huge (4) _____. There are eight popular movies, many video games, and a new TV series is coming soon. These have made the story famous all over the world.

For English learners, this book is best for B2 level. The plot is not difficult, but there are long descriptions and made-up magic words like "Quidditch." A2 and B1 learners will find it too hard without help. Overall, Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone is a fun book with a few small problems. It's great for readers who love magic and (5) _____.

4. Vocab Match

Write each vocabulary word next to its matching definition.

1. Wizard (n)	a) _____ The last part of a story.
2. Cruel (adj)	b) _____ To come back.
3. Plot (n)	c) _____ The main story in a book or movie.
4. Return (v)	d) _____ Very unkind.
5. Ending (n)	e) _____ A person with magic powers.

5. Discussion Builder

Choose the best phrase for each gap:

1. Q: Why is this book popular?

   A: This book is popular _____ the magic world feels real and exciting.

   because / but / so

2. Q: Is it okay if a book starts slowly? Why or why not?

   A: The start is slow, _____ I still want to keep reading.

   because / and / but

3. Q: Would this book be easy or hard for you in English?

   A: The long descriptions would be difficult to follow, _____ I think this book would be hard for me in English.

   so / but / because / although

6. Sentence Unscramble

1. _____ _____ _____ _____ _____

   A. I would like B. it could help C. to do magic D. me every day. E. because

2. _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____

   A. they are easier B. I like C. the movies D. more E. because F. to follow.

7. Discussion Questions

1. Why is this book popular?
2. What kinds of stories do you like? Fantasy, mystery, action, love stories, or something else?
3. Would you like to be able to do magic?
4. Is it okay if a book starts slowly? Why or why not?
5. Do you like reading books or seeing movies more?
6. Would this book be easy or hard for you in English?
7. Would you like to watch the Harry Potter TV series?

Listening: (1) boy, (2) birthday, (3) funny, (4) series, (5) adventure

True or False:

1. True. The review says everything changes on his eleventh birthday.
2. True. The review says Harry, Ron, and Hermione try to stop a bad wizard from returning.
3. True. The review mentions that some readers find the story slow at the start.
4. False. The review says it is best for B2 level.

Review Breakdown:

What it is: d g

Good / bad points: a b c

Final opinion: h

Not in the review: e f

Vocabulary:

1. Wizard (n): A person with magic powers.
2. Cruel (adj): Very unkind.
3. Plot (n): The main story in a book or movie.
4. Return (v): To come back.
5. Ending (n): The last part of a story.

Discussion Builder:

Hints: 1) Reason. 2) Contrast. 3) Result.

1. because
2. but
3. so

Sentence Unscramble:

1. I would like to do magic because it could help me every day.
2. I like the movies more because they are easier to follow.