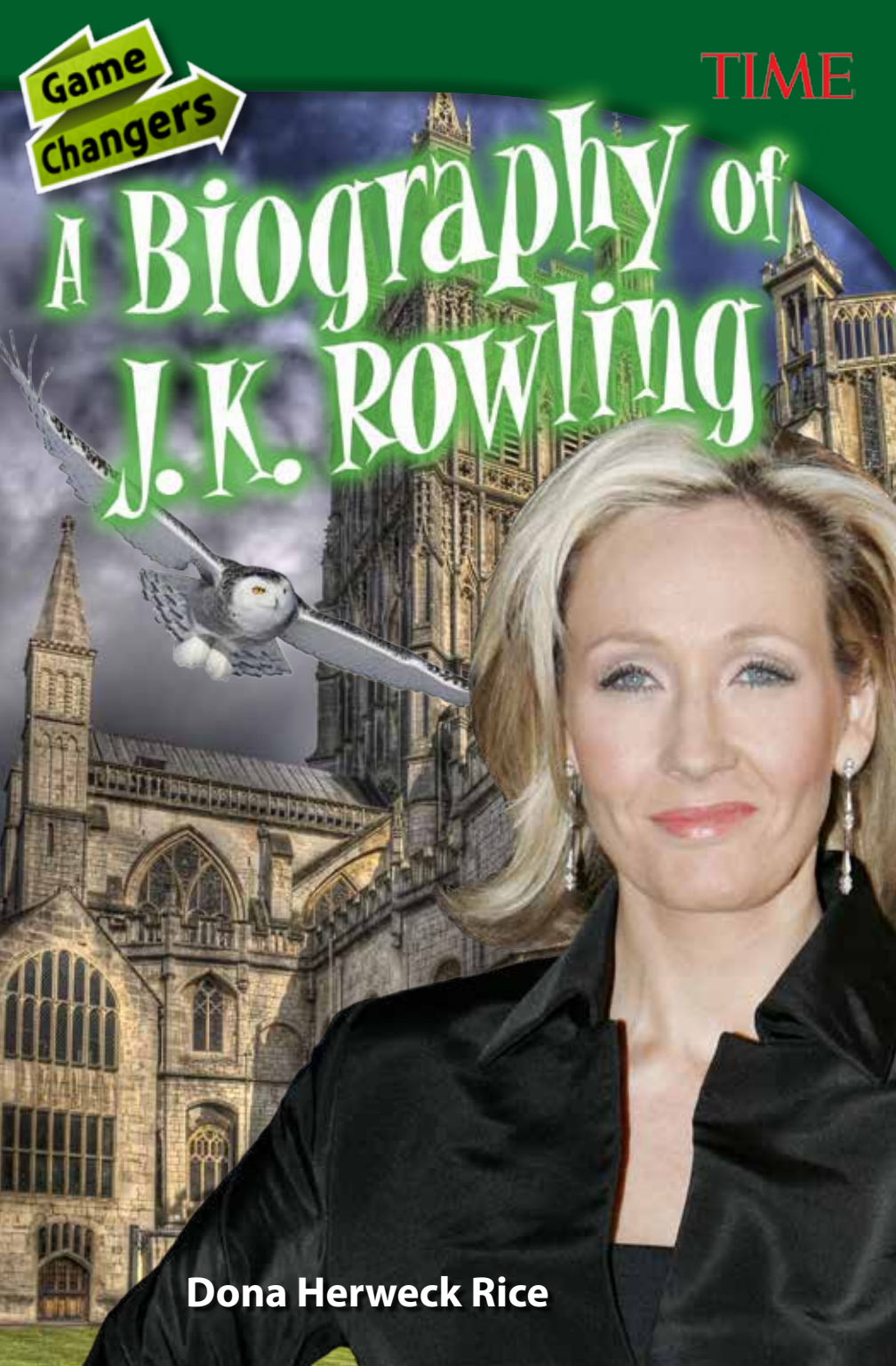
Game Changers

TIME

A Biography of J.K. Rowling



Dona Herweck Rice

Table of Contents

Phenomenal 4
Muggle Born 6
"The Wand Chooses the Wizard" 12
Muggle No More 18
Beyond Words 26
Glossary 28
Index 29
Check It Out! 30
Try It! 31
About the Author 32

For teachers' inspection ONLY

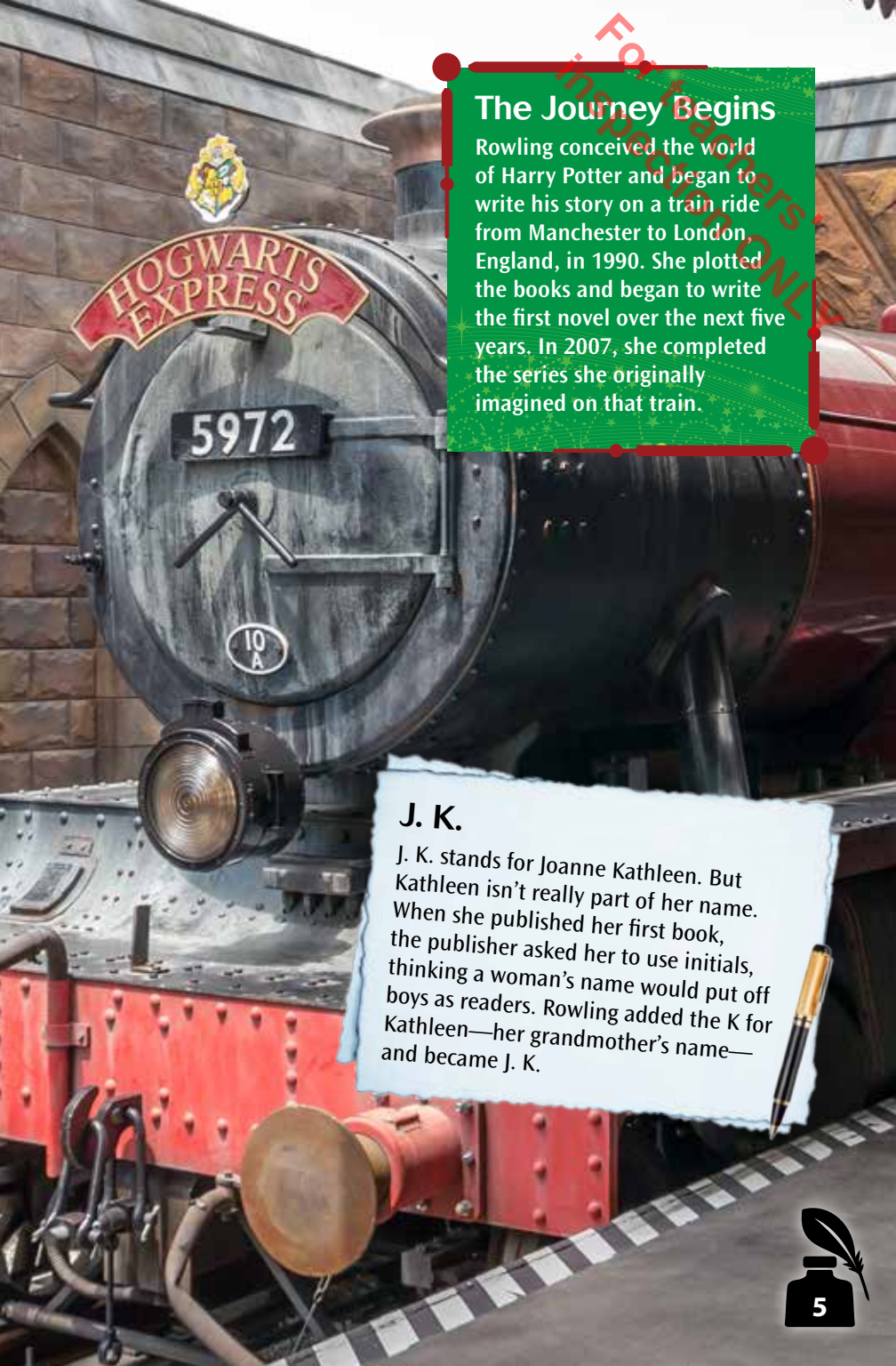
Phenomenal

For teachers' inspection ONLY

The world is filled with people who think they can write a book. Perhaps they can. But the truth is, few people actually do it; fewer still see that book published, and even fewer see it published to critical and popular acclaim.

And then there's J. K. Rowling. She wrote and published a few books you may have heard mentioned—maybe even read. They are about a boy who learns he is a wizard . . . a boy with an **iconic** scar on his forehead . . . a boy who lives, despite the best efforts of the world's most powerful, dark wizard. The boy is Harry Potter. J. K. Rowling's books about him not only have received great acclaim but also have forever changed the world. Rowling's work is **phenomenal** in the truest sense of the word. Her books about Harry and his wizarding world have sold by the hundreds of millions of copies and, according to her American publisher, have been translated into 77 different languages and sold in more than 200 countries.

Rowling is a writer whose work has impacted the world far beyond the content of her books. The world of Harry Potter and the world of J. K. Rowling are rich with imagination, creativity, and a powerful call for the triumph of light over darkness. Rowling's work goes beyond words, beyond the confines of her pages. It is part of our global culture and is woven into the very fabric of our lives.



For teachers' inspection ONLY

The Journey Begins

Rowling conceived the world of Harry Potter and began to write his story on a train ride from Manchester to London, England, in 1990. She plotted the books and began to write the first novel over the next five years. In 2007, she completed the series she originally imagined on that train.

J. K.

J. K. stands for Joanne Kathleen. But Kathleen isn't really part of her name. When she published her first book, the publisher asked her to use initials, thinking a woman's name would put off boys as readers. Rowling added the K for Kathleen—her grandmother's name—and became J. K.

For teachers' inspection ONLY

Muggle Born

In Rowling's wizarding world, a Muggle is a nonmagical individual. By all indications, Joanne Rowling was born a Muggle, to Muggle parents, on July 31, 1965, in Yate, England. She made her entrance at Yate Cottage Hospital, the eldest daughter of Anne and Peter Rowling. Her sister Dianne arrived 23 months later. When Jo was nine years old, the family moved to Tutshill, a small town near Chepstow, Wales. There, they enjoyed investigating the natural world around them in an entirely normal, Muggle-ish way. Life was suitable, and they were happy.

When Rowling was about six years old, she created a story about a rabbit named Rabbit and a bee named Miss Bee. Rabbit developed a terrible case of the measles and spent time in **convalescence** visiting with Miss Bee. The story may not have been **gripping** for anyone else, but for Rowling, the world would never be the same. She became a writer, passionately longing to tell stories. In her biography, Rowling is quoted as saying, "Ever since Rabbit and Miss Bee, I have wanted to be a writer, though I rarely told anyone so. I was afraid they'd tell me I didn't have a hope."

The Muggle girl had found her magic, and once she set it free, the world would be transformed by her enchanting, spellbinding gift.

The Power

"We do not need magic to transform our world. We carry all the power we need inside ourselves already. We have the power to imagine better."—J. K. Rowling

For teachers' inspection ONLY

On the Move

The Rowling family moved to a charming country village that sits on the border of England and Wales in the Forest of Dean, near the River Wye. For any Potter fan, the location sounds like a magical place, indeed!



For teachers' inspection ONLY

School Days

The Rowling sisters attended Tutshill Primary and then Wyedean Comprehensive School and College. Rowling didn't love school at Tutshill—there was a teacher there who frightened her—but she did love words and stories. She excelled in English classes and became increasingly driven to write. As she grew older and attended Wyedean, writing became an ever-growing part of her existence—something she felt **compelled** to do.

Literary Lunches

At Wyedean, Rowling was known for entertaining her friends at lunchtime with imaginative stories of heroes and brave adventures.

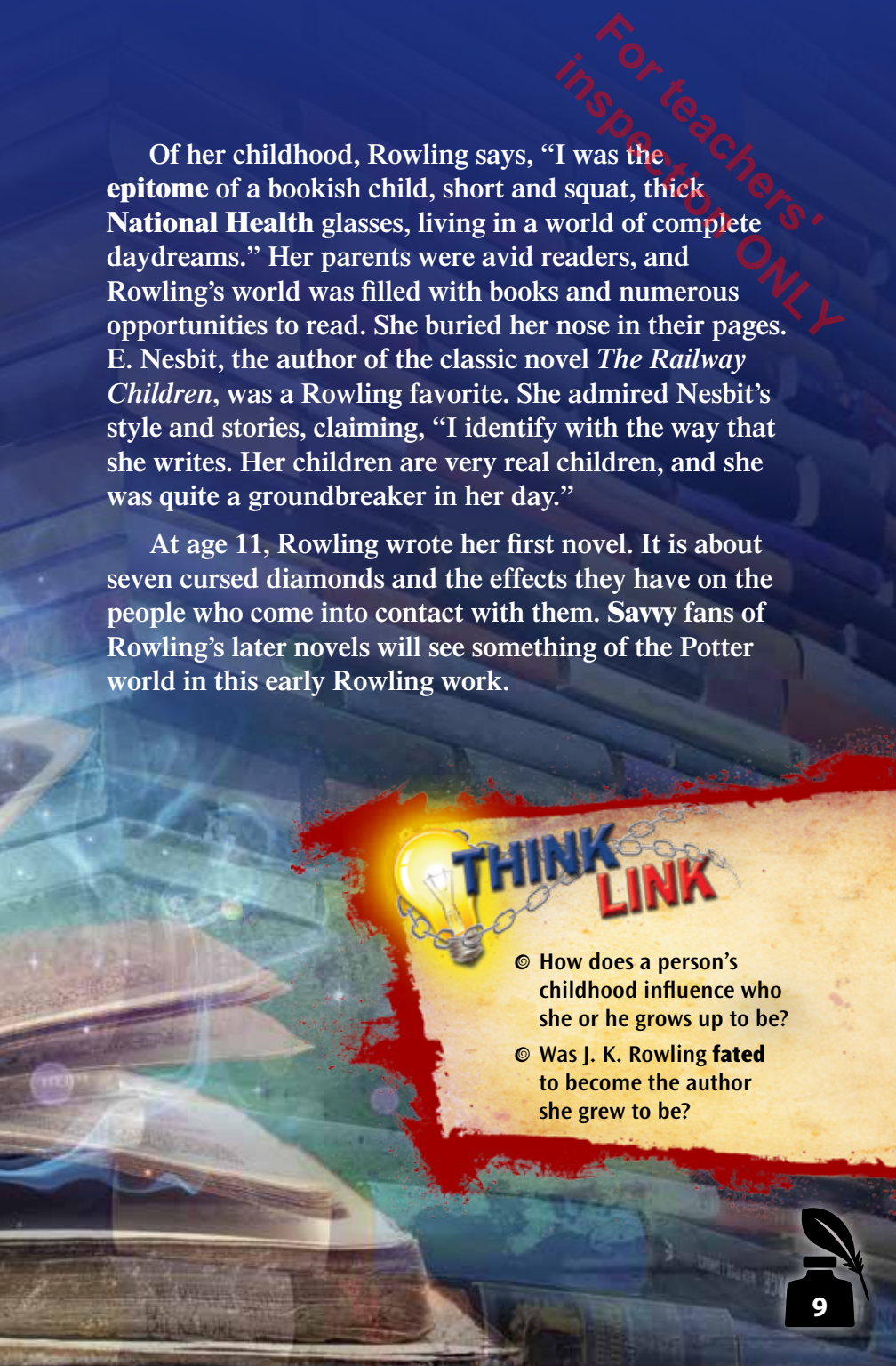
The Seeds of Snape?

Rowling's mom, Anne, became a lab tecÚician at Wyedean when Rowling went to school there. Anne's supervisor (and Rowling's teacher) was likely the inspiration for the character Professor Snape.

For teachers' inspection ONLY

Of her childhood, Rowling says, "I was the **epitome** of a bookish child, short and squat, thick **National Health** glasses, living in a world of complete daydreams." Her parents were avid readers, and Rowling's world was filled with books and numerous opportunities to read. She buried her nose in their pages. E. Nesbit, the author of the classic novel *The Railway Children*, was a Rowling favorite. She admired Nesbit's style and stories, claiming, "I identify with the way that she writes. Her children are very real children, and she was quite a groundbreaker in her day."

At age 11, Rowling wrote her first novel. It is about seven cursed diamonds and the effects they have on the people who come into contact with them. **Savvy** fans of Rowling's later novels will see something of the Potter world in this early Rowling work.



- How does a person's childhood influence who she or he grows up to be?
- Was J. K. Rowling **fated** to become the author she grew to be?

Reader's Guide

For teachers' inspection ONLY

1. What obstacles did J. K. Rowling face in her attempts to become a writer?
2. Imagine that Rowling continued teaching and never completed her first book. How might the world be different without Harry Potter?
3. Several authors inspired Rowling in her evolution as a writer. Who inspires you?
4. What events in Rowling's life probably most impacted her writing? How might her writing be different in the future as her life changes?

