*Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone*

Web Quest

The *Harry Potter* series is one of the most popular novel sets in the world. Children love the fantastical elements that breathe life into imaginations around the globe. Even if you haven’t read it, you know the concept. While this novel is near and dear to my heart, I don’t expect everyone to like it; however, I do expect you to use your higher level thinking skills to look at the historical context needed to build a refined children’s novel that allows an author to develop a series over several years.

You will be reading this novel and writing a university level researched composition on *Harry Potter* and its extensions to the Renaissance. Follow the web quest below to begin a brief overview of the connections the series has to the Renaissance era.

Step 1: *Visit* [*http://www.nlm.nih.gov/exhibition/harrypottersworld/exhibition.html*](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/exhibition/harrypottersworld/exhibition.html)*. You can access this via my website under the* Harry Potter *page.*

Step 2: *Answer the questions that follow*.

1. What three themes will we explore in *HP and the Sorcerer’s Stone* that connect to Renaissance ideology?

Step 3: *Select the “Potions” icon.*

1. What is the Philosopher’s Stone? How will Harry be able to obtain it?
2. Give a brief sketch of Nicholas Flamel? What did he accomplish in his pursuits? Is he real?

Step 4: *Select “Next” or click on the “Monsters” icon.*

1. What is a basilisk?
2. In Harry Potter’s world, how are animals and snakes viewed? How are they found to be useful?
3. After reviewing the actual historical information, how were basilisks and dragons used throughout the Renaissance?

Step 5: *Select “Next” or click on the “Herbology” icon.*

1. Historically, why were plants studied?
2. What is the significance of the mandrake in real life and in Harry Potter’s world?

Step 6: *Select “Next” or click on the “Magical Creatures” icon.*

1. According to Firenze, what will happen if you slay a unicorn?
2. How are magical creatures perceived by characters in *HP and the Sorcerer’s Stone*?
3. What is interesting about Ambrose Paré’s writings on unicorns?

Step 7: *Select “Next” or click on the “Fantastic Beasts” icon.*

1. How are creatures treated in Harry Potter’s world?
2. Explain the issues that surface based on the treatment of several of the creatures in the novel.
3. The “History of Science” section does not connect to the “Harry Potter’s World” section as directly of the others you have visited so far. Why have the authors of this webpage provided you with Paracelsus as a match to creatures? In other words, what do we learn from his view points and studies that connects to the plight of the creatures in Harry Potter’s world?

Step 8: *Select “Next” or click on the “Immortality” icon.*

1. In this section you see the word “impure” repeated. What well-known historical figure does Lord Voldemort seem to have connections with?
2. What is a large part of Harry Potter’s quest throughout the novels?
3. What were Cornellious Agrippa’s views on magic?
4. What is the larger ethical question the Harry Potter novels and Agrippa consider?