



**Otázka:** Fantasy literature

**Jazyk:** Angličtina

**Přidal(a):** sakos

## FANTASY literature

(source Ivana Bobulová, Silvia Pokrivčáková, Eva Preložníková, Irena Přibylová *Children's and Juvenile Literature* – **Fantasy in children's literature Sylvia Pokrivčáková**)

**Fantasy** is a genre that has become extremely popular in recent years, especially thanks to a renewed interest in J. R. R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* and the success of J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter*. It is a form of speculative fiction (it includes both realistic and fantastical elements). Speculative literature encompasses along with fantasy myths, legends, fairy tales, surrealism, magical realism, science fiction, horrors, and psychological dramas.

Fantasy is most typically set in a strange, bizarre or marvellous world that is quite different from the real world.

- the secondary (fantastic) worlds have their own rules, logic and law of nature
- time shifts and imagery realms are quite frequent patterns
- this worlds can be entered by various ways(falling asleep or dreaming a dream, falling down a rabbit hole, going through a wardrobe, climbing up a beanstalk, being „kidnapped“ by a tornado, etc.)



- it can also be a hidden part of a „normal world“
- fantastic worlds are inhabited by extraordinary creatures (talking animals and objects, mythical creatures, knights, damsels in distress, wizards, fairies, werewolves, elves, ghosts, dragons, etc.).

Fantasy has a long and distinguished history with beginnings in Greek and Roman mythology, Hebrew lyrics continuing with heroic epics and medieval romance leading to new-age literature. In the mid-20th century the genre of fantasy caught a new breath with J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* or C. S. Lewis's *The Chronicles of Narnia*.

### **There are several sub-genres of fantasy:**

- Animal and toy fantasies
- Fantasies with eccentric characters and superhero fantasies
- High fantasy
- Comic fantasy
- Dark (horror) fantasy

The classification has been developed only for the needs of children's literature. Various and very detailed classifications according to various literary conditions and genre specialities can be found in literary dictionaries, e.g. Sword and sorcery, Contemporary fantasy, Romantic fantasy, Heroic fantasy, Adventure Fantasy, Fairy-tale Fiction, Magic Realism and many others.

### **Animal and toy fantasies**

Authors: R. Kipling, H. B. Potter, E. B. White, K. Grahame, H. Lofting, E. Nesbit, E. R. Burroughs,





*P. Jakel, R. Dahl, J. Aiken, D. King-Smith, A. A. Milne, P. S. Beagle, R. Godden, R. Hoban, T. Hughes, L. Reid*

– popular among children and young adults for several reasons: children naturally love animals, the opportunity to point out some of the truths about the human world, it results from children's view of life and the world in which the ability of animals to act as human beings is absolutely realistic etc.

**There are two subgenres:**

- a) ***animal fantasies*** (animals with human or magic abilities)
- b) ***animal biological stories*** (realistic stories).

**Three groups according to the level of implicated fantastic elements:**

- a) **stories about talking animals who act as animals**
- b) **stories with animal characters that act as allegories of human beings**
- c) **stories about animals that have extraordinary, usually magical, abilities**

**Examples of animal fantasies:**

Roald Dahl's **Fantastic Mr. Fox** (1970)

Joan Aiken's **Arabel's Raven** (1972)

Dick King-Smith's series on adorable pigs (**Babe the Gallant Pig**, 1984; **Ace, The Very Important Pig**, 1992; **Ace**, 1999; **All Pigs are Beautiful**, 1995; **Babe, the Sheep-Pig**,





2000)

Peter S. Beagle's **The Last Unicorn** (1994)

### Examples of toy fantasies:

Alan Alexander Milne **Winnie the Pooh** (1926).

Rumer Godden **The Doll's House** (1947)

Russel Hoban **Bedtime for Frances** (1960), **The Mouse and his Child** (1967)

Ted Hughes **The Iron Man** (1968)

Lynne Reid Banks **The Indian in the Cupboard** (1980)

### Fantasies with eccentric characters and superhero fantasies

Authors: *J. M. Barrie, P. L. Travers, M. Norton, J. K. Rowling*

– written for children and young adults falling into the subgenre of fantasy where an eccentric (= unconventional, strange, odd) character is the most distinctive feature and his/her adventures make the story. Some of the world-wide famous eccentric heroes are Peter Pan, Mary Poppins and Harry Potter.

Examples:

Sir James Matthew Barrie - **Peter Pan books**

Pamela L. Travers - **Mary Poppins**

Mary Norton - **Borrowers**





J. K. Rowling - **Harry Potter**

Several characteristic traits of superheroes can be recognized: a special costume, a secret identity, super powers or skills or equipment, a strict moral code, a willingness to fight against evil and risk his/her life, a regular enemy, e.g. **Batman, Spiderman, Wolverine, Incredible Hulk, Wonder Woman or The Cat**

### High fantasy

Authors: *J. R. R. Tolkien, C. S. Lewis, A. Garner, Ursula K. Le Guin, T. Williams*

High fantasy is a sub-genre of fantasy the most recognizable feature of which is a spatial and temporary setting in parallel, or completely “new”, invented worlds. It is serious in tone, often dealing with the theme of the struggle between good and extreme evil. Stories are peopled by mythical or fantastical characters (kings, knights, princes and princesses, wizards, elves, dwarves, gnomes and others) who communicate by unknown languages (generally invented by their authors). Nevertheless, real characters who were transported to secondary worlds can be met here, too.

Examples:

J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*,

Ursula K. Le Guin's *Earthsea Tetralogy*

Clive Staples Lewis *The Chronicles of Narnia*