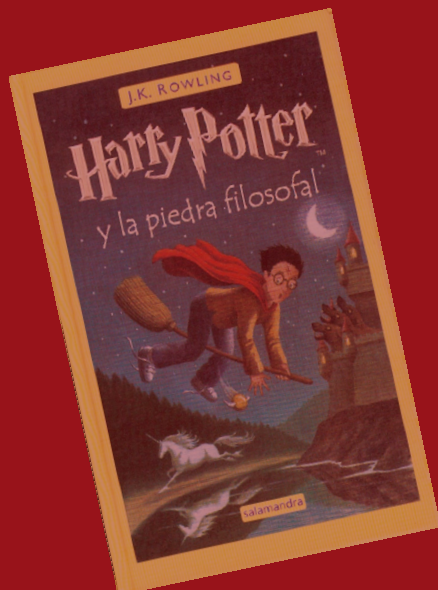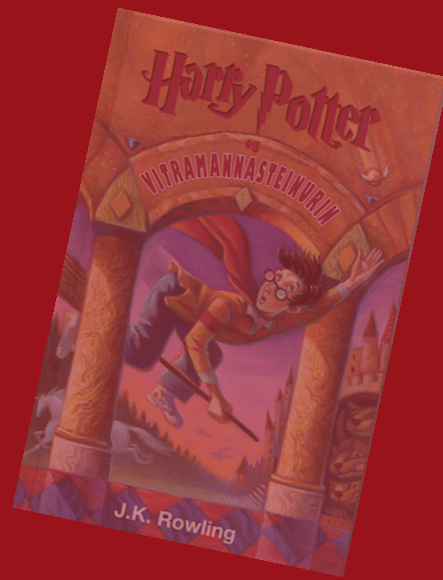# Harry Potter in Translation

Making **Language** Learning **Magical**

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Harry Potter in Translation: Making Language Learning Magical
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What is the Harry Potter in Translation Project?

Researchers at the Language Research Centre at University of Calgary have collaborated on a number of activities related to Harry Potter in Translation including:

- Exhibitions of the first book of J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter series, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, translated into 70 different languages.
- Research presentations on translations relating to the Harry Potter books.
- Audio recordings of the small sections of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* in 70 languages. Listen here: http://arts.ucalgary.ca/lrc/home/celebrating-multilingualism-through-harry-potter/harry-potter-editions
- Research on how to use *Harry Potter* in translation to teach international languages to children.

Who owns all the translations?

The book translations are owned by the collector, Dr. Nicholas Žekulin, a professor of Russian and a former director of the Language Research Centre, at the University of Calgary. He lent his personal copies of the books to the research centre for the audio portion of the project. Today, he does not lend out copies of his translations from his collection.

How did the project start?

The project began in 2003 when Dr. Žekulin when he was on sabbatical in Prague and his daughter gave him copies of the first four books in English. Then, as he travelled around Europe, he picked up translations in various countries of the first book, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*. That set him on a path of collecting copies of the first book in as many languages as he could. It took eight years to collect 70 translations.

Check out a video of talking about his collection and how he got started with the project: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6UzWqpztIIg

How many translations are in the collection?

As of December, 2011, there are about 70 different translations of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* in Dr. Žekulin's collection. These include:

Translations from Asia

1.   Bengali (Bangladesh)
2.   Chinese Simplified (PRC)
3.   Chinese Traditional (Taiwan)
4.   Farsi (Iran)
5.   Georgian (Georgia)
6.   Gujarati (India)
7.   Hebrew (Israel)
8.   Hindi (India)
9.   Indonesian (Indonesia)
10.   Japanese (Japan)
11.   Khmer (Cambodia)
12.   Korean (Korea)
13.   Malay (Malaysia)
14.   Malayalam (India)
15.   Marathi (India)
16.   Mongolian (Mongolia)
17.   Nepali (Nepal)
18.   Sinhala (Sri Lanka)
19.   Thai (Thailand)
20.   Urdu (Pakistan)
21.   Vietnamese (Vietnam)

Translations from the Americas

22.   American English (USA)
23.   Portuguese (Brazil)

Translations from Africa
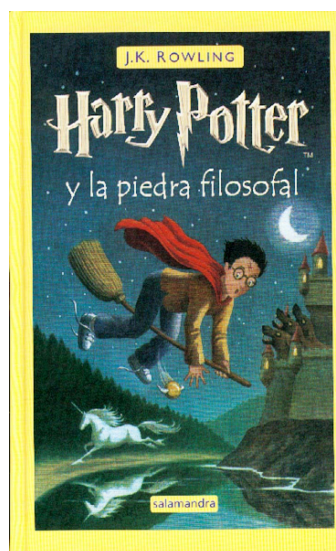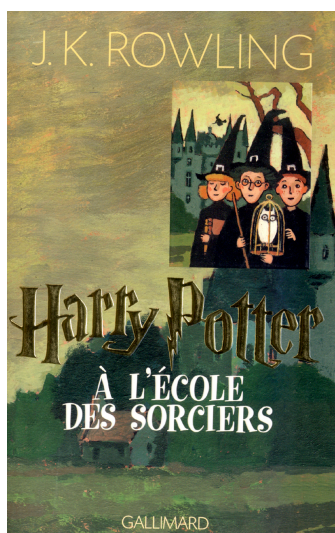
24.   Afrikaans (RSA)
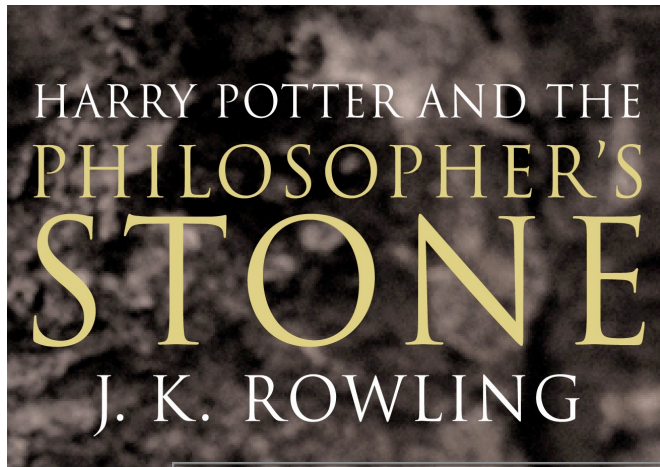25.   Arabic (Egypt)

Translations from ancient languages

26.   Ancient Greek
27.   Latin

Translations from Europe

28.   Albanian (Albania)
29.   Armenian (Armenia)
30.   Asturian (Spain)
31.   Basque (France and Spain)
32.   Bosnian
33.   Bulgarian (Bulgaria)
34.   Catalan (Spain)
35.   Croatian (Croatia)
36.   Czech (Czech Republic)
37.   Danish (Denmark)
38.   Dutch (The Netherlands)
39.   Estonian (Estonia)
40.   Faroese (Faroe Islands)
41.   Finnish (Finland)
42.   French (France)
43.   Frisian (The Netherlands)
44.   Galician (Valencian) (Spain)
45.   German (Germany)
46.   Hungarian (Hungary)
47.   Icelandic (Iceland)
48.   Irish Gaelic (Ireland)
49.   Italian (Italy)

50.   Latvian (Latvia)
51.   Russian (Russia)
52.   Lithuanian (Lithuania)
53.   Low German/Plattdeutsch (Germany)
54.   Luxemburgish (Luxembourg)
55.   Macedonian (Macedonia)
56.   Modern Greek (Greece)
57.   Norwegian (Norway)
58.   Occitan (Gascon dialect) (France)
59.   Polish (Poland)
60.   Portuguese (Portugal)
61.   Romanian (Romania)
62.   Serbian (Serbia)
63.   Slovak (Slovakia)
64.   Slovene (Slovenia)
65.   Spanish (Spain)
66.   Swedish (Sweden)
67.   Turkish (Turkey)
68.   Ukrainian (Ukraine)
69.   Welsh (Wales)
70.   West Greenlandic (Greenland)

HARRY POTTER AND THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE
J. K. ROWLING

Did you know?…

There are even differences among the English language versions of Harry Potter. In the U.K. the first book went by the title *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*.

In the U.S.A. the first book went by different title: *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*.

It is not entirely clear why the change was made, though some scholars speculate that the U.S. publishers thought the word "philosopher" might be too difficult for young readers, so they changed the word to "sorcerer".
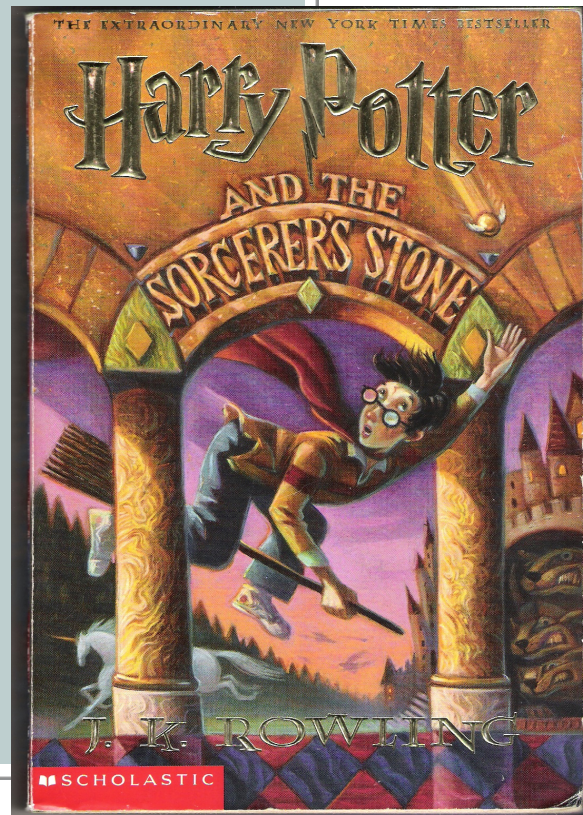
How many audio recordings are there?

There are audio recordings for all 70 of the translations in Dr. Žekulin's collection. You can listen to the recordings here:
http://arts.ucalgary.ca/lrc/home/celebrating-multilingualism-through-harry-potter/harry-potter-editions

Is each entire book recorded?

No. Due to copyright restrictions and laws in Canada, only the first couple of paragraphs of the first chapter of each translation were recorded. Most of the recordings are less than two minutes in length.
Listen here:

Who did the recordings?

All of the recordings were done by native speakers who volunteered to take part in the project. Scholars at the Language Research Centre intend to use the recordings for research projects in language teaching. Since the recordings counted as part of the research project, the university is obliged to keep identity of the individuals who performed the recordings anonymous, in order to ensure that the research project is in compliance with ethics standards for the university.

Five of the volunteers chose to have their names publicized at the *Harry Potter* in Translation event held at the University of Calgary on November 25, 2011. During the event, the volunteers re-read the section of the translation that they had previously recording for the live audience. These volunteers were:

Ms. Livia Kivisild (Estonian)
Mr. Haijo Westra (Dutch)
Ms. Khaliun Batbaatar (Mongolian)
Ms. Ivelina Valcheva (Bulgarian)
Mr. Tanvir Ahmed (Bengali)

What are the recordings used for?

Scholars at the university intend to use the recordings as part of research projects related to teaching and learning second languages.

In the fall of 2011, Dr. Rahat Naqvi brought translations of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* into two heritage language schools in Calgary that are members of the Southern Alberta Heritage Language Association (SAHLA) (http://www.sahla.ca/).

Students at the Calgary Nepalese Community Association (http://calgarynepalese.ca/blog/) and at the Swedish School of Calgary (http://scancentre.ca/ and http://www.swedishschool.com/) read the first chapter of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* in translation, together with their teachers. Students then wrote stories of their own about the Harry Potter characters, in the target language and created their own book jackets for the translations.

Resources for Language Teachers

Language teachers of any of the 70 languages can use the *Harry Potter* in translation audio recordings in their classes.

Teachers may want to locate and then purchase a printed copy of a translation into the target language for class purposes. Publishers of the various translations are searchable on the Internet.

Lesson Plan #1: Reading Harry Potter in Translation

Grade Levels: 3 - 12

Objectives

- Read a section of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* in a translation into the target language. The teacher chooses the length of the section depending on the students age and ability level. A section of not less than two paragraphs and not more than one chapter is recommended for this lesson.
- Students will understand, to 75% accuracy, the story line and characters. (Students will use their existing knowledge base to help with this.)
- Students build reading skills and vocabulary through *Harry Potter* in translation.

Required materials

- A translation of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, translated into the target language.
- Board - A black board, white board or flip chart for new vocabulary words.
- Chalk or markers for the board.

Anticipatory Set

- Activate the students' existing knowledge base by asking if they have read Harry Potter or seen the movies. Review characters' names and story lines.
- Engage students in a discussion about translations of literature and movies. Ask if they knew that there is a translation of *Harry Potter* into the target language.
- Tell the students that the lesson is about *Harry Potter* in translation.
- Brainstorm words the students may already know in the target language including common words such as "school", "student" and "teacher". Challenge them to think of less common words that they may have encountered such as "magic", "wizard" or "broom".

Instruction

- Teacher explains that the lesson will focus on reading *Harry Potter* in translation.
- Students will read the selection silently first.
- Round-robin exercise: The teacher and students will take turns reading a sentence, or part of a sentence (Alternatively, the teacher can read to the students.)

Student engagement

Vocabulary

~ Students identify what words are new to them by writing them on the board. If applicable, have them identify any cognates first. Then, students try to deduce the meaning of the words from the context of the text.

~ Students look up any words they cannot figure out from the context.

~ Students individually write down a list new vocabulary words that they wrote on the board. They will use their list at home as part of independent practice.

Analytical discussion about culture

~ Many of the translations of Harry Potter include words and cultural references to the target language that are not in the original. Identify and reflect on cultural references in the translation.

Critical thinking about translation of texts

~ Engage students in a discussion about translation. Are there words that have not been translated into the target language. Why do they think that is?

Closure / review

~ Review new vocabulary words.

~ Ask students what they remember from the text.

~ Present independent practice work to be completed before next class.

Independent practice

~ Students each receive a copy of a short section of Harry Potter in translation to read at home. Be sure to respect local copy right laws.

~ Using the list of vocabulary, students make up their own flash cards for each new word.

Follow-up / assessment

~ Students share their flash cards in class the following day and "test" one another on vocabulary.

~ Review the story line in as much detail as possible in the target language.

Lesson Plan #2: Listening to Harry Potter in Translation

Grade Levels: 3 - 12

Objectives

❧   Students build listening comprehension skills by listening to a selection of Harry
        Potter in translation.

❧   Students will understand, to 75% accuracy, the general story line. (Students may
        use their existing knowledge base to help with this.)

Materials required

❧   A computer with a sound card and speakers.

❧   Access to the Internet to listen to the recording(s) of Harry Potter in translation at:
        http://arts.ucalgary.ca/lrc/home/celebrating-multilingualism-through-harry-potter/
        harry-potter-editions

❧   Optional, but recommended: A written text of the audio selection students will
        hear (First 2-3 paragraphs of Chapter 1 of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's
        Stone* translated.)

Anticipatory set

❧   Activate the students' existing knowledge base by asking if they have read Harry
        Potter or seen the movies. Review characters' names and story lines.

❧   Engage students in a discussion about translations of literature and movies. Ask
        if they knew that there is a translation of *Harry Potter* into the target language.

❧   Tell the students that the lesson is about *Harry Potter* in translation.

❧   Review any previous lessons done on *Harry Potter* in translation.

Instruction

❧   Teacher explains that the lesson will focus on reading *Harry Potter* in translation.

❧   If students have a copy of the written text, they read the first 2-3 paragraphs of
        the first chapter.

❧   Students read the selection silently first.

❧   Students listen to the native speaker read the translated text. Students may listen
        either with or without the written text to help them.

Student engagement

Listen and repeat (Easy)

❧ Students listen to short sections of the recording and then repeat what the speaker said exactly, trying to imitate the speaker's pronunciation, intonation and speed.

Reading aloud (Easy)

❧ Students pair up and read the same (or different) selections of *Harry Potter* in translation to one another, focussing on pronunciation and fluency.

Reviewing in pairs (Intermediate)

❧ In pairs or groups, students discuss (in the target language) what they understood from the recording. This may include writing down words they heard and discussing the meaning or content.

Paraphrasing aloud (Intermediate to advanced)

❧ Students paraphrase the recording in their own words.

Closure / review

❧ Review new vocabulary words.
❧ Ask students what they remember from the audio recording.
❧ Present independent practice work to be completed before next class.

Independent practice

❧ Students each receive a link to the web page for the Harry Potter in Translation project so they can listen to the text again at home: http://arts.ucalgary.ca/lrc/home/celebrating-multilingualism-through-harry-potter/harry-potter-editions
❧ Students practice reading the same section of Chapter 1 of Harry Potter translated into the target language.

Follow-up / assessment

❧ Review the story line in as much detail as possible in the target language.
❧ Students work in pair or groups to read the same passage aloud to each other, after they have had time to practice reading aloud at home.

Lesson Plan #3: Guided writing activity on Harry Potter in Translation

Grade Levels: 3 - 12

Note: This activity is ideally done after one of the previous reading or listening activities, as it will help to build on the skills and vocabulary that students learned during those activities.

Objectives

~ Students build writing skills though a guided writing activity on Harry Potter in translation.

~ Students will be able to complete, to 75% accuracy, the guided writing activity.

~ Incorporate both technical elements of writing and creativity.

Materials required

~ A translation of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, translated into the target language.

~ Paper and writing instruments.

Anticipatory set

~ Activate the students' existing knowledge base by reviewing what they know about Harry Potter. Review characters' names and story lines.

~ Review any previous activities done on Harry Potter in Translation (e.g. listening or reading activities).

~ Brainstorm words the students may already know in the target language including common words such as "school", "student" and "teacher". Challenge them to think of less common words that they may have encountered such as "magic", "wizard" or "broom". Create a "vocabulary bank" based on their previous knowledge of this text in translation.

~ Tell the students that the lesson is a guided writing activity on *Harry Potter* in translation.

Instruction

- Teacher explains that the lesson will focus on doing a guided writing activity on *Harry Potter* in translation.
- Teacher models what the writing sample looks like.
- Teacher gives specific writing elements that students must include in their piece such as:
  - Thematic vocabulary related to the Harry Potter books.
  - Transitional words and phrases.
  - Grammar and structure.
  - The particular elements of writing will depend on the grade level and students' abilities. Teachers adapt this aspect of the activity to their particular situation.
- Give students a choice of how they prefer to work: either in a pair, in a group of 3 or 4, or independently. Establish time limit for students to make a decision and settle on a partner or group members. A maximum of 1 or 2 minutes should be enough.
- Guided writing activity: Recreate the beginning of the first Harry Potter book by writing your own unique opening for the series. This activity involves writing two to three paragraphs. Students may substitute character names, places and draw on their own experience, if they wish. Urge them to think creatively. What if the Harry Potter series did not take place in England, but rather, in a country associated with the target language they are learning. How would the opening of the book be different?

Student engagement

- Students may verbally discuss their guided writing activity in the target language. This can help them organize their ideas before they write.
- Students actively engage in writing for a defined time period. Give students ample time to complete their writing activity.
- To avoid creating anxiety, remind students that it is not critical that they finish their piece in the time allotted. Give students the space to think and process what they are doing.
- Teacher circulates through the room as students are writing, supporting students and asking them questions to prompt further creativity.

Closure / review

- Students take turns reading what they have written so far. Other students offer compliments and constructive feedback.
- Present independent practice work to be completed before next class.

Independent practice

- Students take their writing draft home with them to complete, revise and proofread it.
- Students check for accuracy, spelling, verb tenses and grammar.

Follow-up / Assessment

- Students hand in their guided writing to the teacher for assessment based on the criteria that were given such as use of thematic vocabulary, spelling, grammar, correct verb tenses, use of transitional words and phrases and any other elements of writing that were previously agreed upon.

Lesson Plan #4: Writing Fan Fiction about Harry Potter in Translation

Grade Levels: 6 - 12

Objectives

- Students build independent writing skills by their own Harry Potter story, using the same characters, ideas and situations.
- Students incorporate their previous knowledge the target culture, by substituting the cultural setting of the original book with one associated with the target language. (Example: Students studying French could re-locate the story so it happens in Québec, Haiti, France or other Francophone regions.)

Materials required

- Paper and writing instruments or the appropriate technology for students to write effectively in the target language.

Anticipatory set

- Activate the students' existing knowledge base by reviewing what they know about Harry Potter. Review characters' names and story lines.
- Review any previous activities done on Harry Potter in Translation (e.g. listening or reading activities).
- Brainstorm words the students may already know in the target language including common words such as "school", "student" and "teacher". Challenge them to think of less common words that they may have encountered such as "magic", "wizard" or "broom". Create a "vocabulary bank" based on their previous knowledge of this text in translation.
- Tell the students that the lesson is about writing fan fiction based on *Harry Potter* in translation.

Instruction

- Ask the question: "What if the Harry Potter series had been set in _____?" Fill in blank with examples of the regions where the target language is spoken. For languages spoken in more than one country, offer examples of a few countries. Otherwise, mention regions the students may know.
- Teacher gives specific writing elements that students must include in their piece such as:
  - Thematic vocabulary related to the Harry Potter books.
  - Transitional words and phrases.
  - Grammar and structure.
  - The particular elements of writing will depend on the grade level and students' abilities. Teachers adapt this aspect of the activity to their particular situation.
- Set a time limit for students to work on their fan fiction.
- Tell students that their story may be set in the past or the present, but that they will need to use the correct verb tense(s).

Student engagement

- Students actively engage in writing for a defined time period. Give students ample time to complete their writing activity.
- To avoid creating anxiety, remind students that it is not critical that they finish their piece in the time allotted. Give students the space to think and process what they are doing.
- Teacher circulates through the room as students are writing, supporting students and asking them questions to prompt further creativity.

Closure / review

- Students take turns reading what they have written so far. Other students offer compliments and constructive feedback.
- Present independent practice work and a deadline for completion.

Independent practice

- Students continue to work on their fan fiction at home, revising it for accuracy and proof-reading it for spelling and grammar errors.

Follow-up / Assessment

- Students hand in their fan fiction to the teacher for assessment based on the criteria that were given such as use of thematic vocabulary, spelling, grammar, correct verb tenses, use of transitional words and phrases and any other elements of writing that were previously agreed upon.
- Student work can be published on a class blog or included in portfolios.

Lesson Plan #5: Creating an Alternate Book Cover for Harry Potter in Translation

Grade Levels: 3 - 12

* This activity was inspired by the work of Dr. Rahat Naqvi at the University of Calgary.

Objectives

Students create an alternate accurate book cover of the first Harry Potter book in translation that is culturally representative of the target language / culture.

Materials required

- Paper
- Markers, coloured pencils, crayons or paints.
- Digital alternative: Students use technology such as PowerPoint, Word or other programs to create their alternate book cover, such as this free tool: http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/interactives/bookcover/)

Anticipatory set

- Activate the students' existing knowledge base by reviewing what they know about Harry Potter. Review characters' names and story lines.
- Review any previous activities done on Harry Potter in Translation (e.g. listening or reading activities).

Instruction

- Teacher explains that the lesson will focus on creating an alternate book cover *Harry Potter* in translation that is culturally accurate with the language the students are studying.
- Discuss the purpose of a book cover (e.g. give readers a clue about the story or act as an "appetizer" for the text itself).
- Discuss the elements of a book cover such as the title of the book, the author's name and a picture or other visual elements.
- Say how much time students have to work on this activity in class.

Student engagement

- Students actively engage the creation of their alternate book cover for a defined time period. Give students ample time to work on the activity.
- To avoid creating anxiety, remind students that it is not critical that they finish their piece in the time allotted. Give students the space to think and process what they are doing.
- Teacher circulates through the room as students are creating, supporting and encouraging students and asking them questions to prompt further creativity.

Closure / review

- Present independent practice work and a deadline for completion.

Independent practice

- Students continue to work on their book covers at home, adding to them until they are complete.
- Students revise and proofread the language elements of their book covers, ensuring that all the words are spelled correctly.

Follow-up / Assessment

- Students hand in their alternate book covers for assessment and grading based upon the previously discussed elements such as: correct spelling of the title and author's name, giving readers a clue about the story and any other elements that were previously discussed in class.
- Student work can be published on a class blog or included in portfolios.

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