

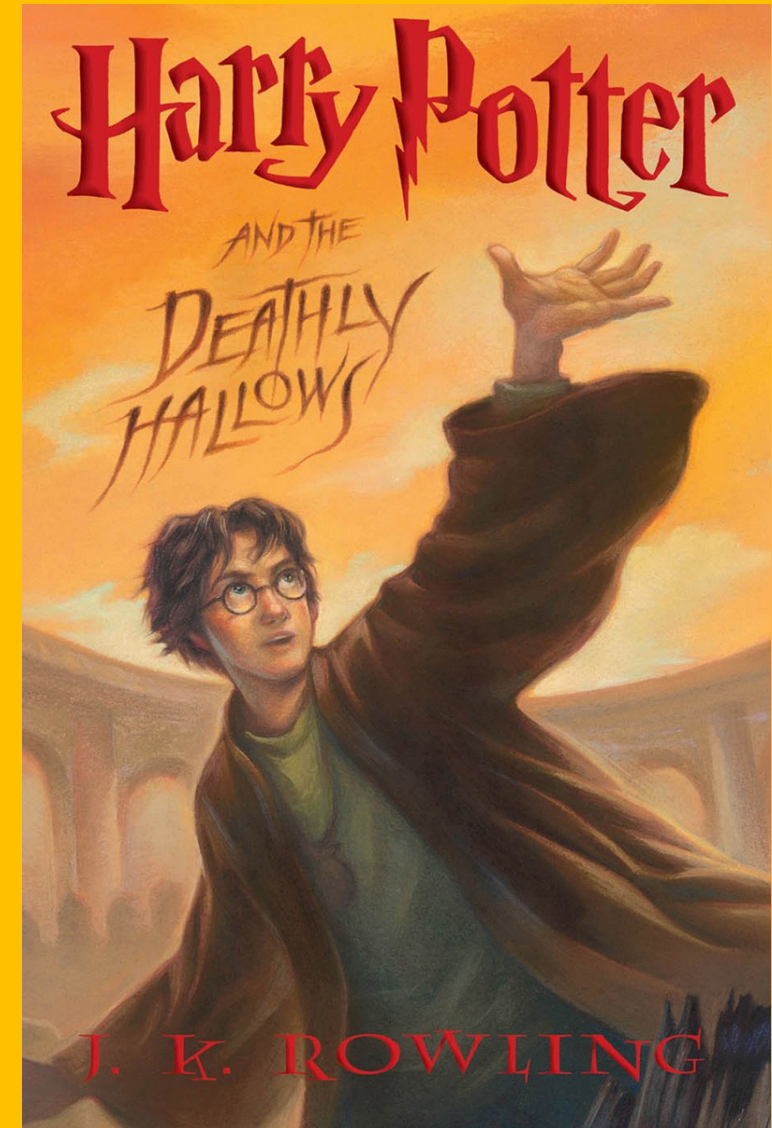


Ιπποπόταμος  
WoLLoW the HiPPo

# The World of Languages and Languages of the World

## Harry Potter and Languages

Let's look at the  
language in Harry  
Potter



# Which Harry Potter book is this and which in which languages are the titles written?

*Harry Potter en de Geheime Kamer*

Italian

*Harry Potter agus an Seomra Rúnda*

Dutch

हैरी पॉटर और रहस्यमयी तहख़ाना

Russian

*Harry Potter e la Camera dei Segreti*

Hindi

*Harry Potter og Mysteriekammeret*

Thai

*Гарри Поттер и тайная комната*

Norwegian

*Harry Potter ve Sırlar Odası*

Turkish

แฮร์รี่ พอตเตอร์ กับห้องแห่งความลับ

Irish



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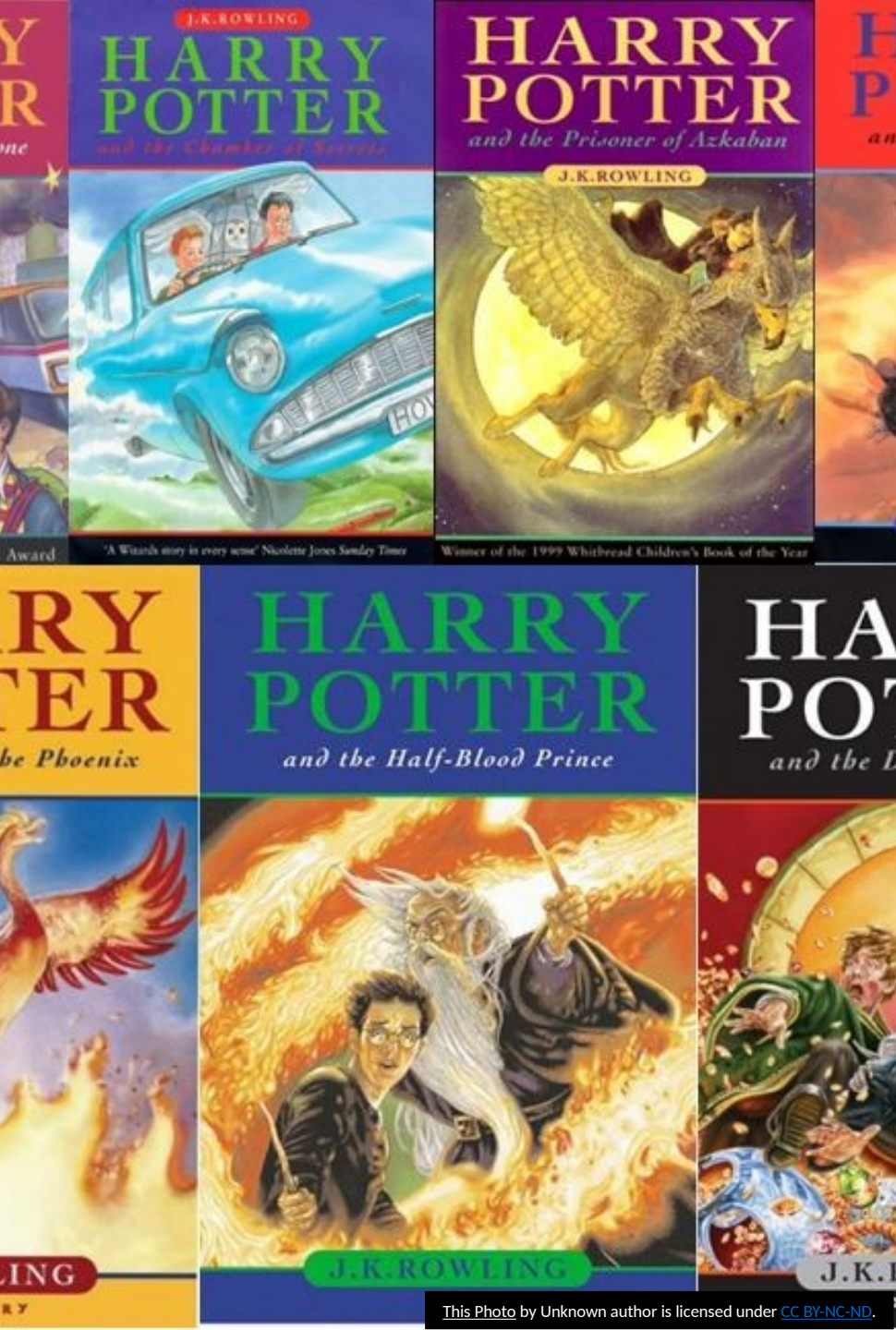
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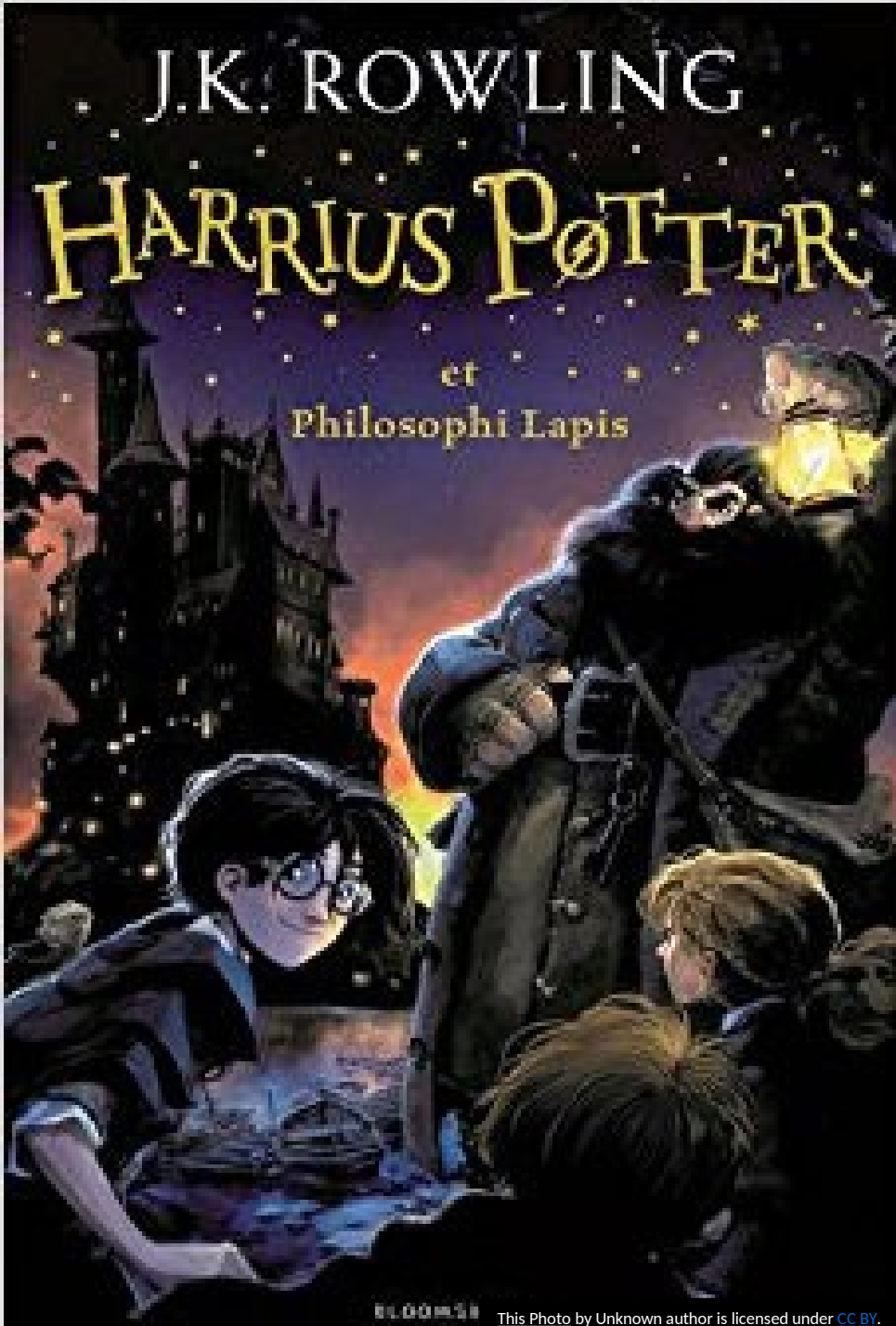
Thai



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Harry Potter has been translated into over 80 languages, but which language do you think has been the most influential in the writing of the Harry Potter books?





# Latin

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The Harry Potter books are full of Latin words and phrases.

The Hogwarts motto is "Draco dormiens nunquam titillandus" never tickle a sleeping dragon

Knockturn Alley from 'nocturnus' meaning night



# Why Latin?

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Latin is very much alive in all the books, adding its rich descriptiveness and magisterial tone to spells, names and places.

With wizards being old-fashioned in nature, it's not surprising that so many of their spells are rooted in an ancient language.

Latin is the language of magic, mysticism, secrecy and legend.

([www.wizardingworld.com](http://www.wizardingworld.com))

# Beasts

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It's not just vocabulary that makes Latin so important in Harry Potter.

Latin was the language of the Romans, who shared with the Ancient Greeks a vibrant mythology and belief in fantastic creatures.

Centaurs, Basilisks, Manticores, Sphinxes and Phoenixes all appear in the Harry Potter series.

([www.wizardingworld.com](http://www.wizardingworld.com))



# Harry The Hero

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*Audentes Fortuna iuvat*, was a popular Latin proverb it means 'fortune favours the bold'.

One of the key motifs in classical mythology is the hero, in the case of JK Rowling's books, the hero is Harry Potter.

([www.wizardingworld.com](http://www.wizardingworld.com))



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# In what other areas is Latin used in the books?

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**Character names.** The etymology of the characters in the Harry Potter books is fascinating. You will notice that many of the names have Latin influence and studying them helps understand the characters.

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**Spells and Incantations.** We can pick apart the spells to see Latin roots, giving meaning to the spells' intentions.

# Can you match the Latin name to the Character?

- |                          |                        |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Severus (Snape)       | a. Wolf                |
| 2. Lupin                 | b. Female warrior      |
| 3. Draco (Malfoy)        | c. White               |
| 4. Albus (Dumbledore)    | d. Had a thousand eyes |
| 5. Rubeus (Hagrid)       | e. Woodland            |
| 6. Ludo (Bagman)         | f. Severe              |
| 7. Silvanus (Kettleburn) | g. Pain                |
| 8. Bellatrix             | h. Fly from death      |
| 9. Delores (Umbridge)    | i. To play             |
| 10. Minerva (McGonagall) | j. Dragon              |
| 11. Argus (Argus Filch)  | k. Goddess of wisdom   |
| 12. Voldemort            | l. Of the bramble      |



# How did you do? Do the names fit the character?

- |                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| 1. Severus (Snape)       | a. Severe  |
| 2. Lupin                 | b. Wolf  |
| 3. Draco (Malfoy)        | c. Dragon  |
| 4. Albus (Dumbledore)    | d. White   |
| 5. Rubeus (Hagrid)       | e. Of the bramble  |
| 6. Ludo (Bagman)         | f. To play (He is Head of the Department of Magical Games and Sports). |
| 7. Silvanus (Kettleburn) | g. Woodland (He is a Hogwarts Care of Magical Creatures professor).    |
| 8. Bellatrix             | h. Female warrior  |
| 9. Delores (Umbridge)    | i. Pain  |
| 10. Minerva (McGonagall) | j. Goddess of wisdom   |
| 11. Argus (Argus Filch)  | k. Had a thousand eyes   |
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# Spells (Germanic) and Incantations (Latin)

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**Expelliarmus** comes from expelle meaning expel; arma meaning weapons

**Exspecto Patronum** comes from exspecto = I await; patronum = protector

**Levicorpus** - levi = lift; corpus = body

**Evanesco** - to vanish, disappear, or pass away.

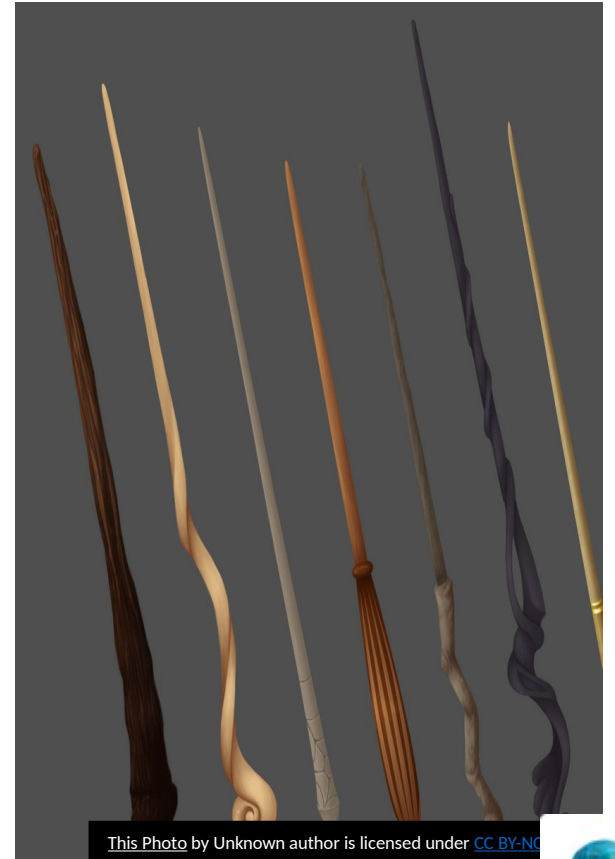
**Wingardium Leviosa** comes from levi meaning lift; (Though it is not Latin:)

Wing = an object used by birds and other creatures to obtain flight.

**Serpensortia** - serpens = snake, serpent

**Apericium** - aperio = open, discover, show, explain

**Petrificus Totalus** - Petrificus = to petrify or freeze in one position and totalus = entire body



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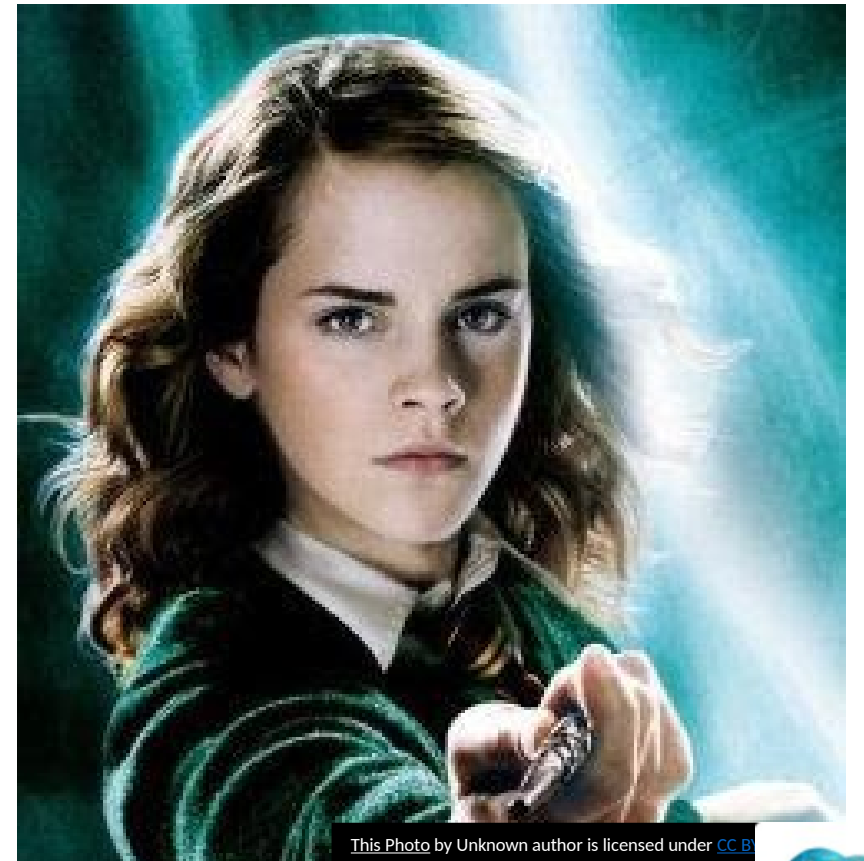
**Crucio** translates as 'I torture'

**Stupefy** - To stun or make stupid


**Accio** means 'I summon'

**Rictusempra**: rictu means open mouth; sempra means always. This is the Tickling Charm which keeps people laughing, hence the *always-open-mouth* part.

**Diffindo** meaning 'I divide', then **Reparo** to put back together.



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Do you know any  
more Harry  
Potter spells and  
their meanings?

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A detailed view of Hogwarts Castle from the Harry Potter films, featuring its iconic towers, spires, and stone architecture under a clear blue sky. The castle is partially obscured by green trees in the foreground.

**Try the Harry Potter Quiz –  
can you make links between  
the books and Greek  
mythology?**

[Click here for the quiz.](#)



ΙΠΠΟΛΟΤΟΜΟΣ  
WALLOW the HIPPO





# Acknowledgements

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Inspiration from [www.wizardingworld.com](http://www.wizardingworld.com).