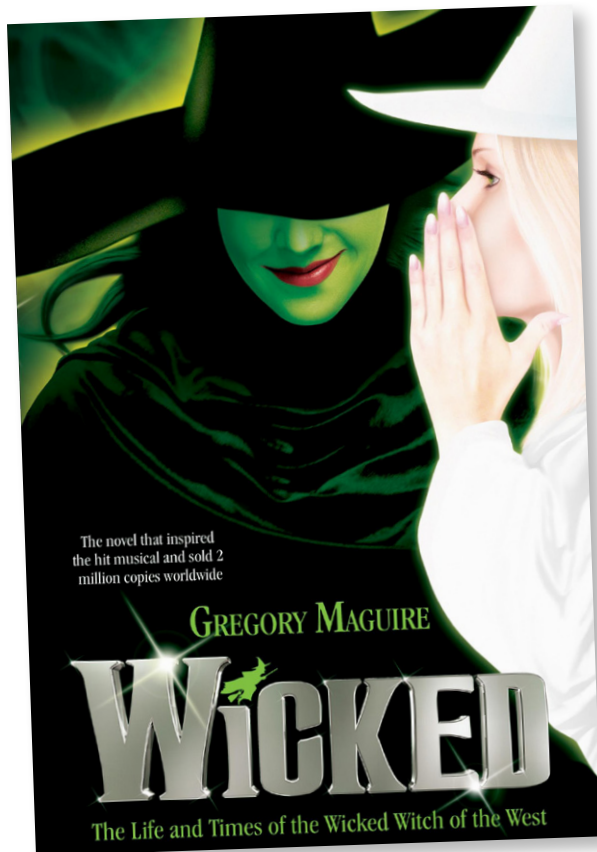


# WICKED

## ACTIVE LEARNING

### English Teacher Resource Pack



**“L. Frank Baum’s ‘Oz’ is one of those rare imaginary places that has gone from one mind to a universe that belongs to all.”**

Erica Wagner, *The Times*

## Index

Page 1:	<b>Index</b>
Page 2:	<b>Introduction</b>
Page 3:	<b>‘Wicked – The Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West’</b>
Page 5:	<b>‘The Wonderful Wizard of Oz’</b>
Page 7:	<b>Influences + Inspiration</b>
Page 9:	<b>The ‘Oz’ Legacy</b>
Page 11:	<b>Prequels, Sequels + Origin Stories</b>
Page 13:	<b>Witches + Wizards</b>
Page 15:	<b>Magical Worlds</b>
Page 17:	<b>Wicked and the World of Magic</b>
Page 20:	<b>Gregory Maguire</b>
Page 22:	<b>L. Frank Baum</b>
Page 25:	<b>Resources</b>
Page 26:	<b>Credits</b>

Please note that all **Wicked Active Learning** materials are protected under copyright law and cannot be used or distributed beyond the classroom by any third party without permission from the copyright owner.

**Wicked London Production Limited** (WLPL) is not responsible for the content of external sites.

# Introduction

**“An unforgettable tale of friendship and acceptance, this ‘Wizard of Oz’ prequel is a dazzling origin story for an iconic villain.”**

Official Theatre

In support of all **English learning**, this resource pack provides written and visual resources for English teachers to enrich engagement in **Wicked**, its themes and source material.

The content is designed to inspire ideas for classroom-based learning activities, lessons, and conversations (argue and persuade), creative and essay writing, reading and homework activities, and to support literacy, SPaG, and oracy skills.

Resources explore the enduring influence of the 1900 “**children’s classic**” (Book Trust) ‘The Wonderful Wizard of Oz’ by **L. Frank Baum**, his own literary inspirations (**Wilhelm** and **Jacob Grimm**, **Hans Christian Andersen**, and **Lewis Carroll**), and the astonishing legacy of ‘Oz’ and its continuing impact on storytellers and pop culture. There is also information about **Gregory Maguire** and his acclaimed fantasy literature novel on which **Wicked** is directly based, plus a look at other famous prequels, sequels and origin stories, the witches and wizards of myth and legend, the magical worlds of fantasy fiction, and an article about the world of magic, written by **Magic Circle** member **Dr. Will Houstoun**.

For English Lesson Plans (Primary, Secondary, and Intermediate ESOL/EFL English), please visit the **Free Resources** section of the **Wicked Active Learning** website.

## TOPICS

Self-esteem, Identity, Prejudice, Bullying + Victimisation, Fake News + Propaganda, Peer Pressure, Ambition, Friendship, Personal Development, Social Justice, Unconscious Bias, Stereotypes, Human Rights, Female Empowerment, Wizards + Witches, Prequels + Sequels, Fantasy Fiction, Magical Worlds, and Fairy Tales.

## SUBJECTS

English / Literacy / Literature / Language, Drama, Music, SMSC, PSHE, Citizenship.

## AGE RANGES

KS2+

‘**Wicked - The Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West**’ by **Gregory Maguire** is recommended for readers aged 16+.

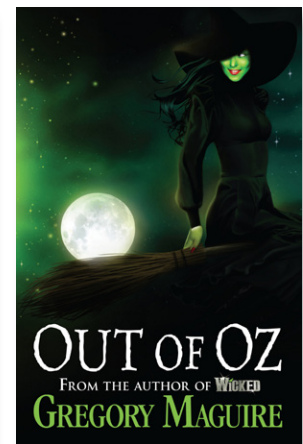
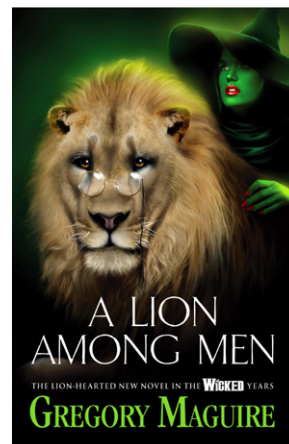
‘**The Wonderful Wizard of Oz**’ by **L. Frank Baum** is recommended for readers aged 7+.

The musical ‘**Wicked**’ is recommended for Primary Year 3 upwards.

# ‘Wicked – The Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West’

“Gregory Maguire’s shrewdly imagined, and beautifully written novel not only revives the ‘Wicked Witch of the West’ but re-envisioned and redeems her for our times.”

Newsday



Inspired by the stories and characters created by **L. Frank Baum** in his classic children’s story ‘The Wonderful Wizard of Oz’, American author **Gregory Maguire** wrote his celebrated novel ‘Wicked - The Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West’ (1995) whilst living in London.

An ingenious reimagining of the land of Oz, Maguire’s darkly brilliant adult novel retells the story of the infamous Wicked Witch of the West, taking readers beyond the famous Yellow Brick Road and into a world rich with imagination and allegory.

“When questions arose in me about the mystery of evil and how the concept of the inhuman enemy is used to legitimise violence, I needed to write a novel about it. Using L. Frank Baum’s ‘The Wonderful Wizard of Oz’ made sense because I wanted to write about a character already understood to be wicked. And who could be more wicked than someone for whom the word ‘wicked’ was part of her name?”

Gregory Maguire

Described as a “political, social, and ethical commentary on the nature of good and evil”, Maguire’s “**outstanding novel**” (Independent) provides a radical re-appraisal of one of literature’s (and cinema’s) most reviled characters. In 2007, Time Magazine named the Wicked Witch of the West (as portrayed by Margaret Hamilton in the 1939 film) as one of the Top 25 ‘Greatest Villains’, and, in 2016, the character featured in Empire’s ‘Top 50 Greatest Film and TV Villains’. The American Film Institute (AFI) placed her fourth in their list of ‘100 Greatest Villains’, behind Darth Vader, Norman Bates, and Hannibal Lecter. With the publication of Maguire’s revisionist tale, the ‘Wicked Witch’ achieved “**one of the greatest reputational comebacks in witching history**” (Time Out London).

**“In Elphaba, Gregory Maguire has created one of the great heroines of fantasy literature.”**

Los Angeles Times

‘Wicked - The Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West’ has, since its publication in 1995, sold more than 5 million copies. An “**intricately imagined expansion of L. Frank Baum’s ‘The Wonderful Wizard of Oz’**” (The New York Times), it was the first adult novel written by the acclaimed children’s author. Following the Broadway opening of **Wicked** in 2003, the book topped The New York Times Best Seller List for an incredible 26 weeks.

**“One of the most audacious and successful fantasy series of the past few decades.”**

The Washington Post

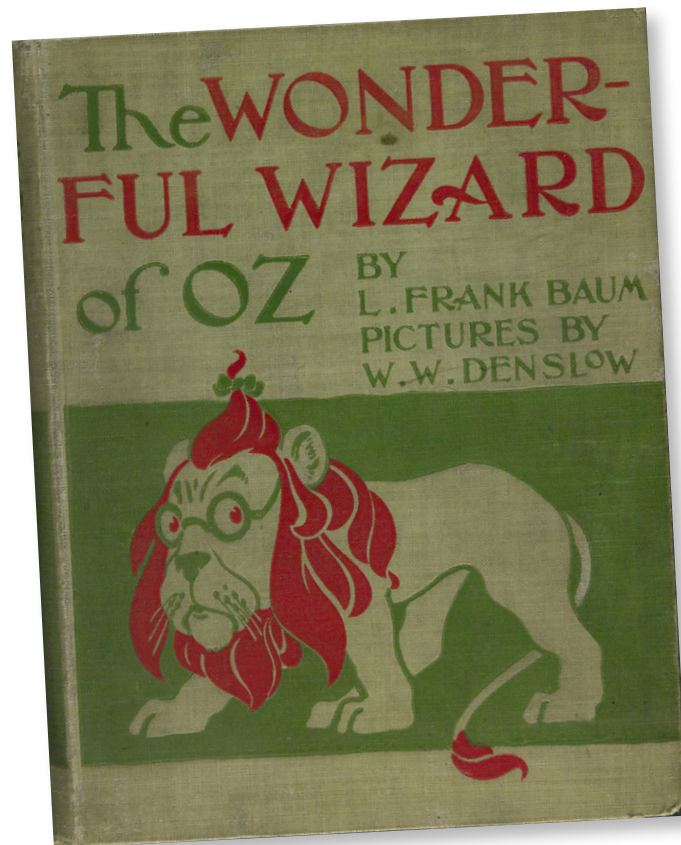
The success of ‘Wicked - The Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West’ eventually led to a four-book series, collectively known as the **Wicked Years** quartet, the other books being ‘Son of a Witch’ (2005), ‘A Lion Among Men’ (2008) and ‘Out of Oz’ (2011). Gregory Maguire continued his story in the acclaimed **Another Day** series: ‘The Brides of Maracoor’ (2021), ‘The Oracle of Maracoor’ (2022), and ‘The Witch of Maracoor’ (2023).

Gregory Maguire’s **Wicked Years** and **Another Day** series are recommended for readers aged 16+.

# 'The Wonderful Wizard of Oz'

**"One of the most influential children's stories of all time."**

The Times



**L. Frank Baum's** 'The Wonderful Wizard of Oz' was first published in 1900. It has subsequently been named as **"one of the 100 Best Children's Books of all time"** (The Daily Telegraph) and acclaimed as **"a classic of children's literature"** (BBC Bitesize). Scholars have called the story everything from "America's first fairy tale" to "a pro-capitalist parable of industrialisation and consumerism".

'The Wonderful Wizard of Oz' tells the story of Dorothy, a Kansas farm girl, who is blown by a cyclone to the land of Oz, where she encounters such memorable characters as the Tin Woodman, the Scarecrow, the Cowardly Lion, Glinda the Good Witch of the North and the infamous Wicked Witch of the West.

**"True courage is in facing danger when you are afraid..."**

The Wizard



Originally illustrated by **William W. Denslow**, the initial print run of 10,000 copies sold out within two weeks, and within the first six months of publication almost 100,000 copies had been sold. Reprinted countless times, frequently under the title 'The Wizard of Oz', it was to be the first in an eventual series of fourteen Oz stories written by Baum:

- 'The Wonderful Wizard of Oz' (1900)
- 'The Marvellous Land of Oz' (1904)
- 'Ozma of Oz' (1907)
- 'Dorothy and the Wizard in Oz' (1908)
- 'The Road to Oz' (1909)
- 'The Emerald City of Oz' (1910)
- 'The Patchwork Girl of Oz' (1913)
- 'Tik-Tok of Oz' (1914)
- 'The Scarecrow of Oz' (1915)
- 'Rinkitink in Oz' (1916)
- 'The Lost Princess of Oz' (1917)
- 'The Tin Woodman of Oz' (1918)
- 'The Magic of Oz' (1919)
- 'Glinda of Oz' (1920).

Between 1921 and 1963, a further twenty-six Oz books written by other authors were published by Baum's long-time publishers, **Reilly & Lee**. Additional Oz stories followed from other publishers and countless editions of the original story are in print across the world.

**“An indisputable classic about the power of goodness and the importance of friends.”**

Kidadi



# Influences + Inspiration

“Folklore, legends, myths, and fairy tales have followed childhood through the ages, for every healthy youngster has a wholesome and instinctive love for stories fantastic, marvellous, and manifestly unreal. The winged fairies of Grimm and Andersen have brought more happiness to childish hearts than all other human creations.”

L. Frank Baum



Wilhelm and Jacob Grimm



Hans Christian Andersen



Lewis Carroll

Often referred to as “America’s first fairy tale”, **L. Frank Baum** acknowledged the influence of European fairy tales when writing ‘The Wonderful Wizard of Oz’. While he wanted his book to be “more enchanting and less frightening” than many of the world-famous stories, he cited the German brothers **Wilhelm** and **Jacob Grimm** (The Brothers Grimm), the Danish author **Hans Christian Andersen** and Englishman **Lewis Carroll** (and specifically his 1865 story ‘Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland’) as major influences.

Fantastical tales of witches and fairies, goblins and elves, heroic princes and princesses and their villainous counterparts, have long been a tradition in storytelling for children.

From rags-to-riches and beasts to beanstalks, these magical tales have been told and retold across many centuries. The ‘Cinderella’ story has particularly deep roots in European culture dating back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century - Italian **Giambattista Basile** (1566-1632) had his story ‘La Gatta Cenerentola’ published posthumously in 1634 and the French writer **Charles Perrault** (1628-1703) published ‘Cendrillon’ in 1697. A Chinese version of the ‘Cinderella’ story dates back to 850 AD.



## **The Brothers Grimm**

**Jacob Grimm** (1785-1863)

**Wilhelm Grimm** (1786-1859)

Notable works include:

**'Grimms' Fairy Tales'** (1812)

Volume 1 includes

**'Rapunzel'**

**'Hansel and Gretel'**

**'Cinderella'**

**'Snow White'**

**'Rumpelstiltskin'**

## **Hans Christian Andersen**

(1805-1875)

Notable works include:

**'The Princess and the Pea'** (1835)

**'Thumbelina'** (1835)

**'The Little Mermaid'** (1837)

**'The Emperor's New Clothes'** (1837)

**'The Ugly Duckling'** (1843)

**'The Nightingale'** (1843)

**'The Snow Queen'** (1844)

**'The Red Shoes'** (1845)

**'The Little Match Girl'** (1845)

## **Lewis Carroll**

(**Charles Lutwidge Dodgson**, 1832-1898)

Notable works include:

**'Alice's Adventures in Wonderland'** (1865)

**'Through the Looking Glass, and What Alice Found There'** (1871)

**'The Hunting of the Snark'** (1876)

# The 'Oz' Legacy

“The world of Oz, created by children’s author L. Frank Baum, is so rich with storytelling possibilities that other writers have offered enchanting adaptations of their own. The stage musical sensation ‘Wicked’ focuses on the origins of the Wicked Witch of the West - and it’s a thrill to experience.”

MTV



L. Frank Baum’s fantasy world has inspired countless other storytellers, and many millions of readers, viewers, and theatregoers have been engaging in adaptations and reimagined stories since the first stage adaptation, ‘The Wizard of Oz - A Musical Extravaganza’, opened in Chicago in 1902 later transferring to Broadway.



‘The Wizard of Oz’ (1939)

Undoubtedly the most famous adaptation was the 1939 Oscar®-winning film version, ‘The Wizard of Oz’, starring **Judy Garland**, but the Oz legacy also spans hundreds of live-action and animated films, television shows, stage plays and musicals, books, comics, games, merchandise, and music videos.

‘The Wizard of Oz’ has also been performed in arenas, on ice and adapted into a ballet.



'The Wiz' motion picture (1978)

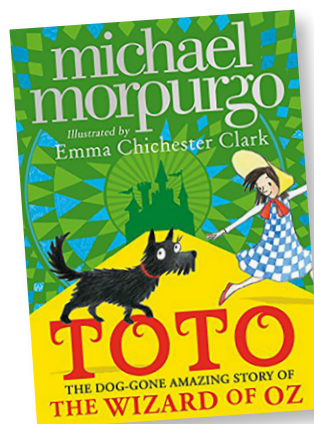


'The Wiz Live!' (2015)

The 1975 'super-soul' stage musical based on Baum's book, entitled 'The Wiz', told the story in the context of contemporary African American culture. It won 7 Tony® Awards on Broadway, including 'Best Musical'. A major film version directed by **Sidney Lumet** followed in 1978, starring **Diana Ross, Michael Jackson, Richard Pryor, and Lena Horne**. A live television version of the stage musical, 'The Wiz Live!', was broadcast on NBC in 2015, starring **Shanice Williams, Elijah Kelley, Ne-Yo, and David Alan Grier**.

Other notable film and television adaptations include 'Return to Oz' (1985); 'The Muppets' Wizard of Oz' (2005); 'Tom & Jerry and the Wizard of Oz' (2011); and 'Oz: The Great and Powerful' (2013), starring **James Franco**.

**Gregory Maguire's** reimagining of Baum's story, in his 1995 novel 'Wicked – The Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West', focused on the origin story of the Wicked Witch of the West. The novel was itself the inspiration for the stage musical **Wicked**, which premiered on Broadway in 2003, where it continues. The ongoing London production opened in 2006.



More recently, the Oz legacy continued with the publication of **Sir Michael Morpurgo's** 'Toto: The Dog-Gone Amazing Story of the Wizard of Oz' (2017) and **Jacqueline Rayner's** 'Doctor Who: The Wonderful Doctor of Oz' (2021).

A Universal Pictures, two-part film version of **Wicked**, directed by **Jon M. Chu** and starring **Cynthia Erivo and Ariana Grande**, will be released in 2024.

# Prequels, Sequels + Origin Stories

“Now every character must have their revisionist origin story, like Timothée Chamalet’s young ‘Wonka’ or Emma Stone’s ‘Cruella’, but ‘Wicked’ got there first.”

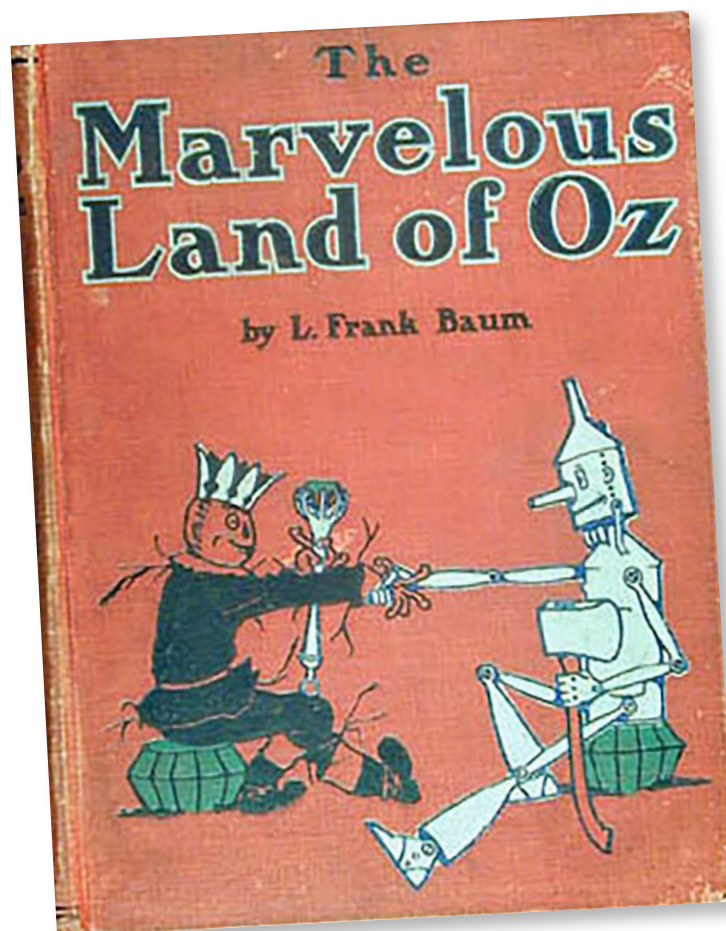
Marianka Swain, *The Daily Telegraph*

The relatively modern phenomenon of the ‘prequel’, ‘sequel’ and ‘origin story’ has captured the public imagination across literature, films, television series and plays.

**Wicked** is frequently described as a prequel or origin story to ‘**The Wizard Oz**’, although its story actually takes place variously before, simultaneously and after the familiar Oz tale.

**Gregory Maguire** described his novel as a ‘reimagining’ of Baum’s Oz and the success of ‘**Wicked – The Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West**’ (1995) led to three direct sequels, ‘**Son of a Witch**’ (2005), ‘**A Lion Among Men**’ (2008), and ‘**Out of Oz**’ (2011) – with the four comprising the **Wicked Years\*** book series.

‘**The Marvellous Land of Oz**’ (1904) by **L. Frank Baum** was his sequel to ‘**The Wonderful Wizard of Oz**’ (1900). Twelve further books set in Oz followed.





## Prequels + Origin Stories

A prequel is “a narrative work released after an existing story but consisting of events that take place before the original story”. ‘**Star Wars: Episode I – The Phantom Menace**’ (1999), ‘**Star Wars: Episode II – Attack of the Clones**’ (2002), ‘**Star Wars: Episode III – Revenge of the Sith**’ (2005), ‘**Star Wars: The Clone Wars**’ (2008), ‘**Rogue One: A Star Wars Story**’ (2016), and ‘**Solo: A Star Wars Story**’ (2018) are all prequels to ‘**Star Wars**’ (1977).

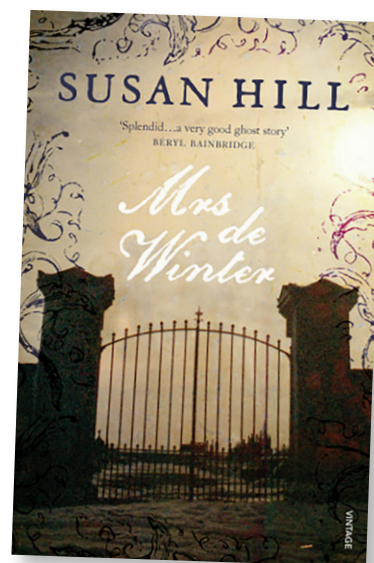
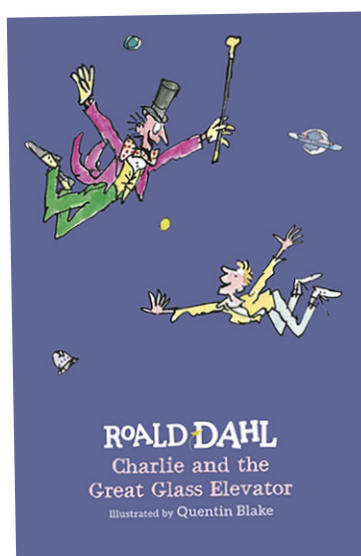
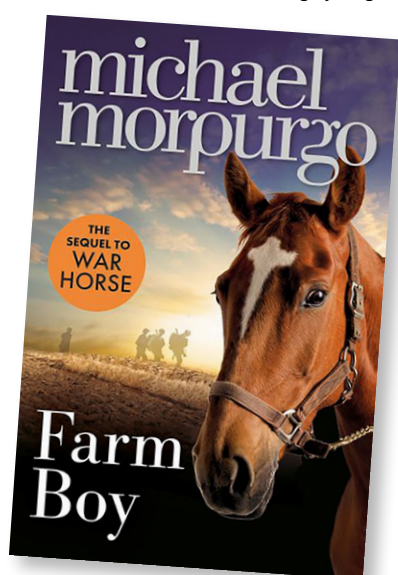
Specific origin stories include **Wonka** (2023, starring Timothée Chalamet); **Cruella** (2021, starring Emma Stone); ‘**Spider-Man**’ (2002, starring Tobey Maguire), ‘**Batman Begins**’ (2005), ‘**Rise of the Planet of the Apes**’ (2011), ‘**X-Men: First Class**’ (2011), ‘**The Hobbit**’ (‘An Unexpected Journey’, 2012; ‘The Desolation of Smaug’, 2013; and ‘The Battle of the Five Armies’, 2014), Pixar’s ‘**Monsters University**’ (2013), ‘**Guardians of the Galaxy**’ (2014), and ‘**Star Wars: Episode III – Revenge of the Sith**’ (2005).

## Sequels

A sequel is set after an original story and proceeds in chronological order. Countless successful films have sequels including ‘**Harry Potter**’ (books and films) and ‘**Jurassic Park**’, but there are also ‘subgroups’ including direct sequel, legacy sequel, stand-alone sequel, spiritual sequels, parallels, paraquels, sidequels, and midquels.

Sequel novels include ‘**Farm Boy**’ (2022), Sir **Michael Morpurgo**’s extraordinary sequel to his classic ‘**War Horse**’ (1982); ‘**Charlie and the Great Glass Elevator**’ (1972), **Roald Dahl**’s sequel to ‘**Charlie and the Chocolate Factory**’ (1964), and ‘**Mrs de Winter**’ (1993), **Susan Hill**’s sequel to Daphne du Maurier’s ‘**Rebecca**’.

\*Gregory Maguire’s **Wicked Years** book series is recommended for readers aged 16+.





# Witches + Wizards



From 'The Three Witches' in William Shakespeare's **'Macbeth'** to 'Grogu' (aka 'Baby Yoda') in television's **'The Mandalorian'**, witches and wizards and their various magical powers have inspired storytellers across many centuries. From popular children's books, such as Cressida Cowell's **'The Wizards of Once'**, Jill Murphy's **'The Worst Witch'** series, and Tracey Corderoy's **'Hubble Bubble'** series, to Arthur Miller's landmark play **'The Crucible'**, the portrayal of wizardry and witchcraft in pop culture varies greatly, from the dark and scary to the funny and kind.



As portrayed by actor **Margaret Hamilton** in the film musical **'The Wizard of Oz'** (1939), 'The Wicked Witch of the West' has become synonymous with all things evil. With her army of winged monkeys and chilling cackle, this iconic character has terrified generations of film fans and is frequently named the scariest female character of all-time and "the greatest witch of all".

'Merlin', a mythical figure prominently featured in the legend of King Arthur, is perhaps the most enduring Wizard of all time, appearing in countless films (including the 1963 animated feature '**The Sword in the Stone**'), television shows, plays, musicals, and books.

Actor **Colin Morgan** portrayed a young 'Merlin' in the popular BBC TV series '**Merlin**' (2008-2012).



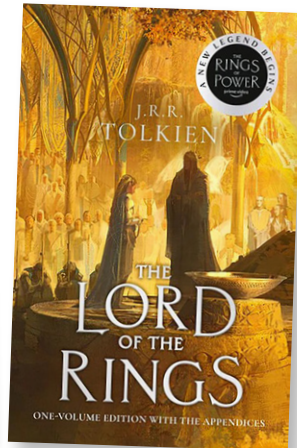
The world of children's literature includes a plethora of enduringly popular 'witch' characters, including 'Meg the Witch' (and her cat 'Mog') in the '**Meg and Mog**' (1972) book series by Helen Nicoll; 'Winnie The Witch' (and her cat 'Wilbur') in the '**Winnie and Wilbur**' (1987) book series by Valerie Thomas; 'Witch' in '**Room on the Broom**' by Julia Donaldson, and 'Delia' in '**It's Raining Bats & Frogs**' (2015) by Rebecca Colby.

Other famous wizards and witches include 'Harry Potter', 'Hermione Granger', 'Ron Weasley', 'Draco Malfoy', Professor Minerva McGonagall, 'Professor Pomona Sprout', 'Bellatrix Lestrange', 'Albus Dumbledore', 'Lord Voldemort' and many more in '**Harry Potter**'; 'Gandalf' and 'Saruman' in '**The Lord of the Rings**'; 'Darth Vader', 'Obi-Wan Kenobi', and 'Yoda' in '**Star Wars**'; 'The White Witch' in '**The Chronicles of Narnia**'; 'Mickey Mouse' in '**Fantasia**'; 'Ursula' in '**The Little Mermaid**'; the 'Sanderson sisters' in '**Hocus Pocus**'; 'Sabrina', 'Hilda' and 'Zelda' in '**Sabrina: The Teenage Witch**'; 'Willow Rosenberg' in '**Buffy the Vampire Slayer**'; 'Samantha Stephens' in '**Bewitched**'; 'The Grand High Witch' in '**The Witches**'; 'Wilhelmina W. Witchiepoo' in '**H.R. Pufnstuf**'; 'Maleficent' in '**Sleeping Beauty**' (1959) and the film series '**Maleficent**' (2014); 'The Witch' in the musical '**Into The Woods**'; 'Grotbags' in the 1991 television series '**Grotbags**'; 'Ged' (aka 'Sparrowhawk') in '**The Wizard of Earthsea**'; 'Stephen Strange' in '**Doctor Strange**'; 'Melisandre' (the 'Red Woman') in '**Game of Thrones**', the witches and wizards of Terry Pratchett's '**Discworld**' series, and many more...

# Magical Worlds

“At the heart of every fantasy is something unreal, impossible, or at the very least, so extraordinary as to take us outside the universe we think we live in.”

The Guardian



The escapist adventures of fantasy fiction continue to enthrall all who enter these magical worlds. From 'Wonderland' to 'Neverland', readers are transported to far-away places by wondrous tales of mythical creatures, strange landscapes, and epic battles between good and evil.

In **L. Frank Baum's** timeless classic 'The Wonderful Wizard of Oz' (1900), a young girl from Kansas named 'Dorothy Gale', together with her dog 'Toto', are swept away by a cyclone and find themselves transported to one of the most magical lands of all, 'Oz', with its fabled Yellow Brick Road and Emerald City.

Some of the many other magical worlds of fantasy fiction are listed below:

- 'Lilliput' and 'Blefuscu' are the two fictional island nations in the 1726 novel '**Gulliver's Travels**' by **Jonathan Swift**. Both are portrayed as being in the South Indian Ocean and inhabited by the minute Lilliputians and Blefuscudians. Amongst Gulliver's other adventures, he also meets the giants of 'Brobdingnag', and the Yahoos and Houyhnhms in the 'Land of the Houyhnhms'.
- When young 'Alice' follows the 'White Rabbit' down a rabbit hole in **Lewis Carroll's** '**Alice's Adventures in Wonderland**' (1865), she finds herself in the fantastical world of 'Wonderland', a place full of riddles, surprises, and unforgettable characters such as the 'Mad Hatter', the 'March Hare', the 'Cheshire Cat', and the 'Queen of Hearts'.



- ‘Neverland’, (aka ‘Never Never Land’), the setting of Scottish novelist and playwright **J. M. Barrie’s ‘Peter Pan’** (1911) is a mythical island where ‘Peter Pan’ – a boy who can fly – spends his never-ending childhood in the company of fairies, pirates, crocodiles, a troupe of Lost Boys and three visiting children from the outside world, Wendy, Michael and John Darling.
- **C.S. Lewis’s** seven-book series **‘The Chronicles of Narnia’** introduced the world to the fictional realm of ‘Narnia’, complete with its fantastical creatures and fierce battles. The first book, **‘The Lion, The Witch, and the Wardrobe’**, was published in 1950.
- **J. R. R. Tolkien’s** ‘Middle-earth’ from his epic novels **‘The Hobbit’** (1937) and **‘The Lord of the Rings’** (**‘The Fellowship of the Ring’**, 1954, **‘The Two Towers’**, 1955, and **‘The Return of the King’**, 1955), conjures a mystical world that includes heroic hobbits, dwarves and elves as well as monsters like dragons, trolls, and orcs. The books were subsequently adapted into multi-Oscar® winning films by director **Peter Jackson**.
- Surrounded by uncharted oceans, the islands of ‘Earthsea’ in **Ursula K. Le Guin’s ‘A Wizard of Earthsea’** (1968) are home to one of the greatest sorcerers of all, ‘Ged’ (aka ‘Sparrowhawk’). The success of the first book led to an eventual six-book series (**‘A Wizard of Earthsea’**, **‘The Tombs of Atuan’**, **‘The Farthest Shore’**, **‘Tehanu’**, **‘Tales from Earthsea’** and **‘The Other Wind’**).
- **Philip Pullman’s** epic trilogy of fantasy novels, known collectively as **‘His Dark Materials’**, are set in a series of parallel universes. The first book, **‘The Northern Lights’** (1995) finds ‘Lyra Belacqua’ travelling to frozen lands, where witch-clans reign and ice-bears fight. Her extraordinary journey will have immeasurable consequences far beyond her own world.
- The creation of **George R. R. Martin** in his **‘A Song of Ice and Fire’** book series, ‘Westeros’ (and other destinations) first appeared in 1996 with the publication of **‘A Game of Thrones’**. The best-selling books, later adapted into a globally successful television series (**‘Game of Thrones’**), follow a dynastic war among several families battling for control of ‘Westeros’, and the Iron Throne.
- ‘Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry’ in **J. K. Rowling’s ‘Harry Potter’** series is located in truly a wizarding world, filled with magical creatures, murderous centaurs and terrifying Dementors. The first book in the phenomenally popular series, **‘Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone’**, was published in 1997 and they were all later adapted into a successful film series.

**“Fantasy fiction is a form of storytelling that delights in a powerful sense of place. Celebrated because they create vivid worlds to which readers wish to return, the imagined lands of ‘Earthsea’, ‘Middle Earth’ and ‘Narnia’ are at least as memorable as their magical inhabitants.”**

Andrew Tate, The British Library

# Wicked and the World of Magic

by Dr. Will Houstoun

“Perhaps a levitation spell..?”

Madame Morrible



If you look up the word ‘magic’ in the Cambridge Dictionary, it will give you two different definitions. The first one says that magic is “the use of special powers to make things happen that would usually be impossible, such as in stories”. The world of **Wicked** shows us precisely this. Elphaba, for example, possesses magical powers, and uses them to make various extraordinary and inexplicable things happen. The second dictionary definition of magic describes it as “the skill of performing tricks to entertain people, such as making things appear and disappear and pretending to cut someone in half.” This means there is another kind of magic that exists in real life rather than fictional stories. Thousands of magicians around the world make people teleport from one place to another, produce handfuls of silver coins, and even make elephants disappear, every single day. These people do not actually have supernatural powers, like Elphaba, but they have spent years learning and practising special skills that let them make the seemingly impossible happen.



Harry Kellar ‘Levitation’ poster



One of the most magical moments in **Wicked** is when Elphaba sings ‘Defying Gravity’ as she flies into the air on her broomstick. Not only does Elphaba literally fly, the idea of flying also represents her character overcoming her limitations. Magic tricks also represent the idea of overcoming limitations, making the impossible seem possible, and astonishingly, magicians have also been making people ‘float’ for well over one hundred years. One of the most famous acts of ‘levitation’ was presented in America in 1904 and called the ‘Levitation of Princess Karnac’. It was performed by a magician called Harry Kellar (1849-1922), who would bring a woman dressed as a princess onto the stage. She would lie down and then slowly float into the air, right in the middle of a brightly lit stage. Kellar would then pass a hoop around her to prove that there was absolutely nothing holding her up. Harry Kellar was, at the time, the most famous magician in America and has his own indirect connection to **Wicked**. He was the inspiration for the character of ‘The Wizard’ when L. Frank Baum wrote ‘The Wonderful Wizard of Oz’ in 1900.

In **Wicked**, Elphaba learns how to use and understand her magical powers at Shiz University, and everyone knows of another fictional wizard, Harry Potter, who learns his magic at ‘Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry’. Sadly, there isn’t a real university where magicians can study, but there are magic clubs where magicians do meet each other and share their latest tricks. The most famous one is **The Magic Circle**, which was created over one hundred years ago. To get into the club, members must pass a magic exam and promise not to reveal the secrets of magic to non-magicians. Once they are in, they can discover how to perform hundreds of astonishing tricks.

When she goes to university, Elphaba is introduced to ‘The Grimmerie - the Ancient Book of Thaumaturgy and Enchantments’, from which she learns to cast spells. In **The Magic Circle**, there is a library with thousands of books that teach you how to perform better magic. The oldest is ‘The Discoverie of Witchcraft’, from 1584, which teaches you how to make balls appear and disappear, do tricks with cards and coins, and even cut someone’s head off without hurting them! **Magic Circle** members must be over 18, but for those younger and interested in magic, you can still get a peek into how to become a great magician. **The Magic Circle’s Young Magicians Club** is open to anyone between the ages of 11 and 18 and membership includes a special members’ magazine and access to workshops at **The Magic Circle’s** headquarters once a month.

When Galinda (later Glinda) wants to join Elphaba to learn magic she gives the teacher an essay entitled ‘Magic wands: need they have a point?’. You might think that, for performing magicians, they don’t have a point, but magic wands - and even magic words like ‘abracadabra’ - are hugely important. If a magician puts a coin in their hand, then opens it to show that the coin has gone, it won’t be particularly impressive. The thing that makes it a great trick is the story and ‘performance’ of what makes the coin disappear, and magicians tell that story by chanting a magic word or using their magic wand. So next time you see a magician wave their wand or shout ‘abracadabra’, you know why!

A bigger question than ‘what is the point of magic wands?’ is ‘what is the point of magic?’ For most magicians, magic is something they use to amaze an audience and share collective moments of awe and wonder. This happens in all sorts of places, from children’s birthday parties to corporate events, and from enormous Las Vegas theatres to intimate close-up magic shows. Some magicians are working hard to see whether magic can have more of a point. Projects are running all over the world where magic is used to help people live better, happier lives. In the UK, the company **Breathe Arts Health Research** runs a programme, ‘Breathe Magic Intensive Therapy’ for young people who find it difficult to move their fingers because of various conditions, including Hemiplegia. By learning specially designed magic tricks, these young people get better at using their hands and learn how to do things we all take for granted like tying shoelaces, doing up buttons or cutting up food. In South Africa, the **College of Magic** brings young people from all kinds of backgrounds together to learn magic, make friends, and learn skills that open up new possibilities for their future.

The world of **Wicked** is a magical place, but so is the world we live in. So, the next time you’re sitting on a bus or in a restaurant, just remember that any one of the people sitting around you might be a real magician...

Dr. Will Houstoun is a member of **The Magic Circle**  
Learn more at [www.drhoustoun.com](http://www.drhoustoun.com)



**The Magic Circle** welcomes education groups by prior arrangement.



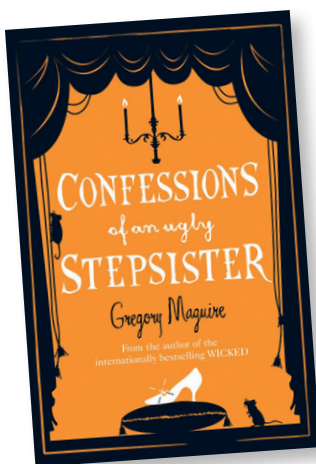
# Gregory Maguire

**“Gregory Maguire did something truly remarkable with his ‘Wicked’ novel, in managing to inhabit, enlarge, deepen, and find new dimensions in a world that had been invented by another writer, and in doing so make something entirely new. It’s an astonishing achievement.”**

Philip Pullman

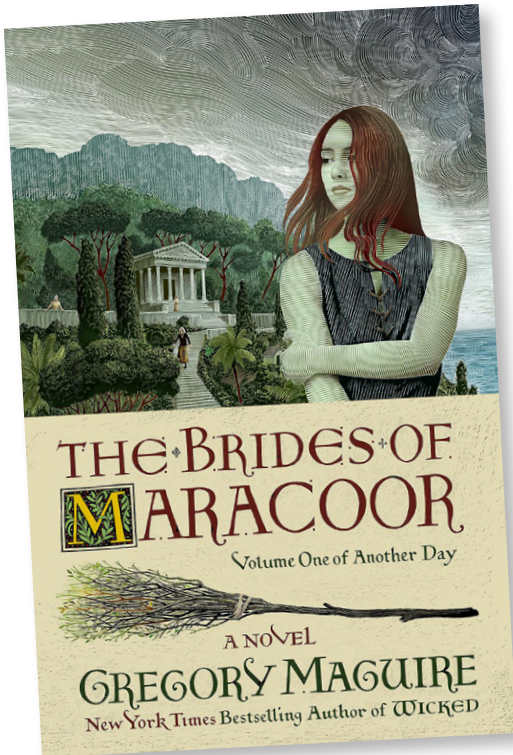


Born in 1954 in Albany, New York, the acclaimed American fantasy novelist is best known for his multimillion-copy international best seller ‘Wicked - The Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West’ (1995) on which the musical **Wicked** is based and which he wrote while living in London. His first book for children, ‘The Lightning Time’, was published in 1978 while his first novel for adults was ‘Wicked’. He now resides outside Boston, Massachusetts with his partner, Andy Newman, and their three children.

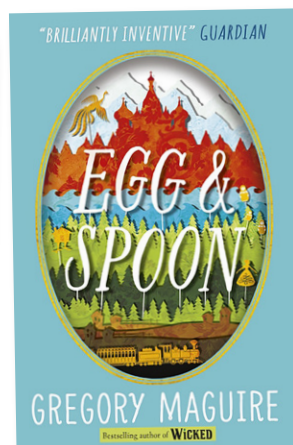
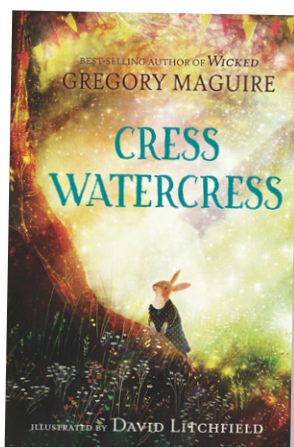




Maguire's books written for adults include **The Wicked Years** series: 'Wicked - The Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West' (1995), 'Son of a Witch' (2005), 'A Lion Among Men' (2008), and 'Out of Oz' (2011); 'Confessions of an Ugly Stepsister' (1999); 'Lost' (2001); 'Mirror, Mirror' (2003); 'After Alice' (2015); 'Hiddensee' (2017); 'A Wild Winter Swan' (2020) and the **Another Day** series: 'The Brides of Maracoor' (2021), 'The Oracle of Maracoor' (2022), and 'The Witch of Maracoor' (2023).



His books for children include 'The Lightning Time' (1978); 'The Daughter of the Moon' (1980); 'Lights on the Lake' (1981); 'The Dream Stealer' (1983); 'The Peace and Quiet Diner' (1988); 'I Feel like the Morning Star' (1989); 'Lucas Fishbone' (1990); 'Missing Sisters' (1994); **The Hamlet Chronicles** series: 'Seven Spiders Spinning' (1994), 'Six Haunted Hairdos' (1997), 'Five Alien Elves' (1998), 'Four Stupid Cupids' (2000), 'Three Rotten Eggs' (2002), 'A Couple of April Fools' (2004) and 'One Final Firecracker' (2005); 'Oasis' (1996); 'The Good Liar' (1997); 'Crabby Cratchitt' (2000); 'Leaping Beauty: And Other Animal Fairy Tales' (2004); 'What-the-Dickens: The Story of a Rogue Tooth Fairy' (2007); 'Missing Sisters' (2009); 'Egg & Spoon' (2014); and 'Cress Watercress' (2022).



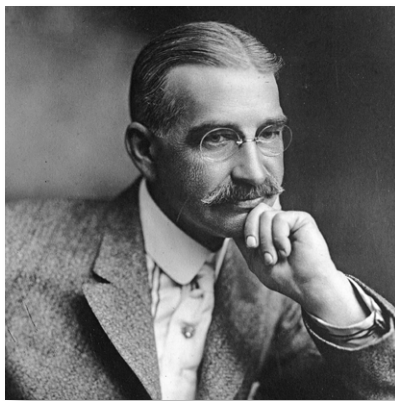
[www.gregorymaguire.com](http://www.gregorymaguire.com)

# L. Frank Baum

(1856-1919)

**“The imaginative child will become the imaginative man or woman most apt to create, to invent, and therefore to foster civilisation. A prominent educator tells me that fairy tales are of untold value in developing imagination in the young. I believe it.”**

L. Frank Baum



L. Frank Baum

**L. Frank Baum** was a prolific journalist, author, actor, playwright, and filmmaker best known as the creator, along with illustrator **William W. Denslow**, of one of the most popular and influential books in children’s literature, ‘The Wonderful Wizard of Oz’.

Born **Lyman Frank Baum** on 15 May 1856 in Chittenango, New York, to **Cynthia Stanton** and **Benjamin Ward Baum**, he never liked or ever used the name Lyman and was always known as Frank. By 1860, his father had made a fortune in oil and settled his family at ‘Rose Lawn’, a country estate outside Syracuse. Among his many business enterprises, **Benjamin Baum** owned several theatres.

His sister (and Frank’s Aunt) was the actress **Katherine Gray**.

A somewhat reserved child, a heart condition restricted all strenuous exercise or physical play with other children, Baum was frequently isolated and invented imaginary places and friends. While ill health plagued him throughout his life, it never impeded his creativity. He read and wrote voraciously, enjoying English writers especially the works of **Charles Dickens**. At the age of fifteen, together with his younger brother Harry, he wrote and published a local newspaper titled ‘The Rose Lawn Home Journal’. Featuring articles, editorials, fiction, poetry, and word games, the newspaper thrived and sold advertising space to local businesses.



Baum maintained a lifelong passion for the theatre and his first musical play, 'The Maid of Arran', was based on the Scottish novel 'A Princess of Thule' by William Black, and featured his own script, music, and lyrics. Re-set in Ireland, and written under the pseudonym **Louis F. Baum**, it was produced in 1882 at the Grand Opera House in Syracuse. It proved a significant success, with Baum also acting as Manager and playing the leading role. It was during this time that he first met, and later married, **Maud Gage**. Her father was a successful dry-goods merchant, and her mother was the writer and activist **Matilda Joslyn Gage** (1826-1898), nationally known for her contributions to women's suffrage in the United States, and for her support of Native American rights.

In 1897, Baum's first children's book was published. With illustrations by **Maxwell Parrish**, 'Mother Goose in Prose' proved popular. He subsequently met illustrator **William W. Denslow** and their first official venture together, 'Father Goose: His Book' was published in 1899.

It was an immediate success, becoming the best-selling children's book of the year. 'Songs of Father Goose' quickly followed, and their success enabled the Baums to purchase a holiday home, which they named 'The Sign of the Goose'.

**“L. Frank Baum’s impact on literature has been deep. ‘Oz’ is a world that contains power, war, revolution, just and unjust rulers, and all the complexities of justice and kindness. The books showed that a fantasy world could be bright, dark, and on an enormous scale – and that it can have just as rich and complicated a political landscape as our own.”**

**Charlotte Runcie, The Daily Telegraph**

Baum's next book, originally to be entitled 'The Emerald City', was to deliver his biggest success and most enduring legacy. A publishing phenomenon, 'The Wonderful Wizard of Oz', featuring illustrations by Denslow, arrived in bookstores in 1900. More than 120 years later, it is still inspiring readers and storytellers across the world. Such was the demand for more 'Oz' (including thousands of letters from children), the publishers commissioned Baum to write a second book, 'The Marvellous Land of Oz' (1904). This would eventually lead to a series of fourteen 'Oz' books, with Baum proclaiming himself 'Royal Historian of Oz'. The last in his series, 'Glinda of Oz' (1920), was published posthumously. The New York Times recently hailed Baum as **“the J.K. Rowling of his day”**.



A stage musical extravaganza, entitled 'The Wizard of Oz' and based on the original book, opened in 1902, involving both Baum and Denslow in collaboration with **Paul Tietjens** and **Julien Mitchell**. It proved a major commercial hit, in Chicago, on Broadway and on tour across North America. Two silent film adaptations were subsequently released, in 1910 and 1925. The latter, the first full-length version, starred a young **Oliver Hardy** (who later found fame as one half of Laurel & Hardy) as the 'Tin Woodman'.

In 1913, another stage musical, 'The Tik-Tok Man of Oz' opened, and Baum released several 'Oz' films through his own company, The Oz Film Manufacturing Company.

Together with their four sons, Frank and Maud eventually moved to California (and into a house they named 'Ozcot'). In failing health, Baum spent his days gardening (growing and exhibiting prize dahlias and chrysanthemums) and continuing to write.

**L. Frank Baum** died of heart failure on 5 May 1919. During his lifetime, he wrote more than 50 books (and many more short stories), frequently under pseudonyms, including the very popular 'Aunt Jane's Nieces' series as **Edith Van Dyne** and 'The Boy Fortune Hunters' series as **Floyd Akers**.

Following his death, **Maud Baum** granted children's writer **Ruth Plumly Thompson** the rights to chronicle life in Oz. She wrote several new stories and many other writers followed. NBC broadcast 'The Wizard of Oz' radio show three times a week, from 25 September 1933 until 23 March 1934 and the Oscar®-winning film musical 'The Wizard of Oz', was released in 1939, twenty years after Baum's death.

**“My books are intended for all those whose hearts are young,  
no matter what their ages may be.”**

**L. Frank Baum**



# Resources



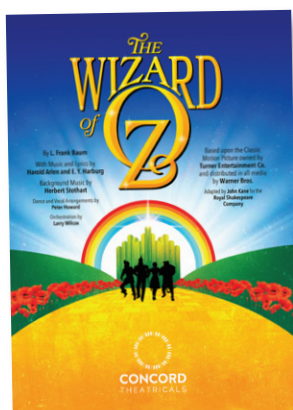
Various versions of **L. Frank Baum's 'The Wonderful Wizard of Oz' / 'The Wizard of Oz'** are published in the UK and available from book retailers, including the **Puffin Classic** edition, pictured above.

**'Wicked - The Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West'** by **Gregory Maguire** is published in the UK by **Headline Publishing Group**.

Recommended for readers aged 16+ only. The stage musical is recommended for Primary Year 3 upwards.

**'Wicked: The Grimmerie'** by **David Cote** - a behind-the-scenes look at the making of the musical - is published by **Hyperion** and available from book retailers.

## Additional Resources



The RSC stage version of **'The Wizard of Oz'** (1987 script) adapted by **John Kane** and featuring the musical score from the MGM film is available from **Concord Theatricals**

**'The Wizard of Oz'** (1939) ©2022 Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc. is available in the UK on streaming services and DVD.

Universal Pictures/Motown Productions' **'The Wiz'** (1978) is available in the UK on streaming services and DVD.

NBC's **'The Wiz Live!'** (2015) is available in the UK on streaming services and DVD.

# Credits

## Image credits:

- Cover:** 'Wicked - The Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West' by Gregory Maguire published by Headline Publishing Group.  
'The Wizard of Oz' by L. Frank Baum published by Puffin Classics.
- Page 3:** 'Wicked: The Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West'; 'Son of a Witch'; 'A Lion Among Men' and 'Out of Oz' by Gregory Maguire published by Headline Publishing Group.
- Page 5/6:** 'The Wonderful Wizard of Oz' original book cover and illustrations by W.W. Denslow / Library of Congress.
- Page 7:** Wilhelm and Jacob Grimm, Hans Christian Andersen and Lewis Carroll / Alamy.
- Page 9:** Fred Hamlin's musical adaptation of 'The Wizard of Oz' / Alamy.  
Film still from 'The Wizard Of Oz' (1939) ©2022 Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc. All rights reserved / Alamy.
- Page 10:** Film still from 'The Wiz' ©1978 Universal Studios. All rights reserved.  
Image from 'The Wiz Live!' ©2017 NBCUniversal LLC. All rights reserved.  
'Toto: The Dog-Gone Amazing Story of the Wizard of Oz' by Sir Michael Morpurgo published by HarperCollins Children's Books.  
'Doctor Who: The Wonderful Doctor of Oz' by Jacqueline Rayner published by BBC Children's Books.
- Page 11:** 'The Marvellous Land of Oz' by L. Frank Baum with illustrations by John R. Neill (1904).
- Page 12:** 'Farm Boy' by Sir Michael Morpurgo published by HarperCollins.  
'Charlie and the Great Glass Elevator' by Roald Dahl and illustrated by Quentin Blake published by Puffin.  
'Mrs de Wynter' by Susan Hill published by Penguin Random House.
- Page 13:** 'The Wizards of Once' by Cressida Cowell published by Hachette Children's Group.  
'The Worst Witch' by Jill Murphy published by Puffin.  
'Hubble Bubble Granny Trouble' by Tracey Corderoy published by Nosy Crow.  
Film still from 'The Wizard Of Oz' (1939) ©2022 Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc. All rights reserved / Alamy.
- Page 14:** Merlin the Magician / Alamy.
- Page 15:** 'Alice's Adventures in Wonderland' by Lewis Carroll published by Puffin Classics.  
'The Lord of the Rings' by J. R. R. Tolkien published by HarperCollins.  
'A Wizard of Earthsea' paperback by Ursula Le Guin published by Puffin.  
'His Dark Materials: Northern Lights' by Philip Pullman published by Scholastic.
- Pages 17/19:** Wicked ©WLPL photograph by Matt Crockett.  
Harry Kellar 'Levitation' poster / Alamy.  
All other images used by kind permission of The Magic Circle.
- Pages 20:** Photo of Gregory Maguire used by permission.  
'Confessions of an Ugly Stepsister'; 'After Alice'; 'Lost' and 'Mirror Mirror' by Gregory Maguire published by Headline Publishing Group.
- Pages 21:** 'The Brides of Maracoor' by Gregory Maguire published by HarperCollins.  
'Cress Watercress' by Gregory Maguire published by Walker Books.  
'Egg & Spoon' by Gregory Maguire published by Walker Books.  
'What-The-Dickens: The Story of a Rogue Tooth Fairy' by Gregory Maguire published by Candlewick Press.
- Page 22:** L. Frank Baum / Alamy.
- Page 23/24:** 'The Wonderful Wizard of Oz' illustrations by W.W. Denslow / Library of Congress.
- Page 25:** 'The Wizard of Oz' by L. Frank Baum published by Puffin Classics.  
'Wicked - The Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West' by Gregory Maguire published by Headline Publishing Group.  
'Wicked: The Grimmerie' by David Cote published by Hyperion.  
'The Wizard of Oz' (RSC) published by Concord Theatricals.  
'The Wizard of Oz' (1939) ©2022 Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc. All rights reserved.  
'The Wiz' ©1978 Universal Studios. All Rights Reserved.  
'The Wiz Live!' ©2017 Universal Studios. All rights reserved.

**Wicked** production images ©WLPL, feature various UK casts.

Please note, every effort has been made to trace copyright holders and, where applicable, to obtain their permission for the use of copyright material. In the case of error or omission, WLPL would be grateful to be notified of any corrections that should be incorporated into any future edition of this free teacher resource.