

“Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone has all the makings of a classic... Rowling uses classic narrative devices with flair and originality and delivers a complex and demanding plot in the form of a hugely entertaining thriller. She is a first-rate writer for children.”

The Scotsman

The most dramatic recollections I had were the sights themselves. Of all the spectacular views we had, the most impressive to me was on the way to the Moon, when we flew through its shadow. We were still thousands of miles away, but close enough so that the Moon almost filled our circular window. It was eclipsing the Sun, from our position, and the corona of the Sun was visible around the limb of the Moon as a gigantic lens-shaped or saucer-shaped light, stretching out to several lunar diameters. It was magnificent, but the Moon was even more so.

Warning

Failure to follow these safety precautions may increase your risk of injury:

- Wear a helmet, eye protection, and bright protective clothes.
- Don’t ride after consuming alcohol or other drugs.
- Slow down on slippery surfaces, unfamiliar terrain, or when visibility is reduced.
- Read owner’s manual carefully.

Skellig

Something little and black scuttled across the floor. The door creaked and cracked for a moment before it was still. Dust poured through the torch beam. Something scratched and scratched in the corner. I tiptoed further in and felt spiders’ webs breaking on my brow. Everything was packed in tight – ancient furniture, kitchen units, rolled up carpets, pipes and crates and planks. I kept ducking down under the hose-pipes and ropes and kitbags that hung from the roof. More cobwebs snapped on my clothes and skin. The floor was broken and crumbly. I opened a cupboard an inch, shone the torch in and saw a million woodlice scattering away.

Mars

Mars, the fourth planet from the Sun, resembles Earth more than any other planet, even though it is about half Earth's size. The Martian day (from sunrise to sunrise) is only 38 minutes longer than the Earth's and the axis¹ of Mars tilts by just 1.7° more than Earth's does. Mars has clouds, volcanoes, canyons, mountains, deserts and white polar caps that shrink and grow with the seasons. But Mars is an arid², cold, and lifeless planet: its surface is littered with rocks and is mainly covered in red dust, while its atmosphere is thin and poisonous to human beings.

¹ imaginary line about which a planet rotates

² dry

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Particles in a solid are fixed in regular patterns and cannot move much — they just wobble, or *vibrate*. When you add energy to a solid, the particles vibrate faster. When they are vibrating quickly enough, they can break away from their fixed positions.

They are still close together but can slide over each other.

The solid melts into a liquid.

