News Release

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What's the Difference Between Harry Potter and Nanotechnology?

WASHINGTON, DC – What is the difference between Harry Potter and nanotechnology? Answer: they both look like magic but only one really is!

Imagine materials as light as plastic and as strong as steel; car batteries that make gasoline look like steam power; or cancer treatments that selectively target diseased cells. Using nanotechnology, researchers are pushing the boundaries of what is possible, and making the dreams of yesterday the reality of tomorrow.

This is the technology of the very small, where things are measured in nanometers (one nanometer is a mere one hundred thousandth the width of a human hair), and where matter behaves in unusual and unexpected ways.

Nanotechnology is already used in many consumer products (see www.nanotechproject.org/consumerproducts), and these are just the tip of what some are calling the "Next Industrial Revolution." Nanotechnology promises to affect every aspect of our lives in the future, from the clothes we wear to the cars we drive.

Like Harry Potter, nanotechnology is big business. In 2005, nanotechnology was incorporated into more than $30 billion in manufactured goods. By 2014, an estimated $2.6 trillion in manufactured goods globally will use nanotech, or 15 percent of total output.

To learn more about the "magic" of nanotechnology (and using it responsibly), read "Nanotechnology for Wizards" by Project on Emerging Nanotechnologies Chief Science Advisor Andrew Maynard.

This whimsical commentary appears as a guest article on *Nanotechnology Now's* (www.nanotech-now.com/columns) new column "Nano Emerging" by Project Director David Rejeski. Maynard's piece is a letter from a "Muggle" scientist to Potterdom's Arthur Weasley, an official at the Ministry of Magic.

Nanotechnology Now (www.nanotech-now.com) is one of the industry's most popular sites.

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About Nanotechnology
Nanotechnology is the ability to measure, see, manipulate and manufacture things usually between 1 and 100 nanometers. A nanometer is one billionth of a meter; a human hair is roughly 100,000 nanometers wide.

The **Project on Emerging Nanotechnologies** (www.nanotechproject.org) is an initiative launched by the **Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars** and **The Pew Charitable Trusts** in 2005. It is dedicated to helping business, government and the public anticipate and manage possible health and environmental implications of nanotechnology.