

**Directions**  
Read this story. Then answer questions 1 through 7.

## Excerpt from *Waste Not, Want Not*

by Teresa Bateman

- 1      My mother believed in using things up. We always squeezed the toothpaste tube until it was as sharp as a razor, and we cleaned our plates, even when it was liver-and-onions night. . . .
- 2      Mom’s frugality was legendary. She could make one chicken come back in a dozen meals as variously disguised leftovers. Her favorite saying was “waste not, want not.” Josh and I weren’t sure what that meant, but it probably explained why Mom was into recycling long before it became popular. It also explained why the “Affair of The Hat,” as it later became known, was so strange.
- 3      The Hat deserved capital letters. It was about three feet across, made of green straw and covered with big plastic daisies, two red peonies, and an orange bow. I might have said it was “dog ugly,” except that wouldn’t sit well with our dog, Mutt.
- 4      Great-aunt Marjorie had given The Hat to Mother on one of her visits to our farm. It was supposed to keep the sun off Mother’s delicate complexion while enhancing her rural beauty (whatever that meant). . . .
- 5      When Aunt Marjorie returned to the city, Josh and I held our breath to see what would happen to The Hat. We could see that Mom’s thrifty nature and fashion sense were in pitched battle. She couldn’t justify throwing The Hat away—it was nearly new and had a lot of use left in it—but neither could she stomach wearing it. She tried pulling off the daisies and peonies, but they were stuck on tight, as were the perky orange ribbons that held The Hat in place. She’d have to find some other solution.
- 6      One day Josh and I came down to breakfast and noticed that The Hat was missing from the hook by the door. We looked at each other, then scouted the house. It wasn’t hard to spot. Mother had installed it in the parlor as a lampshade.
- 7      Our parakeet, Pete, chirped inquiringly from his cage as Josh and I decided to see how The Hat looked in full lampshade glory. We pulled the chain.
- 8      Pete tweeted once, then dropped like a stone from his perch. We ran to his cage, and Josh suggested mouth-to-beak resuscitation. Then we glanced over at the lamp. The

**GO ON**

light shining through the peonies made them look like two big red eyes glaring at you. No wonder Pete had fainted. We plucked The Hat from the lamp and went to tell Mom. Reluctantly she hung it back up on the hook by the door. . . .

9       The next morning she headed out the door, The Hat filled to the brim with turkey feed. Josh and I watched as Mother approached the turkeys scavenging in the barnyard. The minute those turkeys sighted The Hat, they ran gobbling toward the barn door and dived in a panic into the haystack. Mom dumped the turkey feed in the barnyard and walked back to the house, her shoulders drooping. . . .

10       She threw The Hat to the floor, raised her foot, and screamed, “THIS HAT IS FOR THE BIRDS!” Josh and I stepped back, waiting for her foot to come crashing down.

11       “It is not for the birds,” Josh blurted. “They hate it!”

12       It was as though time stood still. Then we heard a strange sound. Mother was laughing!

13       We shook our heads. She’d finally gone over the edge—there she stood, one foot in the air, laughing like a hysterical flamingo.

14       Then she put her foot down . . . on the floor. She picked up The Hat and headed upstairs where we heard boxes being shuffled around in the attic. . .

15       When she came down, she was dragging a body. It was wearing Grandpa’s old overalls, Uncle Paul’s flannel shirt, and the shoes Josh had outgrown last year. Its head was a flour sack, stuffed full of straw from an old tick, and on that head perched The Hat.

tick = mattress
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16       Mom hauled the stuffed body outside and set it up on a post in the middle of the cornfield. And that’s where it stayed.

17       Our corn crop that year was particularly good. For some reason the birds steered clear of our fields and raided the neighbors’ instead. Maybe it had something to do with our scarecrow, I don’t know. All I do know is that from then on, we rarely saw crows on our property except during the month of June.

18       That’s when Great-aunt Marjorie comes to visit.

**1** In paragraph 5, what does the phrase “held our breath” suggest about the narrator and Josh?

- A** They are sneaking around the house to avoid being seen by Mother.
- B** They are feeling thankful that Aunt Marjorie has left.
- C** They are waiting anxiously to see what Mother will do next.
- D** They are trying to avoid talking about The Hat because it is upsetting.

**2** How does paragraph 5 contribute to the story’s structure?

- A** It foreshadows the resolution of the story.
- B** It develops the narrator’s feelings about Mother.
- C** It explains Mother’s problem in detail.
- D** It gives background details that explain the story.

**3** Which quotation **best** supports a theme of the story?

- A** “My mother believed in using things up.” (paragraph 1)
- B** “We looked at each other, then scouted the house.” (paragraph 6)
- C** “It wasn’t hard to spot.” (paragraph 6)
- D** “Then we glanced over at the lamp.” (paragraph 8)

**GO ON**

4

In paragraphs 8 and 9, how does the narrator's point of view influence the description of events?

- A The narrator thinks the events are funny, so she describes them in a humorous way.
- B The narrator thinks the events are boring, so she describes them in a dull way.
- C The narrator is confused by the events, so she describes them in a mysterious way.
- D The narrator is happy about the events, so she describes them in a joyful way.

5

Read this sentence from paragraph 12.

**It was as though time stood still.**

Which idea does the sentence develop?

- A Everyone was pleased.
- B Nobody moved or spoke.
- C Nobody wanted to leave.
- D Everyone was late.

**GO ON**

**6**

What can the reader infer from the details in paragraphs 17 and 18 of the story?

- A** Mother worries that the crows will stop being afraid of The Hat and changes to a new hat every June.
- B** Mother is concerned about the crows and gives them one month each year to eat what is in the cornfield.
- C** Mother spends each June enjoying time with Aunt Marjorie and does not do much work in the cornfield.
- D** Mother removes The Hat from the cornfield in June so that Aunt Marjorie's feelings will not be hurt.

**7**

How are the narrator and Josh alike?

- A** They both make comments that cause their mother to have new ideas.
- B** They both are interested in watching their mother solve her problem.
- C** They both contribute their old items to build the scarecrow for the field.
- D** They both joke about how their dog is more attractive than the hat.

**GO ON**

## **D**irections

Read this article. Then answer questions 8 through 14.

# Excerpt from *Snowflake Bentley*

*by Jacqueline Briggs Martin*

- 1 In the days when farmers worked with ox and sled and cut the dark with lantern light, there lived a boy who loved snow more than anything in the world. Willie Bentley's happiest days were snowstorm days. He watched snowflakes on his mittens, on the dried grass of Vermont farm fields, on the dark metal handle of the barn door. He said snow was as beautiful as butterflies, or apple blossoms.
- 2 He could net butterflies and show them to his older brother, Charlie. He could pick apple blossoms and take them to his mother. But he could not share snowflakes because he could not save them.
- 3 When his mother gave him an old microscope, he used it to look at flowers, raindrops, and blades of grass. Best of all, he used it to look at snow. While other children built forts and pelted snowballs at roosting crows, Willie was catching snowflakes. Day after stormy day he studied the icy crystals.
- 4 Their intricate patterns were even more beautiful than he had imagined. He expected to find whole flakes that were the same, that were copies of each other. But he never did. Willie decided he must find a way to save snowflakes so others could see their wonderful designs. For three winters he tried drawing snow crystals. They always melted before he could finish.
- 5 When he was sixteen, Willie read of a camera with its own microscope. "If I had that camera I could photograph snowflakes," he told his mother. Willie's mother knew that he would not be happy until he could share what he had seen.
- 6 "Fussing with snow is just foolishness," his father said. Still, he loved his son. When Willie was seventeen his parents spent their savings and bought the camera. It was taller than a newborn calf, and cost as much as his father's herd of ten cows. Willie was sure it was the best of all cameras.
- 7 Even so his first pictures were failures—no better than shadows. Yet he would not quit. Mistake by mistake, snowflake by snowflake, Willie worked through every storm. Winter ended, the snow melted, and he had no good pictures. He waited for another

**GO ON**

season of snow. One day, in the second winter, he tried a new experiment. And it worked! Willie had figured out how to photograph snowflakes! “Now everyone can see the great beauty in a tiny crystal,” he said.

- 8 But in those days, no one cared. Neighbors laughed at the idea of photographing snow. “Snow in Vermont is as common as dirt,” they said. “We don’t need pictures.” Willie said the photographs would be his gift to the world. While other farmers sat by the fire or rode to town with horse and sleigh, Willie studied snowstorms. He stood at the shed door and held out a black tray to catch the flakes.
- 9 When he found only jumbled, broken crystals, he brushed the tray clean with a turkey feather and held it out again. He waited hours for just the right crystal and didn’t notice the cold. If the shed were warm the snow would melt. If he breathed on the black tray the snow would melt. If he twitched a muscle as he held the snow crystal on the long wood pick the snowflake would break. He had to work fast or the snowflake would evaporate before he could slide it into place and take its picture. Some winters he was able to make only a few dozen good pictures. Some winters he made hundreds. . . .
- 10 But his snow crystal pictures were always his favorites. He gave copies away or sold them for a few cents. He made special pictures as gifts for birthdays. He held evening slide shows on the lawns of his friends. Children and adults sat on the grass and watched while Willie projected his slides onto a sheet hung over a clothesline.
- 11 He wrote about snow and published his pictures in magazines. He gave speeches about snow to faraway scholars and neighborhood skywatchers. “You are doing great work,” said a professor from Wisconsin. The little farmer came to be known as the world’s expert on snow, “the Snowflake Man.” But he never grew rich. He spent every penny on his pictures. Willie said there were treasures in snow. “I can’t afford to miss a single snowstorm,” he told a friend. “I never know when I will find some wonderful prize.”

**8**

Read this sentence from paragraph 1 of the article.

**In the days when farmers worked with ox and sled and cut the dark with lantern light, there lived a boy who loved snow more than anything in the world.**

How does the author's word choice in the sentence affect the meaning of the passage?

- A** by suggesting that the ideas in the passage are made up
- B** by showing that the subject of the passage became famous
- C** by suggesting that the topic of the passage is familiar
- D** by showing that the events in the passage happened long ago

**9**

What is the meaning of the word "pelted" as it is used in paragraph 3?

- A** created
- B** found
- C** saved
- D** threw



**10** Which quotation **best** supports a main idea of the article?

- A** “He expected to find whole flakes that were the same . . .” (paragraph 4)
- B** “‘Fussing with snow is just foolishness,’ his father said.” (paragraph 6)
- C** “Even so his first pictures were failures . . .” (paragraph 7)
- D** “‘Now everyone can see the great beauty in a tiny crystal,’ he said.” (paragraph 7)

**11** What does the information in paragraph 9 suggest about the author’s point of view?

- A** The author believes that Bentley could have been more careful.
- B** The author respects Bentley’s many different interests.
- C** The author admires Bentley’s dedication.
- D** The author questions the methods Bentley used.

**12** Which statement is true based on the information in paragraphs 6 and 11?

- A** Bentley’s work with snow required expensive equipment that he was willing to spend all his money on.
- B** Bentley was thought to be foolish throughout his life because of his interest in snow.
- C** Bentley’s parents thought he should do something with his life other than taking pictures of snow.
- D** Bentley became less interested in studying snow than in publishing pictures and giving speeches.

**GO ON**

13

What does the reader learn about Bentley from paragraphs 10 and 11?

- A He was more interested in sharing his work than in making money from it.
- B He worked hard to develop a way of making photographs of snowflakes.
- C He wanted to find out if all snowflakes were different from each other.
- D He was able to follow his interests because of the help he got from his family.

14

Which sentence **best** describes how the article is organized?

- A The reasons for Willie Bentley's experiments with snow are presented, followed by their eventual conclusions.
- B The events of Willie Bentley's life and his study of snow are described as they happened over time.
- C The different problems of photographing snow are explained and then Willie Bentley's solutions are described.
- D The important ideas about snow in Willie Bentley's discoveries are presented, followed by details and examples.

**Directions**  
Read this story. Then answer questions 15 through 21.

## Excerpt from *Gregor and the Sheep*

by Toby Rosenstrauch

- 1 In a valley in the highlands of Scotland, there once lived a young tenant farmer, Gregor, and his widowed mother. Although they worked hard, they could never accumulate enough money to buy the flock of sheep they longed to have, for their small parcel of land produced only modest amounts of oats and barley. To make matters worse, MacTavish, the owner of this and many other crofts, always found reasons not to pay the farmers all they had earned. . . .

crofts = small farms

- 2 When he opened the door each morning and looked out, he saw MacTavish's house on top of a mountain, a magnificent stone mansion surrounded by red, pink, and violet rhododendrons. Gregor often climbed the slope and stood outside the iron gates, wondering what fine furnishings and delicious foods lay within. Neighbors claimed that MacTavish owned many houses and even kept a chest of gems under his bed. As Gregor, his mother, and their neighbors grew gaunt and pale with hard work and not enough food, they railed against MacTavish, who had swindled all of them at one time or another.

swindled = cheated or tricked

- 3 One day, as Gregor listened to the bagpipe music that drifted from the open windows of MacTavish's mansion, he had an idea. That night, when his mother was asleep, he emptied the jug that held their money and counted it. After putting back a few coins for food, he put the rest in his pocket. The next morning, he hurried to the market, where he went from farmer to farmer, asking the prices of sheep for sale. Gregor found many handsome animals, but they were all too expensive. When he reached a stall with scrawny and sickly sheep, the owner beckoned to him. . . .
- 4 Gregor shook his head and began to walk away. The man grabbed his sleeve and whispered in his ear, "This one will make her owner rich!" Gregor examined the old

**GO ON**

sheep with spindly legs and dirty, unkempt wool—the worst of the lot. “If she will make me rich,” said Gregor, “how is it that she has not done so for you?”

5 The man paused, thinking. “I have not had her long enough!”

6 “Nonsense,” said Gregor, but he gave the man his money and led the pitiful animal home.

7 When his mother saw what he had bought with their money, she burst into tears. “My foolish son, what have you done? Now we will starve, and no one will help us!”

8 “Do as I say, Mother, and we will be rich. I promise.”

9 She wanted to believe him. Wiping her eyes with her ragged sleeve, she asked what he wanted her to do.

10 “Go to market and tell everyone that your son has a sheep that will make whoever owns her rich,” said Gregor. . . .

11 One morning, a carriage arrived. Two servants opened the door and a stout, well-dressed gentleman emerged. His Tartan kilt was made of the finest wool, his ascot was pure silk, and his shoes had silver buckles. On his fat fingers were eight gold rings, and his pomaded hair glistened in the sun. It was MacTavish!

Tartan kilt = traditional clothing worn by Scottish Highlanders

ascot = a type of necktie

12 Gregor bowed as if to royalty. MacTavish looked at him sternly. “I have come to rid you of the unfortunate sheep that everyone is talking about,” said MacTavish, opening his sporran. “I can pay your price and I will have her, even though she has done nothing for you, I see.” MacTavish sneered at Gregor.

sporran = a small bag worn at the waist for holding personal items

13 Gregor hugged Dear One. “I will not sell her to you!”

14 At that, MacTavish, whose servants were helping him into his carriage, turned and marched back. “I will pay anything,” he said. “Name the price.”

15 Gregor was ready. “That,” he said, pointing up to the mansion above them. “I will have the dwelling and everything in it—furniture, utensils, even the chest of gems under your bed.”

16 “Done,” said MacTavish.

17 The next day, Gregor and his mother moved into the mansion that had once belonged to MacTavish, and MacTavish brought Dear One to the market so that all might see he could indeed own anything he wanted. Then MacTavish and the sheep rode away in his carriage to another of his houses in a valley beyond the mountains.

18 After months had passed and the sheep had done nothing to increase MacTavish’s riches, he realized he had been swindled. Furious beyond speech, he returned to the mansion, but Gregor would not open the gates.

19 “I have been cheated!” shouted MacTavish.

20 “You have not been cheated,” said Gregor. “I was the owner of the sheep, and she has made me rich, hasn’t she?”

21 “Yes, but . . .,” sputtered MacTavish.

22 “Then you got what you paid for.” Gregor turned and walked away.

23 Soon afterward, Gregor sold the chest of gems and bought the huge flock of sheep he and his mother had always wanted. He shared the rest of his fortune with the other poor families of the valley who had been cheated by MacTavish.

**GO ON**

- 15** How do paragraphs 1 and 23 relate to each other?
- A** They show the change in Gregor’s life during the story.
  - B** They show what Gregor has learned in the story.
  - C** They show how MacTavish changes in the story.
  - D** They show the growth of MacTavish’s fortune during the story.
- 16** What does the phrase “marched back” in paragraph 14 suggest about MacTavish?
- A** He is confused.
  - B** He is worried.
  - C** He is determined.
  - D** He is excited.
- 17** How are Gregor and the man who sold the sheep to him similar?
- A** They are both unskilled at selling things to people.
  - B** They both try to trick someone in order to make money.
  - C** They are both concerned with helping their family and neighbors.
  - D** They both believe that animals can have special qualities.

**18** Which of Gregor's actions shows how he is different from MacTavish?

- A** Gregor cheats another person.
- B** Gregor buys a sickly sheep.
- C** Gregor shares his wealth.
- D** Gregor moves to a big house.

**19** Which sentence is true about Gregor and MacTavish?

- A** MacTavish has a plan for how the sheep will make him rich, but Gregor does not.
- B** MacTavish wants to own big houses and many jewels, but Gregor does not.
- C** Gregor wants to move away to another land, but MacTavish does not.
- D** Gregor is generous with his family and his neighbors, but MacTavish is not.

**20** Which sentence expresses a theme of the story?

- A** Big loss can come from being greedy.
- B** Family can make hard times seem easier.
- C** Wealth may come from hard work.
- D** Appreciating others can lead to happiness.

**GO ON**

Which detail would be **most** important to include in a summary of the story?

- A** Gregor goes to the market and talks to many farmers about their sheep.
- B** Gregor's mother is asleep when Gregor takes money to buy the sheep.
- C** MacTavish lives at another one of his houses after he buys the sheep from Gregor.
- D** MacTavish goes to buy Gregor's sheep after he hears rumors about the animal.



**Directions**  
Read this article. Then answer questions 22 through 28.

*This is the true story of a Kenyan woman named Wangari Maathai.*

## Excerpt from *Seeds of Change: Planting a Path to Peace*

*by Jen Cullerton Johnson*

- 1 “Come,” Wangari’s mother called. She beckoned her young daughter over to a tall  
tree with a wide, smooth trunk and a crown of green, oval leaves.
- 2 “Feel,” her mother whispered.
- 3 Wangari spread her small hands over the tree’s trunk. She smoothed her fingers over  
the rough bark.
- 4 “This is the *mugumo*,” her mother said. “It is home to many. It feeds many too.”
- 5 She snapped off a wild fig from a low branch, and gave it to her daughter. Wangari  
ate the delicious fruit, just as geckos and elephants did. High in the tree, birds chirped  
in their nests. The branches bounced with jumping monkeys.
- 6 “Our people, the Kikuyu of Kenya, believe that our ancestors rest in the tree’s  
shade,” her mother explained.
- 7 Wangari wrapped her arms around the trunk as if hugging her great-grandmother’s  
spirit. She promised never to cut down the tree. . . .
- 8 When Wangari finished elementary school, she was eleven years old. Her mind was  
like a seed rooted in rich soil, ready to grow. Wangari wanted to continue her  
education, but to do so she would have to leave her village and move to the capital city  
of Nairobi. Wangari had never been farther than her valley’s ridge. She was scared.
- 9 “Go,” her mother said. She picked up a handful of earth and placed it gently into her  
daughter’s hand. “Where you go, we go.” . . .
- 10 As graduation neared, Wangari told her friends she wanted to become a biologist.
- 11 “Not many native women become biologists,” they told her.
- 12 “I will,” she said.

**GO ON**

- 13 Wangari watched sadly as her government sold more and more land to big companies that cut down forests for timber and to clear land for coffee plantations. Native trees such as cedar and acacia vanished. Without trees, birds had no place to nest. Monkeys lost their swings. Tired mothers walked miles for firewood. . . .
- 14 When Wangari visited her village she saw that the Kikuyu custom of not chopping down the mugumo trees had been lost. No longer held in place by tree roots, the soil streamed into the rivers. The water that had been used to grow maize, bananas, and sweet potatoes turned to mud and dried up. Many families went hungry.
- 15 Wangari could not bear to think of the land being destroyed. Now married and the mother of three children, she worried about what would happen to the mothers and children who depended on the land.
- 16 “We must do something,” Wangari said.
- 17 Wangari had an idea as small as a seed but as tall as a tree that reaches for the sky. “*Harabee!* Let’s work together!” she said to her countrywomen—mothers like her. Wangari dug deep into the soil, a seedling by her side. “We must plant trees.” . . .
- 18 Wangari traveled to villages, towns, and cities with saplings and seeds, shovels and hoes. At each place she went, women planted rows of trees that looked like green belts across the land. Because of this they started calling themselves the Green Belt Movement.
- 19 “We might not change the big world but we can change the landscape of the forest,” she said.
- 20 One tree turned to ten, ten to one hundred, one hundred to one million, all the way up to thirty million planted trees. Kenya grew green again. Birds nested in new trees. Monkeys swung on branches. Rivers filled with clean water. Wild figs grew heavy in mugumo branches.
- 21 Mothers fed their children maize, bananas, and sweet potatoes until they could eat no more.

**22** What idea is developed in paragraphs 4 through 7?

- A** Wangari and her mother want to plant more trees.
- B** Mugumo trees are important to people and animals.
- C** Mugumo trees can provide shade to many people.
- D** Wangari and her mother think education is important.

**23** Read this sentence from paragraph 8 of the article.

**Her mind was like a seed rooted in rich soil, ready to grow.**

What does the sentence help the reader to understand about Wangari?

- A** She likes to think about plants.
- B** She wants to keep learning.
- C** She imagines ways to help others.
- D** She believes in working together.

**24** How are the details in paragraphs 13 and 14 organized?

- A** as a description of how animal habitats changed
- B** as an explanation of the solution to a problem in the environment
- C** as a comparison of the village before and after the government sold the land
- D** as a description of how a problem was caused in the area and its effects

**GO ON**

**25** Paragraphs 17 and 18 explain that Wangari spread her idea by

- A** sharing it with women around the country
- B** giving it the name Green Belt Movement
- C** watching the land in Kenya turn green again
- D** planting trees herself everywhere she went

**26** Which sentence **most likely** expresses Wangari's point of view?

- A** People can make the changes they want by working together with determination.
- B** People change their traditions and customs with each generation.
- C** People cannot rely on the government to help them in a time of need.
- D** People in other countries do not need to work as hard on the same problem.

**27** How does the title of the article support a main idea?

- A** It describes advice Wangari followed.
- B** It describes how Wangari solved a problem.
- C** It explains how Wangari felt about trees.
- D** It explains which values Wangari's village held.

Based on the information in the article, where did Wangari **most likely** get her idea for planting trees across Kenya?

- A** from the school she attended in the capital city
- B** from the government of her country
- C** from the women of the village where she grew up
- D** from what her mother taught her as a girl

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