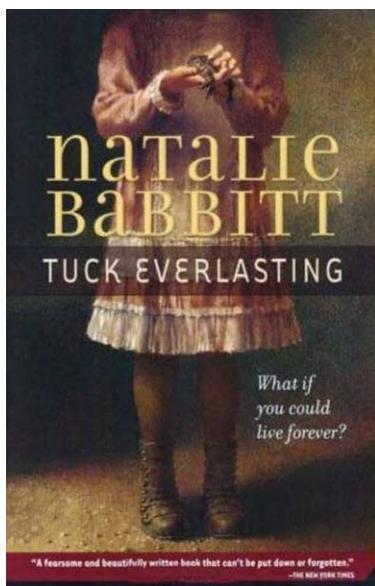


# Tuck Everlasting

by Natalie Babbitt

A Choose to Read Ohio Toolkit



## About the Book

Doomed to—or blessed with—eternal life after drinking from a magic spring, the Tuck family wanders about trying to live as inconspicuously and comfortably as they can. When ten-year-old Winnie Foster stumbles on their secret, the Tucks take her home and explain why living forever at one age is less a blessing than it might seem. Complications arise when Winnie is followed by a stranger who wants to market the spring water for a fortune.

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Book details:

**Tuck Everlasting** by Natalie Babbitt

Macmillan, 2007, 1976, ISBN 978-0-312-36981-1. Grades 5-up.

<http://us.macmillan.com/tuckeverlasting>

Other formats: audiobook, 2001, 978-1-883332648.

Available through the State Library of Ohio Talking Book Program: <http://www.klas.com/talkingbooks/ohio>.

Available in audio through the Ohio eBook Project, <http://ohdbks.lib.overdrive.com/>.

**Tuck Everlasting** won the American Library Association's Notable Book Award and the Christopher Award for juvenile fiction in 1976. **Tuck Everlasting** has also won the Janusz Korczak Medal, IBBY, Polish National Section Award.



## About the Author

Natalie Babbitt was born and grew up in Ohio. She spent large amounts of time in her early years drawing, and reading fairy tales and myths. Her mother, an amateur landscape and portrait painter, provided early art lessons and saw to it that there was always enough paper, paint, pencils, and encouragement. In those days, Mrs. Babbitt wanted only to be an illustrator. She spent a lot of time drawing at Laurel School in Cleveland and went on to major in studio art at Smith College. She married Samuel Fisher

Babbitt, an academic administrator, right after graduation, and spent the next ten years in Connecticut, Tennessee, and Washington, D.C., raising three children.

She and her husband decided to collaborate on a children's book, ***The Forty-ninth Magician***, and moved to Clinton, New York, where Mr. Babbitt became the first president of Kirkland College. Finding herself without a writer -- college presidents are very busy people -- Mrs. Babbitt decided to try becoming her own author.

Believing in the beginning that she would do best with rhyme, Mrs. Babbitt wrote her first two books, ***Dick Foote and the Shark*** and ***Phoebe's Revolt***, in verse. After this she wrote ***The Search for Delicious*** in prose, followed by ***Kneeknock Rise*** and ***Goody Hall***, both novels, and ***The Something***, a picture book for young readers. Mrs. Babbitt has also illustrated five books by Valerie Worth, written and illustrated ***The Devil's Storybook*** and ***The Devil's Other Storybook***, and written many more books including ***Tuck Everlasting***, ***The Eyes of the Amaryllis***, and ***Herbert Rowbarge***, which was hailed by *Publishers Weekly* as "her crowning achievement."

The grandmother of three, Natalie Babbitt lives in Providence, Rhode Island.

*Author biography courtesy Natalie Babbitt/Macmillan Books; used with permission. Photograph used with permission from Natalie Babbitt/Macmillan books.*

### Author Resources:

#### Macmillan Books webpage about Natalie Babbitt

<http://us.macmillan.com/author/nataliebabbitt>

#### Natalie Babbitt Author Page from ipl2 for Kids

<http://www.ipl.org/div/askauthor/babbitt.html>

#### Natalie Babbitt speaking at Bookfest 01 (requires RealPlayer)

[http://www.loc.gov/today/cyberlc/feature\\_wdesc.php?rec=3421](http://www.loc.gov/today/cyberlc/feature_wdesc.php?rec=3421)



## Talk About it!

(Spoiler warning! Some discussion questions refer to key events in the book. Do not read if you don't want to find out what happens.)

- Here is the whole poem that Winnie thinks about, although she remembers only the first two lines. Connect the poem to **Tuck Everlasting**. What would you suggest is the analogy between what the poem and the book are communicating?

*To Althea, From Prison*

Stone walls do not a prison make,  
Nor iron bars a cage;  
Minds innocent and quiet take  
That for an hermitage;  
If I have freedom in my love,  
And in my soul am free,  
Angels alone that soar above,  
Enjoy such liberty.

--Richard Lovelace

- The first week in August is described as like the top of a Ferris wheel. In what ways is the image of a Ferris wheel significant to the theme of the story?
- Consider the description of the "touch-me-not cottage" with the "painfully cut grass." Why these images? Of the village we know only about the jail house and the gallows. Why? What does this suggest about people versus nature? Contrast the Fosters' home with the Tucks'. Discuss how the image of her house is connected to Winnie's banging the stick against the iron bars of the fence.
- The stranger wore a yellow suit that seemed to glow a little. Discuss this character. He "*moved in angles, rather jerkily. But at the same time he had a kind of grace, like a well-handled marionette.*" What is the importance of this image? See also in chapter 20: "*His eyes were closed now, but except for that, he looked more than ever like a marionette, a marionette flung carelessly into a corner, arms and legs every which way midst tangled strings.*"
- In the beginning of chapter 12, Tuck and Winnie go out on the pond. Study this carefully. Examine Tuck's monologue and connect it to Jesse's later plea to Winnie.
- Consider the inscription on the tombstone. "*In loving memory / Winifred Foster Jackson / Dear Wife / Dear Mother / 1870-1948*" Does this tell us anything of significance? After all, it is about as spare as a tribute can be.

Discussion questions courtesy Dr. Janice E. Patten; from *The Literary Link*. Ed. Janice E. Patten. <http://theliterarylink.com/>. Used with permission. Many additional study questions are available for **Tuck Everlasting**. See the "Explore More!" section of this toolkit for links.



<http://oh.webjunction.org/ohcintro>

## Learn and have fun!

**Teachers:** *These activities align to Ohio Academic Content Standards as indicated in parentheses after each activity. These are examples. Other content standards may also apply.*

**Kids, parents, and others:** *These ideas are useful for library programs, family activities, and other projects. Academic content standards define what students in K-12 should know and be able to do at each grade. They are included for teachers who want to use this book in school. For more information on the Ohio Academic Content Standards, see the Ohio Department of Education website at <http://www.ode.state.oh.us> and click on "Academic Content Standards" in the Educators section.*

- Research several different religious faith systems to discover what their beliefs are regarding eternity. Compare and contrast the ideas for their similarities and differences. Use several sources to enhance your understanding, including print library resources and electronic resources available to students through INFOhio (<http://www.infohio.org/>) and to all Ohio residents through Ohio Web Library (<http://www.ohioweblibrary.org/>). (ELA Writing: Research 5-7; SS People in Societies 3-5, 6-8 Benchmark A; Library Technology Literacy 3-5, 6-8 Benchmark C)
- Divide into 2-member debate teams and debate the positive and negative aspects of a revolutionary idea or advance (for example: nuclear energy, the use of oil as an energy source, cloning). (S Science and Technology 3-5, 6-8 Benchmark A; ELA Communications: Oral and Visual 5-7)
- The events in **Tuck Everlasting** happen when Winnie is 10, but she lives to be 78. When she is in her 70s, what do you think she remembers about her brief time with the Tucks? Design a questionnaire of 5-7 questions regarding life as a 10-year-old. Select three people to interview: one person older than 60 years old, one person between 30-50 years old, and one person who is 10. Ask each of them the questions you developed and take notes of their responses. Or use an online survey tool, such as Survey Monkey (<http://www.surveymonkey.com>) to present your questionnaire and collect the responses. What can you conclude about your interviewees? Discuss your findings. (S Scientific Ways of Knowing 3-5 Benchmark B; ELA Writing Process 5-7)
- What does the term "everlasting" mean? Brainstorm synonyms and related concepts, and write down all the terms you think of. Use the thesaurus feature of Oxford Reference Online, available to students through INFOhio (<http://www.infohio.org/>) and to all Ohio residents through Ohio Web Library (<http://www.ohioweblibrary.org/>) to look up synonyms for the word "everlasting". Choose your three favorite terms from this list and draw a separate picture that represents each term. (ELA Acquisition of Vocabulary 4-7, Library Technology Literacy 3-5, 6-8 Benchmark C, A Visual Arts Creative Expression and Communication 5-8 Benchmarks B, E)

Many additional extension activities and projects are available for **Tuck Everlasting**. See the "Explore More!" section of this toolkit for links.



<http://oh.webjunction.org/ohctrointro>

## Explore more!

### **A Reader's Guide to *Tuck Everlasting* by Hannah Mitchell**

[http://www.scholastic.com/kids/homework/pdfs/Tuck\\_Everlasting.pdf](http://www.scholastic.com/kids/homework/pdfs/Tuck_Everlasting.pdf)

Read an interview with Natalie Babbitt and study the plot, characters, themes and settings of the book.

### ***Tuck Everlasting* discussion guide from Scholastic**

<http://www2.scholastic.com/browse/collateral.jsp?id=663&type=Book&typeld=1203>

Explore the book further with these discussion questions.

### **Glencoe Literature Library**

<http://www.glencoe.com/sec/literature/litlibrary/tuckeverlasting.html>

Related readings and a link to a very extensive PDF study guide for ***Tuck Everlasting***.

### ***Tuck Everlasting* from Carol Hurst's Children's Literature Website**

<http://www.carolhurst.com/titles/tuckeverlasting.html>

Includes a book review and discussion questions.

### **Curricular Connections from Audio Book Shelf**

[http://www.audiobookshelf.com/tuckever\\_cc.html](http://www.audiobookshelf.com/tuckever_cc.html)

Activities for the classroom and suggestions of additional books to read or listen to.

### **New Windmills Support Sheets: *Tuck Everlasting***

<http://bit.ly/clgowv> (opens PDF)

Teachers' notes and classroom support sheets for ***Tuck Everlasting***, including student activities and worksheets.

## About Choose to Read Ohio

Choose to Read Ohio (CTRO) spotlights Ohio authors and promotes reading across Ohio. The State Library of Ohio, in partnership with Ohioana Library Association, developed this initiative to encourage Ohioans of all ages to share literature by authors native to, residing in, or associated with Ohio. CTRO is adaptable for use in classrooms, libraries, bookstores, by book discussion groups, families, and other community groups.

Explore Choose to Read Ohio resources & toolkits: <http://oh.webjunction.org/ohctrointro>.