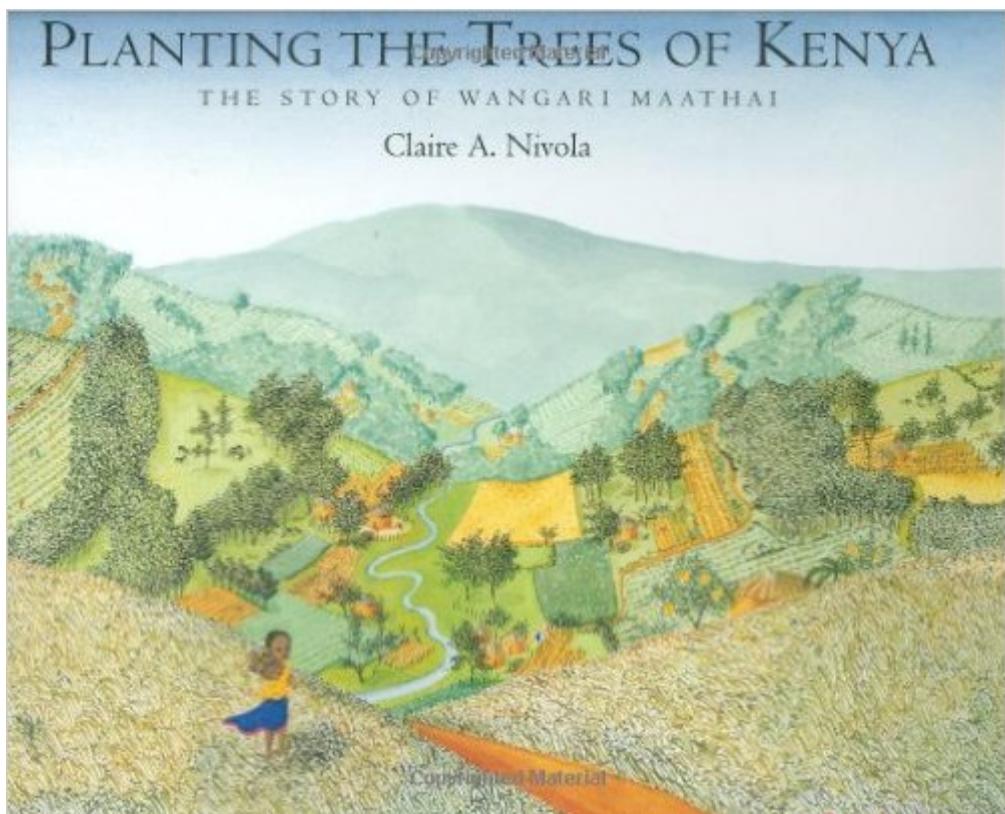


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# Planting The Trees Of Kenya: The Story Of Wangari Maathai (Frances Foster Books)



## **Synopsis**

Wangari Maathai, winner of the 2004 Nobel Peace Prize and founder of the Green Belt Movement, grew up in the highlands of Kenya, where fig trees cloaked the hills, fish filled the streams, and the people tended their bountiful gardens. But over many years, as more and more land was cleared, Kenya was transformed. When Wangari returned home from college in America, she found the village gardens dry, the people malnourished, and the trees gone. How could she alone bring back the trees and restore the gardens and the people? Bill McKibben, author of *The End of Nature*, says: "Wangari Maathai's epic story has never been told better." Everyone who reads this book will want to plant a tree! With glowing watercolor illustrations and lyrical prose, Claire Nivola tells the remarkable story of one woman's effort to change the fate of her land by teaching many to care for it. An author's note provides further information about Wangari Maathai and the Green Belt Movement. In keeping with the theme of the story, the book is printed on recycled paper.

## **Book Information**

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Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars (See all reviews) (19 customer reviews)

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Age Range: 5 - 8 years

Grade Level: Kindergarten - 3

## **Customer Reviews**

"The farms of Ohio had been replaced by shopping malls And muzak filled the air from Seneca to Cuyahoga Falls." -- The Pretenders, "My City was Gone""As Wangari Maathai tells it, when she was

growing up on a farm in the hills of central Kenya, the earth was clothed in its dress of green."Fig trees, olive trees, crotons, and flame trees covered the land, and fish filled the pure waters of the streams."The fig tree was sacred then, and Wangari knew not to disturb it, not even to carry its fallen branches home for firewood. In the stream near her homestead where she went to collect water for her mother, she played with glistening frogs' eggs, trying to gather them like beads into necklaces, though they slipped through her fingers back into clear water."But in the early 1960s Wangari Maathai left Kenya for five years in order to attend college in Kansas. It was during that time that Kenya gained independence from Britain. And in the manner with which Claire Nivola tells and illustrates the story, Wangari's return to Kenya reminds me of the old Pretenders' song. For there had been numerous and radical changes in the landscape of Kenya during Wangari's absence:"Wangari found the fig tree cut down, the little stream dried up, and no traces of frogs, tadpoles, or the silvery beads of eggs...Wangari noticed that the people no longer grew what they ate but bought food from stores. The store food was expensive, and the little they could afford was not as good for them as what they had grown themselves, so that children, even grownups, were weaker and often sickly."Meanwhile, the cutting of the remaining forests for wood to burn as fuel led to widespread erosion and the degradation of streams and rivers.

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