

DR. WANGARI MAATHAI



PLANTS A FOREST

REBEL GIRLS®



ACTIVITIES



THE POWER OF ONE

Inspired by the hummingbird in the story on pages 14-17, Wangari believed in the power of one. This is the idea that each of us, in our own small way, can make a difference. She knew that if everyone took it upon themselves to plant one tree, they would soon have a forest. She was right! Wangari passed the idea of the power of one on to her environmental organization, the Green Belt Movement, which consists of women who still work together to plant trees today.

Wangari used her power of one to help nature and to plant trees. On a separate piece of paper, list some of the things that matter to you. Is it trees, like Wangari? Maybe it's animals, or other people.

Now pick one and think about it a little harder.

- Why is this one thing important to you?
- Why might it be important to others?
- What is one small thing you can do to help?

THE GREEN JENERATION

The Green Jeneration (the *J* stands for “junior”!) is a movement created by Wangari’s granddaughters, Ruth Wangari and Elsa Wanjiru, and their friends that allows children to plant flowers, trees, or vegetables in community spaces. The project understands that plants contribute to the livelihood and well-being of the community.

Spending time in nature also lets us appreciate the air we breathe, the food we eat, the water we drink, the plant medicine that heals us, and the beauty that surrounds us. Exercise your power like Wangari did by giving back to the world that gives us life.

1. Gather your materials:

- *A container for your plant, such as a recycled can, a flowerpot, a tightly woven basket, or even an old rubber boot*
- *A dish or plastic lid to catch the drainage*
- *Soil*

- *Seeds; choose whatever you'd like—flowers, herbs, or a small tree of your own!*
- *Spray bottle*
- *Plastic wrap*

2. Have an adult help you poke a few holes in the bottom of your planter, if it doesn't already have them.
3. Fill the container $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way with soil.
4. Follow the instructions on the seed packet for planting depth.
5. Place your seeds in the hole you've created.
6. Cover the hole with soil.
7. Place the container on the dish and water your seeds. Cover the container with plastic wrap to keep in the moisture.
8. Place your potted plant by a window and watch over the coming weeks as it grows! Be sure to water your plant every few days. You can check

if your plant needs water by touching the soil. If it feels dry, your plant needs water!

9. Once your seedling grows so tall that it touches the plastic wrap, remove the covering.

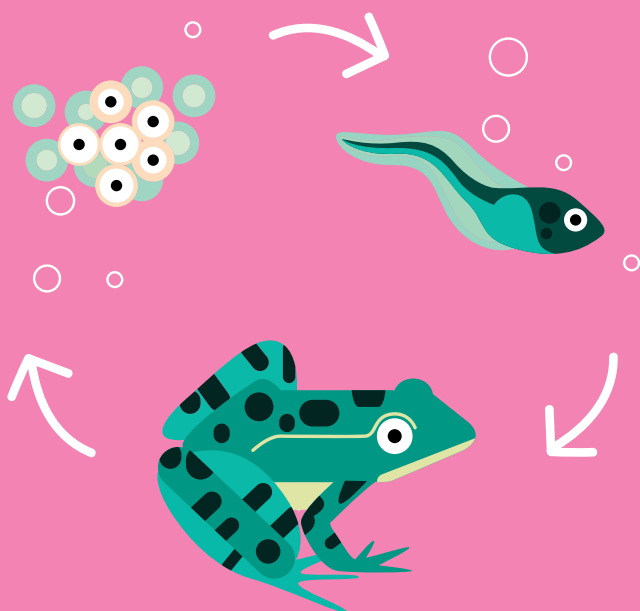


THE INTERCONNECTEDNESS OF LIVING THINGS

Wangari believed that all living things are interconnected, meaning they need one another to survive. When she studied a frog's life cycle at school (pages 32-34), she remembered the frog eggs she once saw in the stream by her home. Later in life, Wangari realized she needed to plant trees to protect the stream and its fresh water so creatures like the frogs would have a place to live.

Think about your favorite animal. What does it need to survive and thrive? On a separate piece of paper, draw your animal's life cycle and make a list of some things you can do to protect its home.

You can look at the image of the life cycle of a frog, shown on the facing page, to get you started.



THE GREEN BELT MOVEMENT

The Green Belt Movement (GBM) is an environmental organization founded by Professor Wangari Maathai in 1977 to empower communities, particularly women, to save the environment and improve livelihoods. In response to the needs of rural Kenyan women, GBM encourages them to work together to improve the surrounding land and local economies by growing seedlings and planting trees in order to bind the soil, store rainwater, and provide food and firewood. They receive a small monetary token for their work.

THE WANGARI MAATHAI FOUNDATION

Inspired by the legacy of the 2004 Nobel Peace laureate Wangari Maathai, the Wangari Maathai Foundation is a nonprofit dedicated to inspiring courageous and responsible leadership in youth and children. The Foundation uses the idea of the power of one to nurture a culture of integrity, purpose, and personal responsibility that will transform the future. The Green Jeneration is one of the Foundation's many youth initiatives.