



Seeds of Change: Planting a Path to Peace

Jen Cullerton Johnson , Sonia Lynn Sadler (Illustrator)

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A picture book biography of scientist Wangari Maathai, the first African woman and first environmentalist to win a Nobel Peace Prize (in 2004), for her work planting trees in her native Kenya.

Seeds of Change: Planting a Path to Peace Details

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Author : Jen Cullerton Johnson , Sonia Lynn Sadler (Illustrator)

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From Reader Review Seeds of Change: Planting a Path to Peace for online ebook

Eileen says

Read this book after winning it on FirstReads. Wonderful childrens' book about Wangari Maathai, the Kenyan environmentalist who won the Nobel Peace Prize. Beautiful illustrations throughout the book.

Kate says

I won this book through First Reads - thanks GoodReads!

My children and I all loved this book. I think the incredibly beautiful, vibrant illustrations reeled us in, but my kids' second and third requests for a reading were based on the tale. This is a true story of a Kenyan woman who educated herself, worked to save her country and especially its women through preservation of natural resources, and was inevitably thrown in jail. She grew stronger through her difficult experiences, though, and became Kenya's minister of the environment, eventually going on to win the Nobel Peace Prize (2004). At first I thought the narrative might be a little too complex for my smallest child (2.5) but it's so compelling that she keeps coming back for more, as do her brothers (5 years old). We all get something a little different out of it, and all is good. I really love the underlying messages that the kids are getting here, that caring for the environment improves everyone's lives, that education can be a powerful tool for good, and that helping everyone as you try to do the right thing is a recipe for a good life. I highly recommend this book for all ages.

Lisa Vegan says

A while back I read a couple picture books about Wangari Maathai, including Planting the Trees of Kenya: The Story of Wangari Maathai and Wangari's Trees of Peace: A True Story from Africa, and I loved them both, and I'm interested in reading her autobiography and her book about the Green Belt Movement, and any biographies about her, but for now I found this new to me picture book, published in 2010. This is by far my favorite of the books I've read so far.

The illustrations are so special: lush, gorgeous, wonderfully colorful, extremely appealing style, and befitting of the subject matter. Most importantly, while the story was superb in its own right, these illustrations enhanced the story to the point where I know I enjoyed it more just because of the illustrations. They're truly brilliant. I'd love to have these pictures on my walls; I'd like to be able to view them over & over.

The story was told in an interesting, informative, entertaining, and clear way. Just great!

Between the pictures and the biography, I was deeply touched. I knew quite a bit about Maathai but I felt as though I still learned some things about her and the Green Belt Movement.

I just reserved the fourth picture book about Maathai I have on my shelves, Mama Miti: Wangari Maathai and the Trees of Kenya, J, and I hope to get to the two books on my shelves that she authored.

Maathai and the Green Belt Movement are inspirational.

Emma Hughes says

"Seeds of Change" is a colorful picture book biography about the first environmentalist and African American woman to win a Noble Peace Prize, Wangari Maathai. It shows the chronology of her life through beautiful illustrations and text, beginning with the foundations of her appreciation for nature to her experiences leaving home and going to school. She broke many barriers, and worked hard to create positive change in her community and in the world as a whole. She spread her conviction throughout the world through patience and peace, discussing the importance of trees in the community. I love the ending of this book because it talks about how Wangari held firmly the belief that children are the hope and future of our world. I think that this book is appropriate for grades 2-4 especially, and would be a great read-aloud in any of those grades. I believe that this book has the ability to inspire children to become agents of change just like Wangari. I consider this a WOW book because of its vivid, bold illustrations and detailed yet readable chronology of the life of Wangari Maathai.

Tatiana says

This is another fantastic book about the amazing Wangari, affectionately known as Mama Miti. The artwork is a treasure to behold and enhances a quality story about a woman who was committed to changing her beloved country Kenya. This is a great book not only about nature, the environment and fighting the political and legal systems, but is also an excellent book for girls to learn the importance of a college education to make a difference in their lives and those around them. This is also an excellent civil rights book as well, showing how one can make a difference, "one tree at a time."

Highly recommended as a read aloud book for grades third and up, and to be used in environmental and civil rights studies, and to be paired with other books on Wangari/Mama Miti.

Hannah says

Audience: Primary

Appeal: Bright, colorful illustrations; female African-American scientist, value of environmental awareness

Award: (Coretta Scott King list) John Steptoe award for new talent, 2011

Tiffany says

This book is for a boy or girl who are in the grade 2 to 4 for them to read. This book is based on a true story about a girl named Wangari who wants to go to school and does get to go. And grows up to stand up to what she believes in and to never give up, no matter what anyone tries to do or say. She brings life and nature back to Kenya just by standing up to what she believes in and more.

This book as great pictures and bright color.

Coretta Scott King Book Award Recipients 2012

Anne Mukendi says

Seeds of change is a fiction book written by Jen Cullerton Johnson and illustrated by Sonia Lynn Sadler. The story is about the young girl from Kenya that planted trees to restore the greenery of her country. This book is different from Wangari's Trees of Peace, because it dives more deeply into the story. The colors are much more bright and vibrant than the other book as well. I believe the cultural connection that this book creates is with the clothing. The clothes are very colorful, like the different african material. I believe this book is for an older audience, like 4th graders, because of the higher reading level. I believe that the book would be very interesting for these students.

Tasha says

We have already seen two incredible picture books about Wangari, so I was hesitant to pick this one up. I should never have hesitated. This book adds to Wangari's story by telling the story of her youth growing up in the bounty of Kenya. Her mother teaches her about each tree and what it offers. Though it was unusual for girls in Kenya to be educated, Wangari's parents saw how bright she was and sent her to school. After she graduated from elementary school, Wangari went to the city to continue her education, eventually heading to the United States to study biology. Throughout her travels, she thought often of Kenya and her home. Kenya had changed with the land being harvested for timber by big foreign companies. Wangari returned to Kenya and taught women and children to plant trees, giving the people a way to feed themselves and turning the barren land green again. In 2004, Wangari won the Nobel Peace Prize, the first African woman or environmentalist to receive it.

Johnson has taken the time to really reveal where Wangari came from and what created the seeds of environmentalism within her. Other picture books pick up where Wangari is seeing the damage done in Kenya, but this addition of her childhood and education make for a more complete understanding of her. Sadler's illustrations use thick white lines which remind me of batik or stained glass. The images show interesting design choices that are often dreamlike.

I would recommend pairing this with both Mama Miti by Donna Jo Napoli and Planting the Trees of Kenya by Claire A. Nivola. The three together offer a strong environmental message combined with a complete view of the woman behind the movement.

Highly recommended, this book tells the powerful story of Wangari and her legacy in Kenya. It shows readers that one person can definitely make a difference. Appropriate for ages 5-8.

Krista the Krazy Kataloguer says

This is the fourth picture book about Wangari Maathai that I've read. Author Johnson starts with her childhood and describes her education and accomplishments. My favorite sentence comes at the end: "She understood that persistence, patience, and commitment--to an idea as small as a seed but as tall as a tree that reaches for the sky--must be planted in every child's heart." Having read Maathai's book *Unbowed*, I know that her life was about so much more than just planting trees, and Johnson has here touched upon her work

with women's rights, education, and politics. Accompanying the text are Sonia Lynn Sadler's bright, colorful, beautiful illustrations. Combine this with Claire A. Nivola's *Planting the Trees of Kenya: the Story of Wangari Maathai*, Jeanette Winter's *Wangari's Trees of Peace: a True Story From Africa*, and Donna Jo Napoli's *Mama Miti: Wangari Maathai and the Trees of Kenya*. Highly recommended!

Sarah Hannah says

Love this art. Really colorful without being too loud, possibly because of the way all the borders and outlines worked. I liked that it focused pretty evenly across her whole life, and nothing was too saccharine.

Loraine says

The beautiful children's book tells the story of Wangari Maathai a Kenyan woman who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2004 for her Green Belt Movement. She is a modern day version of Johnny Appleseed and inspired by her mother spends her life planting trees, encouraging others to plant and promoting the rights of women and children.

The illustrator, Sonia Lynn Sadler, is to be commended for her interesting illustrations that all look like wonderful jigsaw puzzles. The colors and shapes are exquisite.

Nancy Kotkin says

Text: 5 stars

Illustrations: 5 stars

Picture book biography of Wangari Maathai, Kenyan environmentalist and activist. Beautiful painted-scratchboard illustrations burst with color, depth, and life. Art has a real African feel to it. A bit wordy by today's picture book standards, but the text flows well and sustains interest. Page layouts are superb and accommodate all that text with prowess. Includes a brief author's note and sources.

Miriam says

I've already read some books on Wangari Maathai, but I want to get this one for the illustrations.

Edward Sullivan says

There are several excellent books available about Wangari Maathai, also known as Mama Miti, and this is another. Well-told and beautifully illustrated.
