

Approved for use in 6th grade

Summary of the Work:

Tuck Everlasting is set in the year 1881 in a heavily wooded area. Winnie Foster lives in a very proper middle class home where she is feeling suffocated by her home life. She discovers a magical fountain that enables people to live forever if they drink from the water. Winnie comes into contact with the Tucks, who have drunk from the fountain; Winnie has to decide between going home to her limited life or choosing to live with the Tucks where she has a whole array of new choices. She is introduced to a new world and gradually comes to realize that real joy is possible with the presence of the aging process.

Rationale:

Tuck Everlasting weaves together fantasy and reality to create a believable tale of a young girl who comes to understand the role of change and death in the universe of things. This novel prompts compelling classroom discussion of life-altering decisions for a developmentally ego-centric age group, while riding on strong character development and a strong plot.

Connections can be made to the Social Studies curriculum, particularly the era of voyages and discoveries from Christopher Columbus to Juan Ponce de Leon.

Connections can also be made to the media literacy curriculum. This novel is a strong vehicle for exploring our cultural fascination with the modern search for the “fountain of youth” through the use of cosmetics, plastic surgery, and other mechanisms for prolonging life and perfecting ourselves, and, ultimately, our cultural fear of death.

Professional Reviews and/or Critical Essays:

- **From Amazon.com** Imagine coming upon a fountain of youth in a forest. To live forever--isn't that everyone's ideal? For the Tuck family, eternal life is a reality, but their reaction to their fate is surprising. Award winner Natalie Babbitt (*Knee-Knock Rise, The Search for Delicious*) outdoes herself in this sensitive, moving adventure in which 10-year-old Winnie Foster is kidnapped, finds herself helping a murderer out of jail, and is eventually offered the ultimate gift--but doesn't know whether to accept it. Babbitt asks profound questions about the meaning of life and death, and leaves the reader with a greater appreciation for the perfect cycle of nature. Intense and powerful, exciting and poignant, *Tuck Everlasting will last forever--in the reader's imagination.* An ALA Notable Book. (Ages 9 to 12) --*Emilie Coulter --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.*

* Print resources are available from the library media center and libraries in the district. Contact any library media specialist to view the scholarly sources.

* Scholarly reviews are also available online through Books in Print and Gale. Contact the library media specialist to obtain username and password information to access the subscription database of full-text reviews.

Noted Distinction:

Readability:

- Lexile Score: 770L
- Readability Level:

Learning Resources Guidelines:

- The novel meets the Learning Resources Guidelines.

Standard Alignment: ([link](#))

Approval:

Submitted to Committee:

Approved for Adoption:

Notes on the Text:

(The best way to evaluate and understand a novel is to personally read the book in its entirety.)

This story examines the topic of a “fountain of youth.” Readers examine the issues of aging and death and explore the possible ramifications of self-centered decisions.

Connection to the Curriculum:

Death is a difficult concept even for adults. Readers are quickly saddened by the thought dying or of losing loved ones, but the alternative to living forever presents its own problems in *Tuck Everlasting*. The conflict in this text is a struggle of the main character’s knowledge of the spring and the temptation it presents. The additional literary concepts of plot development, characterization, and theme are rich sources for student examination.

Additional Connections:

(AP, Honors, Essential/Applied, Dramas, Films, etc.)

Supplementary materials in the Glencoe Literature Library Series draw from selections dealing with everlasting life, the historical search for the fountain of youth, and other fantasy stories about immortality.

A Disney film version of *Tuck Everlasting* (2002) is a worthwhile supplement to the novel. Winnie is depicted as a 15-year-old in the film, and the love story element is emphasized more strongly in the film.