



# Tuck Everlasting Study Guide

by Michael Poteet

For the novel by  
Natalie Babbitt





## Table of Contents

Study Guide Author .....	5
Note to Instructor .....	6
Synopsis .....	7
About the Novel's Author .....	8
Ideas for Prereading Activities .....	10
Prologue–Chapter 5 .....	11
Chapters 6–10 .....	20
Chapters 11–15 .....	29
Chapters 16–20 .....	33
Chapters 21–Epilogue .....	39
Word Search Review .....	44
Overview .....	46
Overview Activities .....	52
Related Resources .....	54
Answer Key .....	Separate File

## Synopsis

Tired of living under the strict discipline of her parents and grandmother, 10-year-old Winnie Foster decides to run away from home. She feels “cooped up” and wants to make a difference in the world. When she ventures out on her own, she discovers a young man in her family’s wood who belongs to a remarkable family with a remarkable claim: that the waters from a spring in the forest have given them immortality. Mae Tuck, the family’s matriarch, kidnaps Winnie in order to keep this secret safe, but a stranger in a yellow suit is already on the Tucks’ trail, eager to exploit their secret for his own financial gain. Winnie must decide whether she believes the Tucks’ claim, if she will trust and help them, and—before her adventures end—what kind of life she will choose to live.

## Chapters 6–10

### Vocabulary:

Define the underlined words from context and then check your definition against the definition given in a standard dictionary.

1. . . . [Winnie] found herself straddling the bouncing back of the fat old horse . . . while Mae ran puffing ahead, dragging on the bridle.

Your definition:

Dictionary definition:

2. Instead of crying out for help, she merely goggled at him as they fled past the spot where he stood.

Your definition:

Dictionary definition:

3. “Oh, stuff,” said Jesse with a shrug. “We might as well enjoy it, long as we can’t change it. You don’t have to be such a parson all the time.”

Your definition:

Dictionary definition:

4. The pastures, fields, and scrubby groves they crossed were vigorous with bees, . . .

Your definition:

Dictionary definition:

## *Tuck Everlasting Study Guide*

### **Similes and Metaphors:**

*Similes* and *metaphors* are figures of speech that state or imply a comparison between two unlike things that have something in common. A simile uses words such as *like* or *as* to compare. One thing is said to be *like* another thing. A metaphor does not use these comparison words. One thing is said to *be* another thing.

For example, the first two sentences in the book use both a simile and a metaphor:

The first week of August hangs at the very top of summer, the top of the live-long year, like the highest seat of a Ferris wheel when it pauses in its turning. The weeks that come before are only a climb from balmy spring, and those that follow a drop to the chill of autumn.

The phrase “like the highest seat of a Ferris wheel” is a simile comparing the first week of August to the highest seat on the Ferris wheel. This comparison is stated directly, through the use of the word “like.”

The phrase “are only a climb from balmy spring” is a metaphor comparing the preceding weeks to a climb. We know that dates on a calendar cannot have altitude, so the comparison is implied by stating that these weeks *are* a climb, rather than saying that they are *like* a climb.

Each of the following passages from *Tuck Everlasting* contains a metaphor or simile. Put an M in the space after the sentence if the comparison is a metaphor or an S if the comparison is a simile. Then write down the two things that are being compared.

1. The wood was at the center, the hub of the wheel. All wheels must have a hub.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ is compared to \_\_\_\_\_

2. Mae sat there frowning, a great potato of a woman with a round, sensible face and calm brown eyes. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ is compared to \_\_\_\_\_

### *Tuck Everlasting Study Guide*

7. What is Tuck's reaction to meeting Winnie and finding out that she knows their secret? Why do you think he reacts this way?

### **Thinking About the Story:**

#### *Comparing and Contrasting:*

8. Read the description of the woods surrounding the Tucks' cottage in the fourth paragraph of Chapter 9. How does the description of these woods compare to the description of the Fosters' wood in Chapter 1?
9. Why might the author have chosen to describe these two locations in similar terms?
10. Read the description of the Tucks' cottage from Chapter 10. How does the Tucks' cottage contrast to the Fosters' cottage?
11. How does this contrast highlight the differences in the two families?

*Tuck Everlasting Study Guide*

16. When Mae leaves for Treegap in Chapter 1, she asks Tuck, “Will you be all right?” Tuck replies, “What in the world could possibly happen to me?”  
Practically speaking, what would the Tucks ever have to worry about or fear?
17. What limits or boundaries would there be on people like the Tucks who could live forever?
18. According to Jesse, Tuck speculates that the spring is “something left over from . . . some other plan for the way the world should be.” What do you think he means?
19. Read Genesis 2:4–3:24. Based on these verses, what do you think God wanted the world to be like? What happened that changed things?
20. Talking about their life with Winnie, Mae says, “Life’s got to be lived, no matter how long or short . . . . You got to take what comes . . . . [T]here’s no use trying to figure why things fall the way they do. Things just are, and fussing don’t bring changes.” How is Mae’s outlook on life similar to that found in Ecclesiastes 3:1–13? How is it different?

## *Tuck Everlasting Study Guide Answer Key*

is telling them. This also suggests that the man in the yellow suit is in complete control of the situation. He has put them in a situation where they must do as he wishes. Answers may vary. The author most likely meant to communicate exactly this: that the man in the yellow suit is the one in charge of the situation.

9. Answers may vary. Chapter 15 reveals that the man in the yellow suit is no friend to either the Fosters or the Tucks. He has his own agenda—he wants the Fosters’ wood. He is clever and scheming and he will use people to get what he wants.

10. Answers may vary.

*Dig Deeper:*

11. Tuck’s image of the wheel is meant to convey his belief that life involves constant change: “[E]verywhere around us, things is moving and growing and changing . . . I want to grow again . . . and change” (Ch. 12). The writer of Ecclesiastes also sees life as fluid and in motion; he adopts a similarly cyclical view of the world. Yet he also voices a frustration with the “wheel” of life: “All things are wearisome, more than one can say” (Ecclesiastes 1:8a). The weariness the writer of Ecclesiastes expresses comes from participating in the cycle of life; Tuck’s weariness comes from not participating in it. Accept other reasonable responses.

12. Answers will vary.

### *Chapters 16–20*

*Vocabulary:*

1. in partnership with
2. something supplied for convenience or to satisfy a need, such as food or lodging
3. a frame from which criminals are hanged
4. moving at an easy, bounding gait, capable of being sustained for a long time
5. a division of philosophy concerned with the fundamental nature of reality and that which lies outside objective experience
6. marked by obstinance, or an ill-tempered mood

*Questions:*

1. By the time they figured out what was happening, Miles’ children were almost as old as he was and his wife was almost twice his age. Also, Tuck was against it, believing that the fewer people who knew about the spring, the fewer people who could tell about it.
2. The man in the yellow suit heard his grandmother tell stories about a family that never grew old. He found them because he heard and recognized the tune played by Mae’s music box.
3. He plans to sell the water from the spring to those who “deserve” it, believing that anyone would “give a fortune to live forever.”
4. The man in the yellow suit wanted to take Winnie back to her family, but he also threatened to make her drink water from the spring. His plan was to do things to her that would kill anyone who was mortal to demonstrate the power of the spring water. Mae hits the man with the stock of a shotgun, a wound from which he eventually dies. She believed she had to do this in order to protect Winnie and the Tucks’ secret.
5. This time Winnie does not see the possibilities that might happen to her, but the possibilities that she might keep from happening to someone else.