



Transcript for *Planting the Trees of Kenya: The Story of Wangari Maathai* by Claire A. Nivola (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, an Imprint of Macmillan)

Introduction (approximately 0:00 – 4:00)

Hi everyone! It's Colleen from the KU Natural History Museum, and I'm so excited for today's Story Book Science! I do want to wait, just so that we can give an opportunity for other folks to join us.

So while we wait, I want to just quickly go over what we are going to discuss in our book today. So we're going to continue to talk about trees. If you remember from last week, we talked about these giant humongous coast redwoods that grow in Northern California. But this week we're going to be reading about trees in a place very far away from California. We're going to be talking about trees in Kenya.

Now Kenya is a country on the continent of Africa. So I have a map. Right here is where Kenya is located. And you can see that it's just one of many countries that you can find on the continent of Africa. So there are many different countries, many different peoples, many different cultures, but we're going to be focusing on Kenya today.

Now I have another map of the continent of Africa I want to show you. And this map, you'll notice that there's a red line right there. And that red line represents an imaginary line that goes all the way around the Earth, splitting it in half. And it also splits the continent of Africa into two halves: the Northern Hemisphere and the Southern Hemisphere. Now this line is called the equator, and we'll talk about why the equator's important as a geographical tool because we can use the equator to better understand some of the natural landscapes and where you would find those natural landscapes on the continent of Africa. So we'll talk about that after we read our story, but it looks like folks have joined us. So let's go ahead and get started!

First and foremost, we need to go over our rules for Story Book Science. We are not in the museum, but we are going to follow museum rules. And what that means is if you want to write a question or if you want to write a comment, you should feel welcome to do so, but you need to make sure that you're using kind and considerate words. And if you respond to someone's question or comment, you also need to make sure you use kind and considerate words. It's very important that we make sure that this space is welcoming and inclusive to all.

So for today's Story Book Science, we will be reading the book *Planting the Trees of Kenya: The Story of Wangari Maathai*. This book is written and illustrated by Claire A. Nivola, and it's published and being read with permission from Farrar, Straus and Giroux, which is an imprint of Macmillan. So thank you to them for the permission to read the book! I love this book. I think it's amazing to read the wonderful true story of Wangari Maathai. Additionally, I think it's great to learn about her movement, the Green Belt Movement, and how it has supported communities, especially women, in her home country of Kenya, and how this movement has grown all throughout the world as well. Now if you have any questions, please feel free to ask those. I will let you know I may not be able to see them until the very end, and only if time remains. Additionally, if you need a partial transcript of this reading, that will be made available later today, and you can find it on the museum website. There's a link to where you can find it in the video description.

So let's go ahead and get started!

Planting the Trees of Kenya: The Story of Wangari Maathai.

Reading from *Planting the Trees of Kenya: The Story of Wangari Maathai* (approximately 4:01 – 13:13)

Planting the Trees of Kenya: The Story of Wangari Maathai *includes copyrighted materials, and we do not have permission to include the written text of the book in this transcript.*

Conclusion (approximately 13:14 – 22:36)

Alright, and that is the end of *Planting the Trees of Kenya: The Story of Wangari Maathai*. Now I love this book! Like I said earlier, it's amazing to learn about Wangari and her movement and how she was able to help support and build up communities. And I just think that's so wonderful and amazing that she was able to do that, and that movement has continued to grow.

Now in the story we just read, we were talking about the country of Kenya. And Kenya is a country on the continent of Africa. So just to show you again on the map, that's where Kenya is located on the continent of Africa. And we also know that the equator, that imaginary line that goes all around the Earth, right in the center, separates the continent of Africa into two parts: the Northern Hemisphere and the Southern Hemisphere. Now it's important to understand location, so the equator is a good helpful tool for geography. But it's also good because we can look at where the equator is located on a map to help us understand the landscape of the continent of Africa because there are so many different landscapes, so many different natural resources! And I want to go over just a few with you today.

So the first I want to go over is the desert. Now this is a photo of sand dunes of the Sahara Desert, and this photo was taken near Morocco. So let's look at a map of the Northern Hemisphere of the continent of Africa to better understand what we're talking about. So, just to make sure we know where we are geographically, there's the equator, that line that splits the continent into those two halves. And so we're looking at the Northern Hemisphere. And all of this orange on the map that you see, that's the Sahara Desert. The Sahara Desert is huge! It is a very big desert. And we just saw one photo of it, and that photo was taken near Morocco. And that's where Morocco is on our map. But what you can see is the Sahara Desert is so much bigger than just Morocco! So this is just one example of a natural landscape you can find on the continent of Africa.

Another landscape includes mountains. Now one of the mountains that I tend to see photos of is Kilimanjaro. But this photo is a little misleading because Kilimanjaro is actually three volcanic cones! They are inactive, so they're not active volcanoes. But if we want to look at a more accurate photo of Kilimanjaro, this is what we want to look at. We want to see those three volcanic cones. And you can see them 1, 2, 3, with the one in the center being the tallest. Now Kilimanjaro is located in eastern Africa in the country of Tanzania. So this is where it would be located on a map, and so right near the border of Kenya and Tanzania. So another natural landscape in another part of the continent.

Now another natural landscape includes rainforest. Now the rainforests on the continent of Africa, you find those in the Congo Basin. So I have a map to help us understand where that is. Now this map, we see that there's the Congo River, and then there are these smaller rivers that flow into the Congo River. And to be honest, it's a little overwhelming to look at this map because there's so much going on! So this is where it's helpful to look at the smaller map. Do you all see that red square? So that red square, that represents what's happening in the larger portion of the map. So what we can tell by looking at the red square is that the Congo

Basin incorporates a lot of different countries, including the Democratic Republic of the Congo. My finger is pointing to it. Now I wanted to give you an example of what the rainforests look like. So this is a photo of the Ituri Rainforest, and look how green and lush that vegetation is! And look how much is growing! This is a huge rainforest because here's a photo of the tree tops, but then it keeps continuing off into the distance. So these rainforests are lush and green and full of biodiversity! They're full of different plant and different animals, and it's just an amazing landscape.

Now the last landscape I want to share are the grasslands or the savannas. Now there are a lot of places to see savannas on the continent of Africa, but the pictures I'm going to show you are from one area in particular. And they're from the Serengeti plains. And this photo really demonstrates the savanna, that there are trees, but they're dispersed. They're very far away from each other. And what you see primarily are grasses, and it's a big wide open space. And the Serengeti is a really good place to see animal migrations in these wide open spaces. And this is a photo of that. This is a photo of wildebeests, or gnus, as they migrate on the plains. Now, like I said, the Serengeti is just one example of a savanna on the continent of Africa. There are many others, and you tend to see those in southern Africa. So it's not just one place where you can find a savanna but many places.

Now when we talk about the continent of Africa, we talk about a lot of different natural landscapes. But we also can talk about natural resources, so things the earth provides that people can use. And on the continent of Africa, there are many different examples of natural resources, and people, powerful leaders in Europe, wanted those natural resources. And they took them without asking! And when they did that impacted the land, and it also impacted the people that lived there.

Now where Wangari Maathai was born in Kenya, she was born when Kenya was a colony. So it was under British rule. So it was a colony of Great Britain. And then in 1963, Kenya gained its independence. So it was no longer a colony, but the impact of Great Britain being there remained, especially on the land. And we talked about that in the book: how the land was bare, the trees had been cut down. All of these different things had happened that impacted the land and also impacted the people. But Wangari had her idea for the Green Belt Movement to encourage women in their communities to grow and plant and support not only themselves but their families. And that was a really successful and powerful movement that we got to read about in the book. So I just want you to think about Wangari's movement and how that helped grow back the land.

Now this is the end of Story Book Science, but I do want to let you know I will be back next week to read a new book. I will be reading the book *Buzzing with Questions: The Inquisitive Mind of Charles Henry Turner*. Now Charles Henry Turner was one of the first African American entomologists. So what that means is he studied insects, and not only did he study insects, but he was a pioneer! So he led the way in how entomologists, even today, study insects and insect behavior, so trying to understand why insects do what they do. So I'm so excited to get to read that book with you, but I'm also excited because joining me after the reading will be an entomologist from the museum! Rachel Neff will join me after our reading to talk about other entomologists who've inspired her. She'll talk about insects you can find in your backyard, and she'll even talk about insect conservation! So I'm really excited for Story Book Science next week, and I hope you join Rachel and myself here on Facebook Live at 10am. I'll see you then! Bye!