

# to Save the GIANTS



## INTERNATIONAL

and take steps to halt the **domestic trade** in both countries. The move signaled fresh hope for elephants and allowed for a welcome moment of cooperation between China and the U.S. (see sidebar “A Tense Relationship,” far right). Once in place, the new rules could be a major step toward ending the poaching crisis that threatens to wipe out elephants.

“We currently face the risk of losing wild elephants during my lifetime,” Obama said recently. “It’d be an unpardonable loss for humanity and the natural world. There’s no question: We need to take urgent action to save one of the planet’s most majestic species.”

### Laws and Limitations

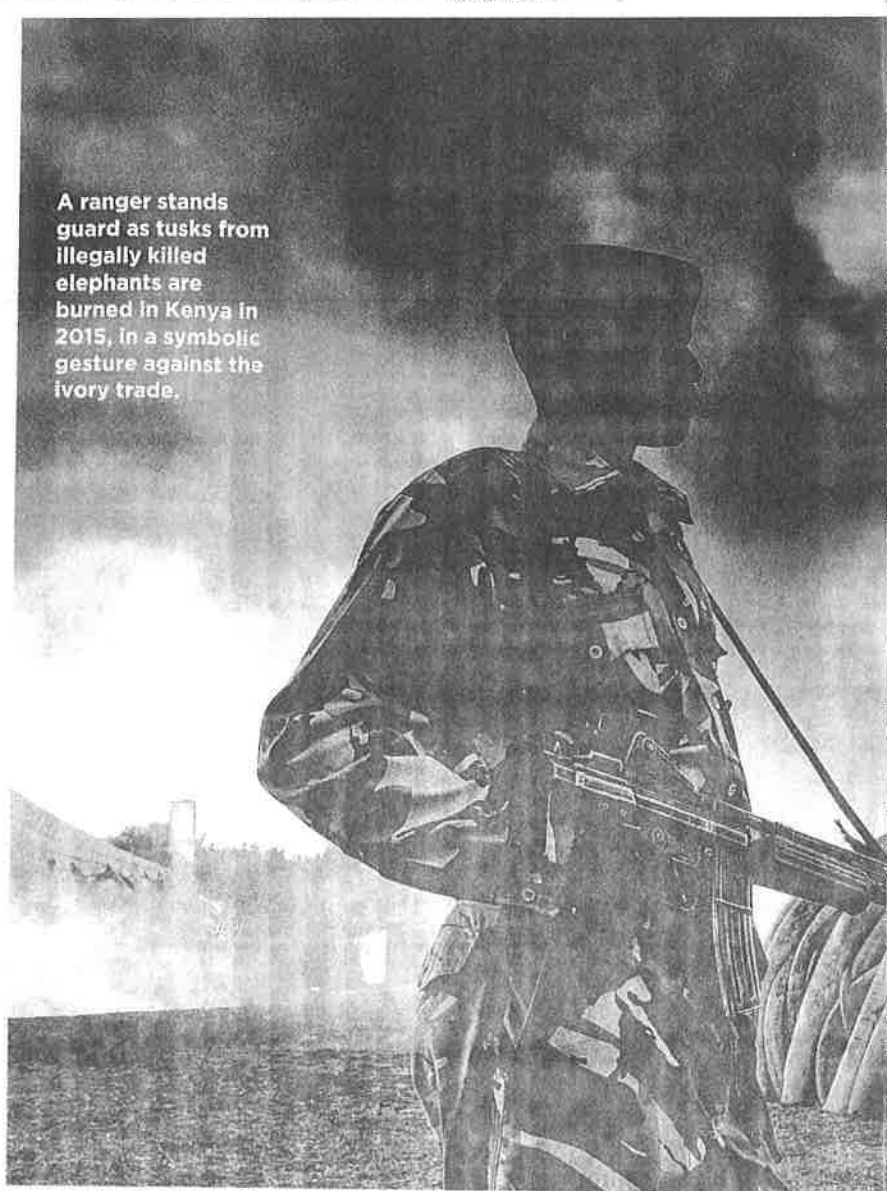
At one time, elephants were too numerous to count in Africa. What has brought the world’s largest land mammal to the point of vanishing? Conservationists say that decades of ineffective regulations have allowed the illegal ivory trade—and the poaching that fuels it—to flourish.

All African elephants have tusks, and have been hunted for them for centuries. (Asian elephants are also poached, but only some have tusks. Most illegal ivory comes from African elephants.) Poaching spiraled out of control in Africa in the late 1970s as global demand for ivory grew. From 1979 to 1989, the African elephant population dropped from 1.3 million to 600,000.

In 1989, the world took action. The United Nations’ Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)—a treaty that governs wildlife trade—banned international sales of African ivory. The ban went into effect the following year but had several limitations. Among them: Trading ivory imported before 1989 remained legal.

At first, the restrictions worked, and elephant populations began to

**A ranger stands guard as tusks from illegally killed elephants are burned in Kenya in 2015, in a symbolic gesture against the ivory trade.**



**“WE NEED TO TAKE URGENT ACTION TO SAVE ONE OF THE PLANET’S MOST MAJESTIC SPECIES.”**

recover. Then, in 1999, CITES made a controversial decision. It allowed some African countries to auction 55 tons of stockpiled ivory to Japan, with the proceeds going toward conservation. In 2008, China was similarly allowed to buy 68 tons of stockpiled ivory from Africa.

The intention of those sales was to flood the market with legal ivory to lower its value, but the opposite occurred. As more ivory became

available, more people wanted it. Demand surged, prices rose, and China’s ivory carving industry—which had declined under the ban—sprang back to life. China’s government introduced an ivory product certification system meant to prevent illegal sales, but unethical merchants were able to dodge the rules.

“The ivory market in China is really impossible to regulate,” says Grace Ge Gabriel, Asia regional director for the



## A TENSE RELATIONSHIP

Economically, the U.S. and China are tightly bound: Their annual trade adds up to \$600 billion, China is the largest holder of U.S. government debt, and no other country buys more American agricultural products.

But politically, the two nations often clash, and their relationship remains tense. Recently, China increased its military spending. (It spent \$145 billion last year, second only to the U.S., which spent \$577 billion.) China has also picked fights with several of its neighbors in Southeast Asia, claiming control over large parts of the South China Sea. These and other issues have made U.S. leaders uneasy.

"There is extensive cooperation [between the U.S. and China] at the day-to-day, working level, but the level of mistrust is incredibly high and growing," says Scott Kennedy, a China expert at the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

The agreement on the ivory trade is unlikely to alter that dynamic, but it does provide an opportunity for the two nations to find some common ground. "Wildlife trafficking is a pretty safe area for us to collaborate," says Jan Berris, vice president of the National Committee on U.S.-China Relations. "Clearly, the U.S. and China, despite the differences we have, are trying in many ways to cooperate."



U.S. President Barack Obama and Chinese President Xi Jinping in 2014

International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW). "Once legal trade was allowed, the whole thing exploded."

Elephants are the ones paying the price. Poaching has caused African elephant populations to fall to about 500,000 today. The species is classified as vulnerable, meaning it's likely to become endangered.

### "White Gold" in China

China—where as much as 70 percent of illegal ivory ends up—has long had a love affair with the material. The ivory carving tradition there dates back to at least the Shang dynasty (c. 1600 B.C.–1046 B.C.). Ivory is prized not only for its beauty, but also for the healing properties many people believe it to have. Popular myth holds that ivory powder,

for example, can do everything from heal a sore throat to clear up skin.

In the past, ivory products were a luxury only a privileged few could afford. That has changed in recent decades as China has enjoyed an economic boom. In 1978, the Communist country's leaders adopted reforms that loosened governmental control of the economy. Since then, more than 500 million Chinese have been lifted out of poverty. That has allowed vast numbers of people to buy ivory.

In addition to being a status symbol, ivory has been promoted as a wise investment among Chinese. Gabriel recalls looking at an ivory pot in a Beijing market in 2011. "The shop owner told me, 'If you buy this today, it will triple its price next year.'"

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It's white gold." Indeed, the wholesale price of illegal ivory soared from about \$170 per kilogram in 2002 to \$2,100 per kilogram in 2014.

Compounding the problem, says Gabriel, is a widespread ignorance of the fact that elephants must be killed for all of their ivory to be harvested. "The [Mandarin] Chinese word for ivory, *xiangya*, literally means 'elephant's teeth,'" she says. "People think, 'Well, a tooth can fall out, and you don't die from it.'"

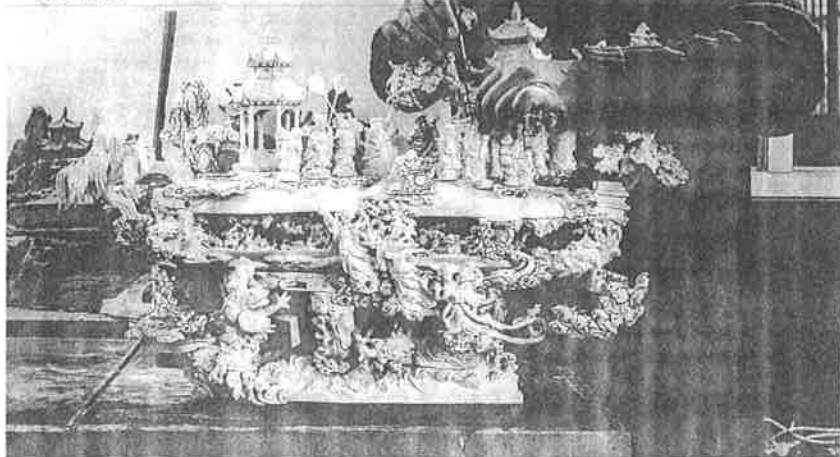
### The U.S. Market

Appetite for ivory isn't limited to China. The U.S. is the world's second-largest ivory market, and has its own long history with it. From about 1840 to 1940, the U.S. was the leading importer of ivory. Most of it traveled from Africa to Connecticut, where factories churned out ivory combs, billiard balls, and piano keys.

As in China, current U.S. ivory laws are complex. Importing African elephant ivory to sell it is against the law, but some items (such as hunting trophies and certain antiques) are allowed in. Also, ivory that was imported or harvested before certain dates can be exported to other countries and sold between states.

These gaps in the law have opened the door to an illegal ivory trade in the

An ivory carver works at a state-owned factory in China.



U.S. In 2011, for example, one ton of illegal ivory (valued at \$800,000) was seized from a Philadelphia art dealer.

That's why tightening federal law is critical, experts say. State laws are also key to stopping the illegal ivory, however. Four states—California, New Jersey, New York, and Washington—have passed ivory bans, and other states are considering doing the same.

"Not only is the U.S. a market, we're a global influencer," says Jeffrey Flocken, IFAW's North American regional director. "We have to clean up our own house, get our ivory off the streets, and make our laws definitive and meaningful."

### Hope on the Horizon

The vow by Presidents Obama and Xi to end the ivory trade was hailed by conservationists as a landmark move. The two countries agreed to share information and increase cooperation among law enforcement.

"It is the first time that a U.S. president and a Chinese president have made a specific pledge about saving wildlife," Wayne Pacelle, president of the Humane Society of the United States, said at the time of the pact.

In the U.S., new federal restrictions could be finalized within months. China's timeline is less clear, although U.S. officials say they expect the ban to go into effect within the year. Still, questions remain on how it will be carried out. For example, what will happen to China's remaining legal ivory?

Already, though, attitudes seem to be changing. Wholesale ivory prices recently dropped in China. Thanks to educational campaigns, public opinion is turning against owning it. That's good news for African elephants, and everyone who values the species.

"Elephants are beloved by people around the globe," says Flocken. "They have a right to exist on this planet that we share with them. If we were to lose them, it would be a tragedy." ↔

## Join the Herd!

Here are a few ways you can help Africa's elephants:

### RAISE AWARENESS

About 96 elephants are killed in Africa every day. Let people know about the crisis by creating a poster (templates are available at [96elephants.org/family](http://96elephants.org/family)), snapping a photo of it, and sharing it on social media with the hashtag #elphie.

### PUSH FOR LAWS

Do research to find out if your state has banned ivory sales. If it hasn't, write to your state representatives and urge them to consider passing such a law. (The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust provides a sample letter at [iworry.org/action](http://iworry.org/action).)

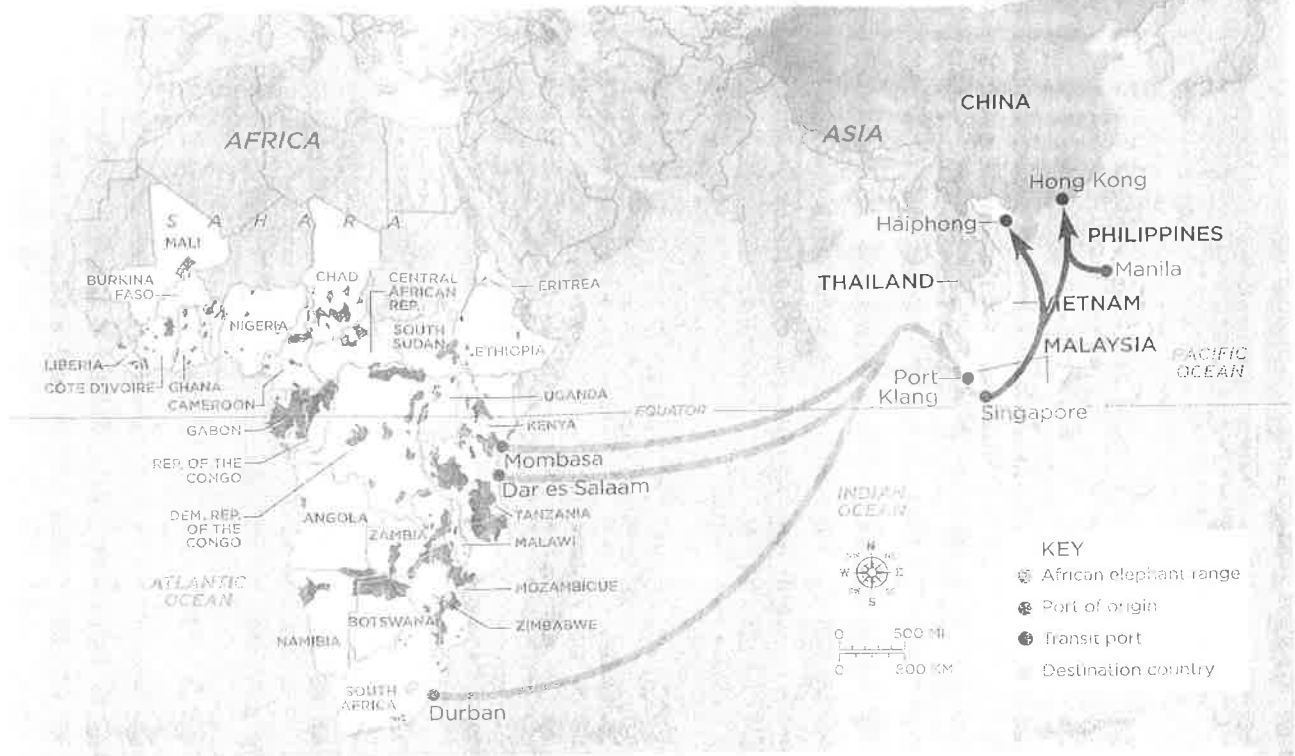
### SPREAD THE WORD

Elephants possess complex intelligence and also play an important role in ecosystems throughout Africa. Learn more about these creatures and why they matter at [worldwildlife.org/species/elephant](http://worldwildlife.org/species/elephant), then educate others.

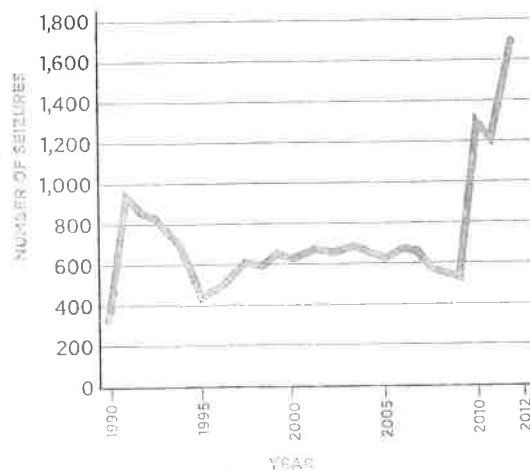


## THE ILLEGAL IVORY TRADE

Most illegal ivory makes its way to Asia. Ivory is smuggled by ship from Africa to Asian ports. Smugglers often change vessels to avoid detection.



## ESTIMATED NUMBER OF IVORY SEIZURES



SOURCES: The Elephant Trade Information System (chart); National Geographic and TRAFFIC (map)

## QUESTIONS

- Which country has the northernmost African elephant range?
- African elephants live in which countries along the equator?
- From which coast does illegal ivory leave Africa?
- Which ocean do ivory shipments cross?
- Port Klang is a transit port in which country?
- Which destination country has a transit port?
- In which compass direction would ivory travel from Port Klang to Hong Kong?
- Hong Kong is about how many straight-line miles from Singapore?
- About how many ivory seizures were reported in 1990, the year the CITES ban took effect?
- What is the difference between that number and the number of ivory seizures in 2012?



Why might the new U.S.-China ban on ivory be more effective than previous efforts? Explain.



Watch a video about a reformed poacher at [junior.scholastic.com](http://junior.scholastic.com).



The radioactive cloud formed by the atomic bomb explosion over Hiroshima, Japan, on August 6, 1945

# THE ANSWER

The winner of our **2016 Eyewitness to History** contest shares his interview with his grandmother, Mochiko Yokoyama DeSilva, who experienced the aftermath of the atomic bomb that was detonated over Hiroshima, Japan, in 1945

BY EBEN DeSILVA, 12, EXETER, NEW HAMPSHIRE



World War II (1939-1945), one of history's most turbulent periods, is the backdrop to this interview by Eben

DeSilva (*above*). The fighting began in Europe in 1939, but the U.S. didn't take part until 1941, after Japan attacked American naval bases in Hawaii. In 1945, the U.S. hit Japan with a new weapon far more powerful than ever before seen: the atomic bomb. Eben's grandmother witnessed the bomb's devastation firsthand. After interviewing her, says Eben, he drew one main conclusion: "It is necessary to find a way to avoid war, because war hurts more than it gains."

**Eben DeSilva:** Where did you live during your childhood?

**Mochiko Yokoyama DeSilva:** I was born in Tokyo, Japan, in January 1936, and I lived there until I was 6. After the war started and the bombing raids on the city of Tokyo became more frequent, we evacuated to my father's ancestral village, Jinseki, just outside of Hiroshima City, where I lived until I was 15. Then I went to school in Hiroshima City, [and] lived there for several months. Then I came to the United States by boat in 1951.

**ED:** How were you involved with the

tragic event that killed [tens of] thousands of people?

**MYD:** We lived in Hiroshima Prefecture but not directly in the city. Hiroshima City is shaped like a bowl surrounded by a mountain range, and our home was in the mountains. We lived close enough to feel the vibration from the atomic bomb but not get the radiation, which [is what] saved us.

One week after this incredible, horrendous bomb destroyed Hiroshima, my mother and I traveled there to look for my father's sister's family. We found out that they [had] moved to Osaka to stay with other relatives.

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t 6, 1945

I saw the city at that time—the whole thing was flattened.

**ED:** Were any of your relatives in or around Hiroshima at the time?

**MYD:** A number of them.

**ED:** Describe the terrible damage that had been done to the city.

**MYD:** My recollection of the city is [of] one vast, burned field with bits and pieces of building materials and what might have been household items. It looked like the whole city was burned by this one bomb. You could practically see the horizon.

There were people sheltering anywhere [they could], and some were badly burned. Someone pointed out a large stone near the **epicenter**, where the bomb was dropped. Upon the stone was the silhouette of a person burned on it.

**ED:** Your mother's job had a connection to these events. What was it?

**MYD:** My mother worked for the Atomic Bomb Casualty Commission as a secretary. This research institution [established by President Harry S. Truman after the war] studied, among other things, the long-term effects of radiation exposure on the survivors of the atomic bomb.

Because she was bilingual in Japanese and English, while she was working there she was recruited to accompany 25 young ladies who [as children] had been disfigured from injuries sustained from the explosion of the atomic bomb for treatment in the U.S.

**ED:** How was this effort organized?

**MYD:** The project was called the Hiroshima Maidens project, and my mother accompanied the maidens as



▲ The ruined remains of Hiroshima in 1945, soon after the bombing

► The Hiroshima Maidens in New York in 1955



their chaperone.

Ten years [after the bombing,] they came to the U.S. to get plastic reconstructive surgery at Mount Sinai Hospital in New York City. The maidens lived with American families in homestays during their time in the U.S.

**ED:** Did you accompany these maidens with your mother the whole time?

**MYD:** No, I was not directly involved in the project—I volunteered for just one summer vacation. My job was to help translate English into Japanese. The maidens were housed in the suburbs of New Jersey and New York. I would accompany them to and

from their treatments at Mount Sinai.

**ED:** When the maidens arrived in the U.S., were they treated with care?

**MYD:** Yes, they were embraced by all whom they came in contact with. It was truly healing for them both physically and emotionally.

**ED:** Have the U.S. and Japan settled their differences?

**MYD:** There is a **bilateral** alliance, and Japan is now an ally of the U.S.

**ED:** How do you feel today about the bombings? Are you bitter at the Americans, or have you moved on?

**MYD:** War does terrible things. Children become orphans. People lose their lives. War has huge human costs. In Syria [today], for example, people can't live there, so they try to find anywhere else on Earth to go.

[War] splits families. Some of my classmates in Hiroshima lost their parents at a young age. I am not bitter at the Americans, but I am a pacifist. War is not the answer. ♦



Eben's grandmother, Mochiko Yokoyama DeSilva, about 1960



Download the complete interview and skills sheets at [junior.scholastic.com](http://junior.scholastic.com).



## Should Libraries Get Rid of Printed Books?

THE NEW PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS, are filled with big cozy chairs, long tables, and rows of computers. The one thing they don't have? Books. Bexar County's Digital Library, also known as BiblioTech, is the nation's first—and only—public library system to go entirely digital. Its collection includes more than 10,000 e-books and hundreds of tablets for people to borrow.

While bookless libraries have been common on college campuses

across the country for years, more public libraries—and school libraries—recently started to replace some of their printed books with e-readers and computers.

Supporters of the switch point out that students today are much more likely to consult the Internet than a printed encyclopedia—and that a Google search is often faster and easier than flipping through stacks of books in a library. Plus, e-readers and other digital resources can

get kids excited about reading.

Still, opponents say that physical books have many advantages and that it would be a mistake for libraries to eliminate them. Research shows that people tend to concentrate much better when reading in print. Critics of the switch also point to studies showing that most people—including kids—actually prefer reading physical books.

Should libraries get rid of printed books? Two experts weigh in.





# YES

As a teacher librarian and huge fan of school libraries, I hope there

will never be a time when digital content replaces the printed book entirely. However, there is now a very important place for electronic books within our libraries and classrooms.

First and foremost, digital resources get students excited about reading. E-books allow kids to engage with content like never

before. Many devices have built-in learning tools, including narration, videos, live Twitter chats, up-to-date news feeds, and interactive assessments. Such features make learning more fun.

In addition, most students today conduct research almost exclusively online.

Browsing Web pages or other electronic sources is much easier than searching through stacks of printed books. Ninety-nine percent of middle and high school teachers surveyed say that the Internet enables students to access a wide range of resources beyond just books, according to the Pew Research Center. More than three quarters of teachers also reported that digital technology has had a “mostly positive” impact on kids’ research habits.

And let’s not forget that the information in printed textbooks and encyclopedias can become outdated in just a few years. Many electronic sources, on the other hand, are regularly updated online. Plus, physical books are expensive to replace. A new textbook typically costs about \$100. In the long run, it’s often cheaper for school districts to invest in computers and other digital tools than to buy new textbooks every few years.

In my opinion, nothing will ever completely replace the printed books that fill libraries and classrooms across the country. But I must admit—it’s exciting for me to know that there’s a device that can make reading and learning more interactive, creative, and fun.

—SHANNON MCCLINTOCK MILLER

Teacher librarian and educational consultant,  
*The Library Voice*

Digital resources can get kids excited about reading and learning.

# NO

Most of us read a lot on digital screens. We access Web pages, check out restaurants, and read

friends’ Facebook status updates. In many schools, reading assignments are entirely online. But if more libraries go the way of BiblioTech, they will shortchange readers.

Why? Because physical books offer us many advantages over digital reading. With electronic screens, we often multitask. We tend to read faster and less carefully on laptops, tablets, or mobile phones. Some people say that reading in print is “real reading.” Indeed, my research in five countries shows that 92 percent of people reported concentrating best when reading in print.

People often say that readers who like print are just being nostalgic and that it’s only older people who want physical books. Yet if you ask younger readers, they may surprise you. My own studies reveal that if the cost were the same, college students would prefer reading books in print, both for schoolwork and when reading for fun. Many kids and teens also enjoy turning the pages, having a physical sense of how much of the book they have read, or remembering where in the text (near the beginning, on the upper-right-hand side) they saw an important sentence.

Logically, a bookless library is a contradiction in terms. After all, the word *library* comes from the Latin word for “book.” Bookshelves full of physical volumes show us books we haven’t read. They invite us in. With digital books, out of sight is generally out of mind.

Digital reading has many virtues, especially when someone is skimming and searching for information. For reading short articles or finding out where Marco Polo traveled, electronic sources are ideal. But if you want to get absorbed in a novel or think through a problem, the physical books in a library are priceless.

—NAOMIE S. BARON

Linguistics professor, American University, and author,  
*Words Onscreen: The Fate of Reading in a Digital World*

Studies show that most people concentrate best when reading in print.

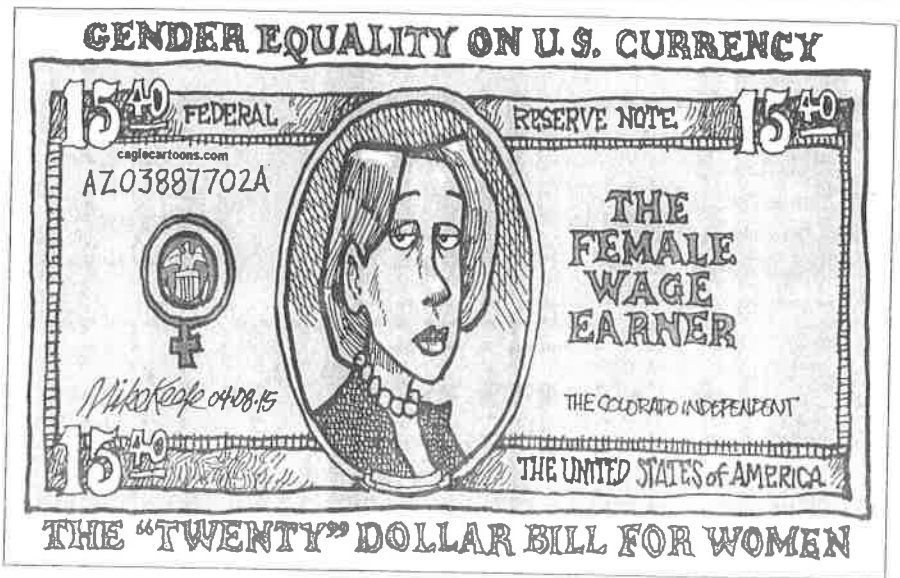
**YOUR TURN** What are two facts and two opinions from each expert?



Vote yes or no: Should libraries get rid of printed books? Visit [junior.scholastic.com](http://junior.scholastic.com) to cast your ballot.

# A DAY'S EQUAL PAY?

The Treasury Department has announced that an American woman's face will be appearing on the new \$10 bill (see pp. 6-7). (A separate campaign to get a woman on the \$20 bill has been under way for some time.) But a lot of women say they are more concerned about a different measure of equality. According to government estimates, a woman in the U.S. earns just 77 percent of what a man does for similar work. This cartoon has a point of view on the subject. Review it, then answer the questions below.



**1** Who is represented on this bill? In what ways does the cartoonist indicate this?

**2** How much is this bill worth? How does the cartoonist tell us it's not worth what it should be?

**3** How does the cartoonist convey his message with irony (using words that express a meaning different from what they literally say)?

**4** Compare the woman's expression with that of Alexander Hamilton on the \$10 bill or Andrew Jackson on the \$20. What might she be thinking?



**WRITING PROMPT** Why might women feel cheated in the workplace? How might it have come to be that a woman often earns less than a man for similar work? Ask some important adult woman in your life what challenges working women face. Write a paragraph describing what you learn.

## Words to Know

**abolitionist (n):** a person who seeks to end slavery (p. 7)

**bilateral (adj):** involving two sides, such as countries or groups (p. 21)

**denomination (n):** the value of a particular bill or coin (p. 6)

**dissident (n):** one who actively opposes a political system (p. 4)

**domestic trade (n):** the exchange of goods within a country (p. 16)

**epicenter (n):** the part of Earth's surface directly on or above the starting point of an event, such as an explosion or an earthquake (p. 21)

**establishment (n):** a group of leaders who form the ruling class of an institution or a country (p. 12)

**poacher (n):** one who hunts wild animals illegally (p. 15)

**power broker (n):** a person who is able to exert strong influence on an institution through control of votes or individuals (p. 13)

**prototype (n):** the original model on which something is patterned (p. 10)

**resolution (n):** a formal expression of opinion or intent voted by an official body (p. 7)

**trafficking (n):** activity involving buying or selling illegal goods (p. 17)

