

The Westing Game

By Ellen Raskin

About the book

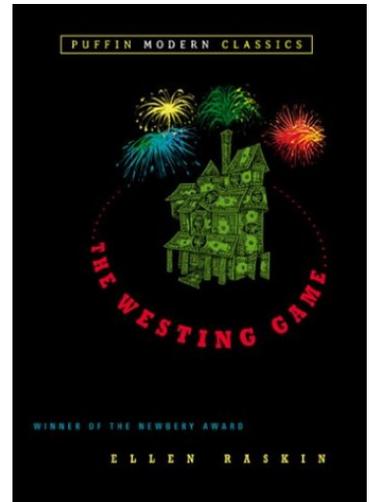
When sixteen people are called together for the reading of wealthy Sam Westing's will, they are surprised to learn that the will is actually a contest in which they are all to participate. Working with partners, the potential heirs take their clues to try to find the elusive answer to the Westing game and thus take their shares of the two-hundred-million-dollar prize.

A Newbery Medal winner.

About the author

Ellen Raskin was a writer, illustrator, and designer. She was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and grew up during the Great Depression. She primarily wrote for children. She received the 1979 Newbery Medal for her 1978 book, *The Westing Game*.

Ms. Raskin was also an accomplished graphic artist. She designed dozens of dust jackets for books including the first edition of Madeleine L'Engle's classic *A Wrinkle in Time*.



She married Dennis Flanagan, editor of the *Scientific American*, in 1965.

Raskin died at the age of 56 on August 8, 1984 in New York City due to complications with connective tissue disease.

Discussion Questions

- 1 Which tenant was chosen by mistake? What was Sam Westing's mistake?
- 2 Sam Westing turns out to be a man with many different identities. What five different names and identities does he use?
- 3 At the end of the story, how is Judge Ford able to finally repay her debt to Sam Westing?

4 After the second bomb in Chapter 13, Angela and Theo have a conversation in which they discuss their separate future plans. What did Theo and Angela confide to each other? What do we learn about them here? Why couldn't Angela answer Theo's question?

5 At her bridal shower, why do you think Angela turned the gold box containing the bomb toward herself?

6 Who did the burglar turn out to be, and why do you think he or she stole the jewelry and the clock?

7 Did you feel sorry for any of the characters here? Why? How would you help that character if you could?

8 Turtle, or T. R. Wexler as she came to be called, always kept her secret about Sam Westing, even from her own family, including her husband Theo. Why do you think she kept the secret? What would you do in her shoes? Can you imagine keeping such a secret from the people most important to you?

9 What do the words of the song "America the Beautiful" have to do with the Westing mystery? Do the words to the song help the heirs as they try to solve the puzzle?

10 The Westing heirs are asked two times in the story to give their signatures and titles on a receipt. Compare the original titles of the heirs in Chapter 7 to the titles they give later in Chapter 23. How do the titles change, and what does this show about what each heir is experiencing?

11 Why do you think Sam Westing set up this elaborate "game," and do you think it turned out as he hoped?

12 Most of this book takes place in the apartment building Sunset Towers. How does this location affect the story? Can you imagine this story in another setting? What other kinds of places could a story like this take place?

13 What events or characters here did you find funny? Why do you think Ellen Raskin, the author of this book, included so many humorous details in her mystery?

14 Why do you think Angela waited more than five years to marry Denton Deere? Do you think she made the right decision?

15 As you were reading, which of the heirs did you trust the most? Who did you find the most suspicious? Explain why you judged them as you did.