Figure 4.2 Return values in methods.

Recall the method **getContents** of the **WashingMachine** class—it was supposed to *return* a string to whoever invoked it. Let's complete it now:

```
class WashingMachine {
    private String contents;

    // The method add assigns a value to contents.
    public void add (String item) {
        contents = item;
    }

    // The method getContents returns the value of contents.
    public String getContents () {
        return contents;
    }
}
```

The **return** statement has three effects:

1. The value of the expression (**contents** in this case) is calculated,
2. that value is given back to the statement that invoked the method, and
3. the execution of the method containing **return** stops right away.

Note: statements following a "return" are never executed.

Now let's use **add** and **getContents** in **TestWash**:

```
public class TestWash {
    public static void main (String[] args) {
        WashingMachine myWashingMachine = new WashingMachine ();
        myWashingMachine.add("sock");
        System.out.println("Inside you will find " + myWashingMachine.getContents());
    }
}
```

Again, this will print out "Inside you will find sock".