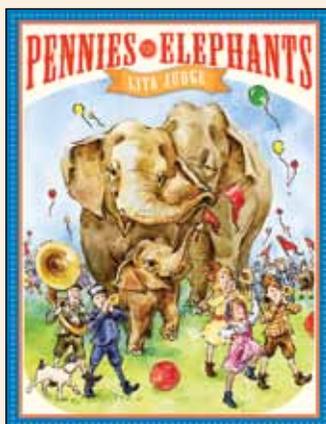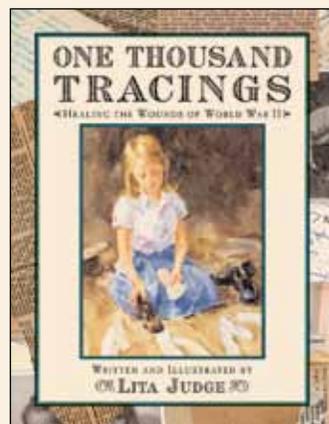This guide was created by the author, Lita Judge, and Dina Sherman, School
and Library Marketing Director, Disney • Hyperion Books. Many more Teacher's
Guides can be found on the Disney • Hyperion Web site at:
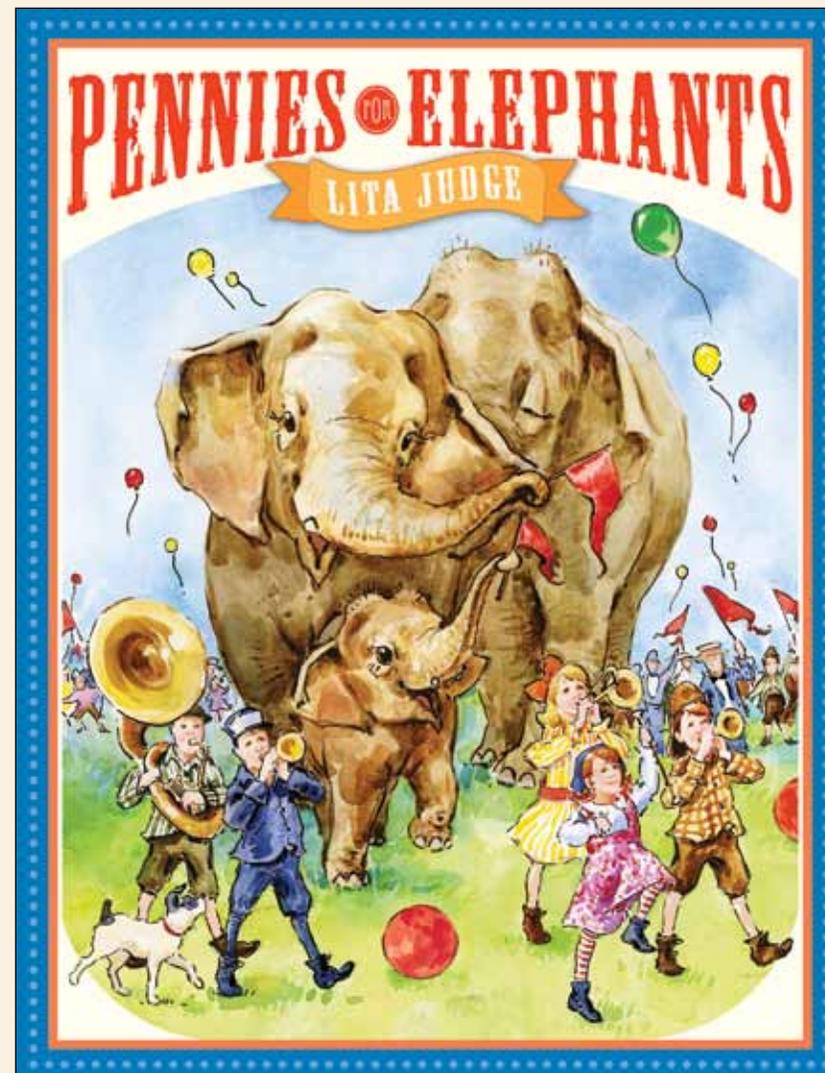**www.hyperionbooksforchildren.com**.

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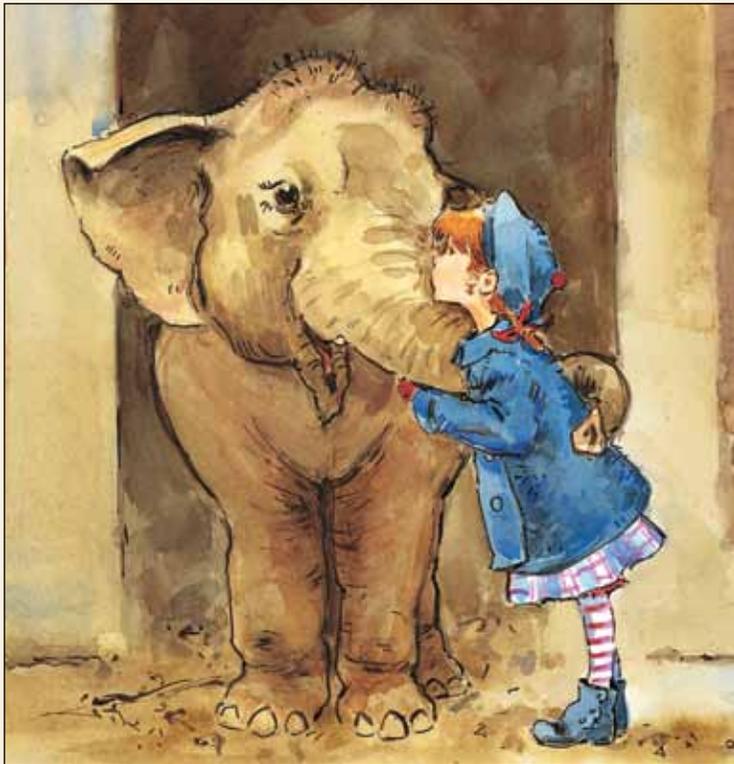*Discussion guide available*

DISCUSSION GUIDE
Disney • **HYPERION BOOKS**

ABOUT THE BOOK

When Dorothy and her brother Henry learn that three beloved local circus elephants will soon be retiring, they are shocked and dismayed, but also inspired! The owner has agreed to sell the elephants to the children of Boston if they can raise the $6,000. They have two months. They'll have to contribute every penny they have, but they're determined to do it. Soon, more and more children are joining in, donating everything they have to the cause. Fourteen cents from Roger from washing windows, five cents from Jimmy from the tooth fairy. In the end, it's the elephants themselves—Mollie, Waddy, and Tony—who are most grateful for the children's resolute and generous spirit.

DISCUSSION GUIDE

1 Look through the newspaper clippings in the book and write down how much a dress or a car cost in 1914, or how much it cost to go to a movie. How does this compare to what things cost today?

2 Throughout the story, the paperboy calls out the headlines to sell papers. How old do you think he is? Do children today have jobs like that?

3 In the book, movies are called "moving pictures." How do you think they were different from movies you see today?

4 In 1914, the newspaper was how everyone got their news. What do we use now?

5 Read the author's note at the end of the book (hint: the headline is "Author Bases Story on True Events"). What stories have you heard or read about that you think would make a good picture book? Why?

ACTIVITIES

HOST A PENNY DRIVE

Generate a discussion with students about a cause they'd like to support through a fund-raising event. This could be a charitable event, or an opportunity for them to raise money for an activity.

After selecting a cause, have students create a poster for the penny drive. They can also create a chart to record progress as money comes in. Decorate jars for collecting money and place them around the school, and perhaps even in shops and town buildings in the local community.

Collect pennies, nickels, dimes, and quarters for a cause. Make suggestions to students about what chores and activities they can do to also earn the money. Contact the local paper about the penny drive. Encourage students to find ways for the community to participate in the penny drive by writing a letter to their local newspaper.

CURRENT EVENTS

- Maintain a bulletin board of newspaper clippings and current events about what is going on in the local, state, national, and world news. Invite children to contribute to this by bringing articles and pictures.

- Create a classroom newspaper with the children having different responsibilities such as writing, editing, drawing, and layout.

- After reading a news article aloud, have students draw a picture about what they think happened.

- Show the children featured pictures and ask them to compose their own headline and share what they think the story is about.

MATH

Story Problem: If you visit the zoo and want to buy a bag of peanuts to feed the elephants, and it costs one dollar, how many quarters do you need? How many dimes? How many nickels? How many pennies?

London Zoo Page: Fill in the spaces

   3¢ = _____ Pennies

 25¢ = _____ Quarters *or* _____ Nickels

   5¢ = _____ Nickels *or* _____ Pennies

 18¢ = _____ Dimes + _____ Nickels + _____ Pennies

\$1.14 = _____ Quarters + _____ Dimes + _____ Nickels + _____ Pennies

Tea Party Page: Fill in the spaces

 87¢ = _____ Quarters + _____ Dimes + _____ Nickels + _____ Pennies

  5¢ = _____ Quarters + _____ Dimes + _____ Nickels + _____ Pennies

 15¢ = _____ Quarters + _____ Dimes + _____ Nickels + _____ Pennies

 67¢ = _____ Quarters + _____ Dimes + _____ Nickels + _____ Pennies

 48¢ = _____ Quarters + _____ Dimes + _____ Nickels + _____ Pennies

Total = _____ Quarters + _____ Dimes + _____ Nickels + _____ Pennies

How much do these equal?

Children's Romper = 2 Dimes + 9 Pennies = _____¢

French Dresses = 4 Dimes + 9 Pennies = _____¢

Tony's Contribution = 1 Dimes + 0 Pennies = _____¢

Figured Crepe Dresses = 15 Dimes + 9 Pennies = \$_____

Dorothy and Henry's Life Savings = 11 Dimes + 9 Pennies = \$_____

Charles Wright Violin Concert = 14 Dimes + 0 Pennies = \$_____

Washing Pets = 11 Dimes + 9 Pennies = \$_____

- A seat at the movies costs 5¢. If 12 children are in line to buy tickets, count by 5 to get the total amount of money raised at the theater.
  5¢, 10¢, 15¢,   ,   ,   ,   ,   ,   ,   ,   ,   = _____

- If the theater donated half the total to the elephant fund, how much money did they donate for the 12 children who went to the movies? _____

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

LITA JUDGE was born in Ketchikan, Alaska, but now lives in Peterborough, New Hampshire, with her husband and two adorable cats. Her first picture book, *One Thousand Tracings*, received the IRA's Children's Book Award and the Jane Addams Children's Book Award Honor. It was also selected as an ALA and an NCTE Notable Book.

Q & A WITH THE AUTHOR

1 How did you first learn about this story?

I learned about this story while reading a book about New England history. There was just one sentence in the book mentioning a penny drive that took place in 1914 to purchase the first elephants for the Franklin Park Zoo. Curious about this, I went to the Boston Public Library and searched through newspapers from that time period. *The Boston Post* featured headlines about the Elephant Fund nearly every day and I found it was a huge community event involving thousands of children.

2 Both this book and your last book (*One Thousand Tracings*) are based on true stories. Is there something in particular that draws you into writing about real events?

I'm fascinated by what people have accomplished and how they can work together to make amazing things happen. I also love learning, and writing about history through personal stories.

3 Do you know what your next story will be—and will it also be based on something that really happened?

Yes, my next story is about Thomas Moran, an illustrator who set out on an amazing journey in 1871 to join the first official expedition into the almost unknown region of western frontier—the area surrounding the Yellowstone River headwaters. The paintings he created as a result of the trip helped convince Congress to create Yellowstone National Park, America's first national park.