



## The Hundred Penny Box

*Sharon Bell Mathis , Leo Dillon (Illustrations) , Diane Dillon (Illustrations)*

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**The Hundred Penny Box** Sharon Bell Mathis , Leo Dillon (Illustrations) , Diane Dillon (Illustrations)  
Michael loves his great-great-aunt Dew, even if she can't always remember his name. He especially loves to spend time with her and her beloved hundred penny box, listening to stories about each of the hundred years of her life. Michael's mother wants to throw out the battered old box that holds the pennies, but Michael understands that the box itself is as important to Aunt Dew as the memories it contains. Winner of a Newbery Honor, this beautiful story will be available in a collector's edition featuring heavy interior stock embossing and silver ink on the cover, and a thread-sewn binding for added durability. A timeless story of the relationship between a boy and his elderly relative, this new edition is one that families young and old will treasure for years to come.

## The Hundred Penny Box Details

Date : Published October 5th 2006 by Puffin Books (first published 1975)

ISBN : 9780142407028

Author : Sharon Bell Mathis , Leo Dillon (Illustrations) , Diane Dillon (Illustrations)

Format : Paperback 48 pages

Genre : Fiction, Historical, Historical Fiction, Childrens, Juvenile, Realistic Fiction

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## From Reader Review The Hundred Penny Box for online ebook

### Alexis Caudill says

#### 1. Book summary, in your own words (3 pts)

The Hundred Penny Box is a Newbery Honor Book. It is a story about a little boy named Michael and his great aunt's hundred penny box. Each penny in the box has a story to go along with it. There is a small conflict between Michael's mom and his great aunt. You'll have to read the book to find out what that is and how it is handled.

#### 2. Grade level, interest level, lexile (1 pt)

This would be a book for 3rd-5th grade students. It is a little difficult to read, but interesting.

#### 3. Appropriate classroom use (subject area) (1 pt)

I would use this book for the reading portion of my class.

#### 4. Individual students who might benefit from reading (1 pt)

Students interested in books about family would like this book.

#### 5. Small group use (literature circles) (1 pt)

I would not use this book for small groups.

#### 6. Whole class use (read aloud) (1 pt)

I probably would not read this book aloud to the class either. I would rather use it as a book for the reading bookshelf.

#### 7. Related books in genre/subject or content area (1 pt)

A Chair for My Mother by Vera B. Williams

The Hundred Dresses by Eleanor Estes

Lon Po Po by Ed Young

#### 8. Multimedia connections (audio books, movie) available (1 pt)

There is no multimedia associated with this book.

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### Josiah says

I would give this book two and a half stars.

The combination of author Sharon Bell Mathis and the Caldecott Medal-winning illustrators team of Leo and Diane Dillon is well chosen, in my view; The marriage of text and pictures seems very much right for the book throughout.

The Hundred Penny Box is infused with a lot of family warmth, especially in the way that Michael is fiercely protective of his great-great Aunt Dew's independence. Michael's mother thinks that the Hundred Penny Box that aunt Dew treasures is not really important, and that her holding onto it as so very important is really nothing more than a curmudgeonly tendency because of her old age.

Michael sees things very differently, however. He sees his great-great aunt as a person whose wishes matter as much as those of anyone else, as a human being who just happens to be one hundred years old, and he is willing to defend her autonomy to any extent.

In my thinking, some of the book's best scenes are those that see Michael playing a spirited advocate for what his great-great aunt wants. This is inspiring, in many ways.

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## **Lori says**

Now 100 years old, Michael's great great aunt Dew comes to live with them. Aunt Dew cared for Michael's father John after his parents died. She often calls Michael "John" because he resembles his father. Michael's mother wants to burn Aunt Dew's hundred penny box in the furnace as she burned many other things Aunt Dew brought with her. The box was a gift to Aunt Dew. Each penny represents a year in her life and helps her recall what happened that year. Michael realizes the importance of that box and wants to save it from destruction. The book does not work as well for today's readers as it did for those in the 1970s. The book does, however, help young readers understand aging. It also helps them understand the value of tradition. The illustrations are all brown tones and underwhelming.

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## **BookSweetie says**

Excerpt From THE HUNDRED PENNY BOX by Sharon Bell Mathis

"How do you get to be a hundred years old?" Michael asked and raised up from the bed on one elbow and waited for his great-great-aunt to answer.

"First you have to have a hundred penny box," his great-great-aunt finally said.

"Where you get it from?" Michael asked.

"Somebody special got to give it to you," Aunt Dew said.

Maybe reading THE HUNDRED PENNY BOX and encountering Michael who is fiercely protective and deeply loving towards his hundred year old Aunt Dew will inspire YOU to give someone a hundred penny box.

Or, better yet, maybe someone will gift you with a "penny box" that you will be able to fill with your very own pennies -- one for each year of your life.

On second thought, maybe the box needs to be a "nickel" or "dime" box, just in case pennies go extinct before you do!

Highly recommended illustrated 47 page story first published in 1975. For all ages.

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## **Sara B says**

Someone suggested I read this book because it is one that when they began their teaching career they used it to read to their class at the beginning of each school year. At first I was not impressed with the book but the more I read it the more I understood why it was read aloud the class. It is about a boy who stands up for what

he believes it right even when he thinks his own mother is doing wrong. It is a very touching and moving story.

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### **Kassidy says**

This book was interesting. It was about a boy whose great aunt had come to live with him and his parents. His aunt was 100 years old, and she had a box full of pennies for each year that she had been alive. He would pull pennies out of the box, and she would tell him what had happened that year. The thing I didn't like about this book was that the ending didn't really wrap up. I like sure endings, I don't like to be left wondering whatever would happen.

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### **Shreya says**

This book was a fine book. Nothing too special, but not too bad either. It was about a boy, named Michael and, his Great-Great Grandma Dew who came to start a new life with her great-great grandson. It was a bit of a sweet story about how a family works. How, Michael's mother and Great-Great Grandma Dew struggle but, has a sweet lesson nearing the end of the book. It was an okay book!

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### **Jennifer says**

A nice little reminder that kids understand more than we think.

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### **Tasneem Zafer says**

A beautifully intimate relationship between little Michael and his 100 year-old-great-great aunt Dewbet Thomas who has a hundred penny old cracked-up, wacky-dacky box and a story behind each single penny! It's a bit sad, I kind of felt like crying by the end of it.

I loved the part when Michael plays his favorite question game and asks his great-great-aunty, "are your arms a hundred years old? Is your face and your eyes and fingers a hundred years old too?"

The darkly brownish illustrations are both warm and a bit depressing but very artistic at the same time.

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### **Maureen says**

This charming story is of Michael, a young African-American boy, and the close relationship he enjoys with his Great Aunt Dew, who is now one hundred years old. Michael does not think his mother understands Aunt Dew and the value of her precious hundred penny box, which holds one penny from each year of her life. Michael loves to pick a penny from the box, say, the year, and then listen intently to the memory which the year evokes. This lovely intergenerational story sensitively depicts the special relationship between children and seniors, and the unique bond which they share.

This simple yet rich story would make a wonderful addition to an intergenerational theme study, and would be a wonderful complement for books such as The War With Grandpa, Mrs. Katz and Tush, Blackberries in the Dark, and Wilfred Gordon Macdonald Partridge. A meaningful extension activity would be to have students collect a penny minted from each year of their own lives, and to find a memory connected with that year.

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### **Teresa says**

I found this little book too sophisticated for young new readers, but not rich enough for experienced readers... ( young and old). It's the sort of book that NEEDS to be read aloud and discussed.

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### **PJ says**

The idea of a Hundred Penny Box was very appealing. The story is about Aunt Dew coming to live with Michael and his family. Aunt Dew tells Michael stories about the pennies. Michael's mother wants to throw away the old Hundred Penny Box. Michael argues with his mother to save the box. Would have liked to hear more stories of the pennies and less arguing. Good multicultural book but ending isn't very strong.

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### **Erica says**

Copyright 1975; Newbery honor 1976. Michael's great-great Aunt Dewbet Thomas, (Aunt Dew) is 100 years old, and she lives at Michael's house. She has an old beat-up wooden box that she keeps with a bag of 100 pennies inside. Each penny represents a year of her life, so, as he counts the pennies, she recalls events of each year. Mom doesn't seem to understand why the box is so important, but Michael is determined to protect it. Quiet story about listening to and respecting old people. Rec for grade 3-5.

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### **Amber Scaife says**

A glimpse into the relationship between a young boy and his great-great aunt, and the tense emotions that come when an older family member comes to live with her descendants.

I wanted to like this one more than I did. I appreciate the care with which the relationship between boy and aunt is crafted, but the story is too staid for me, and the ending is more frustrating than poetic.

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### **Linda Lipko says**

Destined to be one of my favorite Newbery books, this small book is quite remarkable.

It is a poignant tale of aging and the lessons passed along to those who want to learn.

When Michael's Great Aunt Dew comes to live with his family, he is drawn to the 100 year old woman who seems at times forgetful and other instances spot on with her observations.

Increasingly spending time with her nets a plethora of knowledge for Michael as systematically he and his Great Aunt play a game with her most precious possession -- a box of 100 pennies.

As Michael counts the pennies, a story results for each year a penny was added. Weaving wonderful tales, Aunt Dew shares a history rich in value and tradition. Michael grows to love his Aunt deeply.

While the tension between his mother and his Great Aunt mounts, Michael realizes his mother wants to throw away the 100 penny box. Desperately trying to make his mother appreciate the history and the significance of Aunt Dew's memories becomes quite a task for Michael.

The writing is wonderful and the images of Michael and his Aunt are as precious as the 100 penny box.

Highly recommended.

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