

## About the Book

Penny Posner knows everything there is to know about good luck. Every day she wears her lucky bracelet on her wrist, her lucky socks on her feet, and Ferdinand, her lucky frog keychain, on her belt loop. And today she needs all the luck she can get.

It's the day of the school's Rosh Hashanah picnic, and one lucky student will be chosen to blow the shofar, the ceremonial horn to welcome in the Jewish new year. Penny wants more than anything to be that person. And when she sees a lucky penny on the ground, she just has to pick it up.

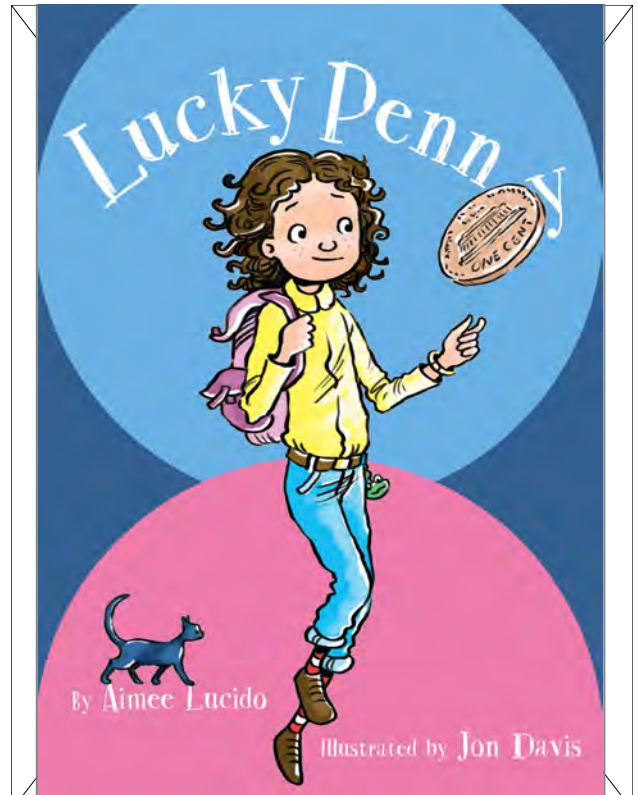
But her best friend, Mara, warns her that a face-down penny is actually bad luck. Penny isn't worried. She only believes in good luck—that is, until her whole day gets turned upside down. Penny does everything she can to reverse the bad luck curse, including increasingly disruptive behaviors during class that land her in trouble with her teacher and Mara.

Fortunately for Penny, her chance at a fresh start might begin with the new year, as she learns that luck is sometimes less of a cosmic force, and more of a change in perspective.

Backmatter includes directions for readers to make and blow their own shofar.

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## Key Themes:

Change in Perspective, Friendship, Asking for Forgiveness, Rosh Hashanah

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Use these questions to preface and conclude a reading of this book with children. Encourage them to share their observations as you read the book together, and take time to linger on pages or spreads that generate more discussion.

## Before Reading

- Do you know who and what are on the penny?

(President Abraham Lincoln, our 16th president is on one side. The other side may have a variety of symbols on it. Since 2008, the penny has been printing the Lincoln shield with 13 stripes to represent the original 13 states, and the national motto, "E Pluribus Unum." More facts can be found at [www.usmint.gov/learn/kids/about-the-mint/penny](http://www.usmint.gov/learn/kids/about-the-mint/penny))

- Can you flip a coin?
- Do you, or anyone you know, do special things in hopes of bringing good luck? Describe them.

## After Reading

- Have you ever tried to blow a shofar/trumpet/horn/kazoo to keep a melody? Was it hard?
- Describe a time when you thought you had good or bad luck. What happened? Would the outcome have changed if you felt your luck was different?
- Share a time you felt nothing was going your way. Were you able to change the course of that time or day? How did you do it?
- Can you remember a time when you were so proud of a friend or family member that you forgot to be jealous? How did that make you feel?

## Optional Extension Activity

- Paint your own rock with something you want to achieve in the coming year and something you want to leave behind.
- Make your own Apple Honey Cake, with an adult helper. (*recipe on next page*)

**Apple Honey Cake** (Recipe by Tori Avey)**Cake**

- 3 large eggs
- 3/4 cup honey
- 1/2 cup white sugar
- 1/4 cup light brown sugar
- 1 1/4 cups canola oil
- 1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla
- 3 cups all purpose baking flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 1/2 teaspoons cinnamon
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon allspice
- Dash of ground cloves
- 4 Granny Smith apples (peeled, cored, and shredded)

**Instructions**

1. Preheat oven to 325 degrees F. In a large mixing bowl, beat the eggs until they are frothy. Whisk in the honey, white sugar, brown sugar, oil, and vanilla. In a separate medium mixing bowl, sift together the flour, baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon, salt, and spices. Incorporate the flour mixture into the liquid, stir to blend. Fold in the shredded apples and their juice.
2. Spray a Bundt pan with cooking spray, evenly coating the entire inner surface. Pour batter into the pan to  $\frac{3}{4}$  full or less. Smooth the batter on the top so it is flat and even all the way around the pan.
3. Bake for 75-90 minutes (if you're using a black or dark-colored pan, it may bake faster - start checking after 50 minutes). When the edges darken and pull fully away from the sides of the pan, and the cake browns all the way across the surface, insert a toothpick deep into the thickest part of the cake. If it comes out clean, it's done. It's a very moist cake, so it's easy to undercook it- err on the side of caution and let it bake a little longer if you're unsure (but don't bake it too long or it will dry out!).
4. Let the cake cool for 10 minutes, then flip it onto a flat plate. Tap the pan gently to release the cake. If your cake sticks, use a plastic knife to carefully loosen the cake around the center tube and sides. Allow cake to cool completely (very important to let it cool before frosting).