

## ABOUT

### *the Author*



**L**INDA OATMAN HIGH is the author of many books for young readers, including *Cool Bopper's Choppers* (Boyd Mills) and *A Humble Life: Plain Poems* (Eerdmans), which was awarded

the Lee Bennett Hopkins Poetry Honor. Linda is an author, a journalist, and a songwriter. She lives in Narvon, Pennsylvania.

"I found a short mention of the Tenth Avenue Cowboys in a reference book about old New York City," Linda says. The idea of cowboys in the big city intrigued her: "I went to Hell's Kitchen to walk the streets where the cowboys once rode."



### *the Illustrator*



**B**ILL FARNSWORTH is an artist who has illustrated more than forty books, including *Louis Sockalexis: Native American Baseball Pioneer* by Bill Wise (Lee & Low) and *Eli Remembers*

by Ruth Vander Zee (Eerdmans). Bill lives in Venice, Florida.

"The subject matter of my work ranges from a canoe trip on the Mississippi to Native American History," Bill says. "Using light, color, and texture, I try to bring the viewer into the painting, so they too can feel the moment in time."

## TENTH AVENUE COWBOY

Written by Linda Oatman High

Illustrated by Bill Farnsworth

Hardcover ISBN: 978-0-8028-5330-1 ❖ \$17.00

9" x 11¼" ❖ 32 pages ❖ Ages 7-10

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If you have any suggestions for using *Tenth Avenue Cowboy* with young readers, we would be happy to hear from you.

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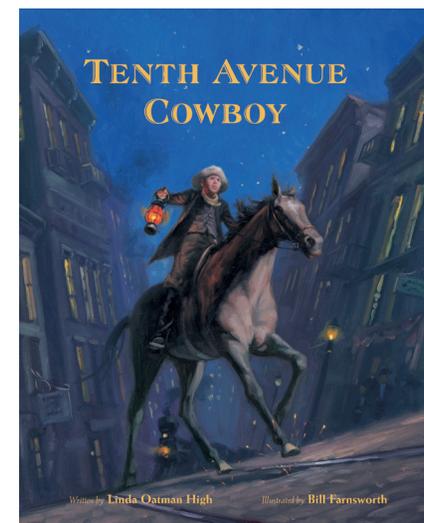
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*Then one day, Ben heard about the Tenth Avenue Cowboys, whose job was to ride before the train and warn people of its approach. Ben couldn't believe it: there were cowboys in the city!*

### THEMATIC CONNECTIONS

- ❖ Fitting in
- ❖ History
- ❖ Home
- ❖ Western culture
- ❖ City life
- ❖ Friendship

Eerdmans Books for Young Readers  
Discussion Guide

## **VOCABULARY**

Look up the following terms in a reference book: ranch, plains, prairies, longed (verb), fearless, canyon, stable, clamoring.



## **THINGS TO THINK ABOUT BEFORE READING THE BOOK**

1. Read the title and study the cover illustration. Where and when do you think this story takes place? What do you think a horse is doing on a city street?
2. Think about a time you or someone you know moved to a new town or city or started going to a new school. What was it like? Was it hard or easy to fit in? Why?
3. Have you ever had a chance to see a horse up close or to ride one? Think about your experiences with horses and write down the words that come to your mind. When you read the story, look for the words you wrote.
4. Use library or online resources to find out what New York City was like in 1910. What do you think it would be like to be a child in New York City back then?



## **QUESTIONS TO REFLECT ON AFTER READING THE BOOK**

1. Why is Ben unhappy when his family moves to New York City? If you had to choose

to live on a ranch or in a big city, which would you choose? Why?

2. Compare the illustration on pages 8–9 with the illustration on pages 10–11. What do the pictures have in common? What is the most important difference between them? Think about how Ben feels about his old home and his new home. Which picture would he like better?

3. In New York City, Ben does not feel like he fits in. Have you ever felt this way? When? What did you do about it?

4. Ben wishes he had a friend in New York City. Is Johnny, the Tenth Avenue Cowboy Ben meets, a real friend? Why or why not?

5. Read the Author's Note and the glossary on page 32. What do they tell you about the part of New York Ben's family moved to? Why were the Tenth Avenue Cowboys so thrilling for Ben?

6. How do Ben's experiences with the Tenth Avenue Cowboys help make New York City feel more like home?

7. At the end of the story, Ben has grown up. Do you think he will stay in New York City? Will he stay in Hell's Kitchen as a Tenth Avenue Cowboy? Why or why not?



## **ACTIVITIES**

1. New York City has changed a lot since 1910, but Hell's Kitchen is still there. Find a map of New York City. Locate the Hell's Kitchen

neighborhood and copy that part of the map onto a poster. Mark where the Pebble Yard and the stable were. Show your class where the Tenth Avenue Cowboys rode.

2. Life in 1910 was very different from life today. What was life like in 1910 where you live? Use library or online resources to find out what your town or city was like in 1910. How many people lived there? Did they have trains and cars? Did they ride horses? Share what you discover with your class. You might want to write key facts on a poster to use in your presentation.

3. One way we know about cowboys in the West is by listening to cowboy songs. Find some old cowboy songs using library or online resources. As you listen to the songs, write down the lyrics. Then write your own song for the Tenth Avenue Cowboys. Imitate the style of the western cowboy songs, but make your song about New York City in 1910. Share your song with the class.

4. What is involved in caring for a horse? First, write down a list of questions about horse care, such as the following: What do horses eat? How are horses cleaned and groomed? Then, use library or online resources to find answers to your questions. Create a "Horse Care Handbook" with tips and illustrations. Put your handbook in your classroom or school library so others can read it.