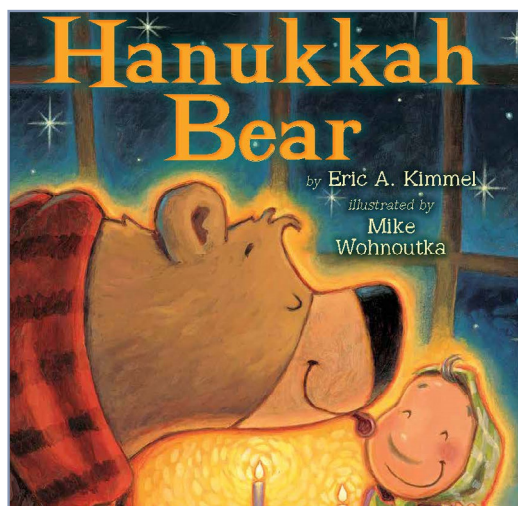


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## What's your miracle?

### Lighten Up

The most well-known Hanukkah rituals are lighting candles, eating oily foods, and playing dreidel, a top-spinning game. But this book highlights what's perhaps the most important Hanukkah custom – *hachnasat orchim*, Hebrew for “welcoming guests.” Hanukkah recalls the revolt of the Maccabees, a small group of Jewish soldiers, that took place about two thousand years ago against the oppression of the Greek-Syrians. Today, we counter that oppression by welcoming family and friends of any background to share the holiday. And just when the days are at their darkest, we flip that, too: We light Hanukkah candles, one more each night, until the whole menorah is aflame. To learn more, visit [pjlibrary.org/hanukkahbear](http://pjlibrary.org/hanukkahbear).

### HANDS ON!

#### Make a No-Sew Scarf for a Friend



Bubbe Brayna gives Old Bear a lovely red scarf as a parting gift. You can make simple scarves for your guests, too, to help ward off nippy weather as they depart.

#### Supplies

- Fleece (an old fleece blanket works great)
- Scissors



- 1 Cut the fleece into strips the desired length and width of your scarves. (Parents can help with the cutting.)
- 2 Cut fringe into each end. If you like, tie knots at the ends for an added detail.



### What Bubba Knows

At 97, Bubba Brayna knows a thing or two about Hanukkah rituals. She puts her menorah by the window, a custom meant to “announce the miracle” – in Hebrew, *pirsum hanes*. When facing outside, she knows to put the first candle in the menorah all the way to the right. (We place candles from the right, and light them from the left.) She knows the two blessings for lighting the candles; she knows to add a third blessing, the *Shehecheyanu*, on the first night of Hanukkah; and she knows that latkes taste better with sour cream or jam. Who cares if she doesn't know that her guest is actually a bear? Details, details!

### It's a Miracle!

This book includes a note about the miracle of Hanukkah – that when the victorious Maccabees restored the Temple in Jerusalem and lit the ritual menorah, oil that should have lasted only one night lasted eight nights. Contemporary scholars have suggested that the real miracle of Hanukkah was that the Maccabees tried to light the menorah at all, considering how little oil they had. Think of how much hope and optimism that took! Bubba Brayna reminds us of this miracle. Whether we're short on oil or our best years are behind us, no matter. We just keep on lighting the way.

### TALK IT OVER WITH YOUR KIDS

- WHY** do you think Bubba Brayna doesn't seem afraid of the bear?
- DO** you think the bear likes Bubba Brayna? Why?
- WHAT** do you like to eat during Hanukkah?