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# Oskar And The Eight Blessings



## Synopsis

Winner of the 2015 National Jewish Book Award for Children's Literature A refugee seeking sanctuary from the horrors of Kristallnacht, Oskar arrives by ship in New York City with only a photograph and an address for an aunt he has never met. It is both the seventh day of Hanukkah and Christmas Eve, 1938. As Oskar walks the length of Manhattan, from the Battery to his new home in the north of the city, he passes experiences the city's many holiday sights, and encounters it various residents. Each offers Oskar a small act of kindness, welcoming him to the city and helping him on his way to a new life in the new world. This is a heartwarming, timeless picture book.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: AD570L (What's this?)

Hardcover: 40 pages

Publisher: Roaring Brook Press (September 8, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1596439491

ISBN-13: 978-1596439498

Product Dimensions: 10.9 x 0.4 x 8.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 15.5 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars 25 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #94,004 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #2 in [Books > Children's Books > Holidays & Celebrations > Jewish](#) #29 in [Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > Holocaust](#) #118 in [Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Where We Live > City Life](#)

Age Range: 4 - 8 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 3

## Customer Reviews

PreS-Gr 2 **On the seventh day of Hanukkah in 1938, which also happens to be Christmas Eve, a young refugee boy named Oskar arrives in New York City from the horrors of Nazi Europe with only a photograph and an address to find an aunt he has never meet. As Oskar walks the length of Manhattan, from the Battery to his aunt's home in the north end of the city, he passes and encounters the city's many holiday sights and residents. Each person he meets offers Oskar a small act of kindness, such as the newsstand man who gives Oskar a Superman comic book. Each encounter is a reference to an event which took place in the city in 1938. A constant for Oskar is**

remembering his father's last words, "Oskar, even in bad times, people can be good. You have to look for the blessings." The majority of illustrations are presented in variously sized panels that move the story along, with inserts of long panel illustrations that serve as a glimpse of Oskar's experiences. VERDICT A wonderful, heartwarming picture book for any library at any time of year. — Diane Olivo-Posner Los Angeles Public Library

Winner of the 2015 National Jewish Book Award for Children's Literature — "Eloquently rendered in art and text. . . The descriptive prose has lyrical touches, while vibrantly accented, softly-shaded illustrations incorporate varying perspectives and historical details." — Booklist, starred review — "A wonderful, heartwarming picture book for any library at any time of year." — School Library Journal, starred review — "Wonderfully original in every way." — Publishers Weekly, starred review — "Siegel's paneled illustrations make anything seem possible. . . They glow. People used to say that the streets of America were paved with gold, and this book almost makes you believe it." — Kirkus Reviews

"Oskar and the Eight Blessings" is a wonderful children's Christmas and Hannukkah historical fiction hardback book measuring 9 by 11 inches. The book has a beautiful full color pictorial cover and matching dust jacket. The dust jacket will hook the attention of the reader as they stare at Oskar's big hazel doe eyes and the expression on his face. Readers will want to find out why Oskar has this expression and what he is doing in a city of giant skyscrapers. The colors used by the illustrator on the cover/dust jacket and the individual page illustrations are mostly grays, browns, and blacks. These colors help to convey the feeling of loneliness, coldness, and fear that a brand new refugee to New York might experience. Each page is heavily illustrated with limited amounts of texts - from a sentence or two to a brief paragraph. As one reads the book, they sense the fear, despair and uneasiness in Oskar as he arrives in a strange and unknown New York City in the year 1938. It is the seventh day of Hannukkah and it was also Christmas Eve. As Oskar walks over a hundred blocks on Broadway to get to his aunt's house, he encounters various persons who show kindness to him. Oskar remembered his father's last words, "Oskar, even in bad times, people can be good. You have to look for the blessings." Oskar experiences the goodness of men's hearts and not only looks for blessings but receives various blessings on his way to his aunt's house. The book opens with some allusion to "The Night of Broken Glass" or "Kristallnacht" with no explanation. The non-Jewish reader encounters two other words with no explanation - "shamash" and "nigundi". At

first, the reader may think that the author should have explained these terms but at the conclusion of the story, the reader finds background information and definitions of these terms. An interesting two page spread of a map of 1938 Manhattan showing Oskar's trek of over a hundred city blocks is also included at the back of the book. I highly recommend this book for children and adults. Not only does one get a new appreciation of immigrants and their feelings in a new world, but the true spirit of Christmas and appreciation and awareness of blessings is also portrayed in this wonderful book. Caution - do not allow the fact that this is a children's picture book deter you from experiencing this awesome book -- older youth and even adults will enjoy the book. This book is suitable for both Jewish and Christian families to read during the holidays.

I will start off this review by stating that I'm a former colleague of the author. It's a children's book, and to be honest, I don't buy children's books anymore. I bought the book because, well, that's what friends do. But I have to say, I would have enjoyed this book and given it the same rating no matter who wrote it. Oskar's journey grows darker as it progresses, but only because of the setting sun. The light in his heart increases as he goes along, crossing paths with historical figures that should surely lead to discussion opportunities if you read the book to/with your child. I had a tear in my eye on the last page, and anyone who knows me knows what a rare occasion that is. The artist illustrated Oskar's cold and fatigue, and I enjoyed the details that were included. I felt nearly as uplifted at the end of Oskar's journey as Oskar did.

This is a well-written and beautifully illustrated book. I bought it for my sons; they're normally pretty picky and don't necessarily like the books that I (the mom) think are going to be good. But they were completely attentive through this, and only interrupted to ask questions about the historical parts of the story (in short--a great reading experience). We especially appreciated the multiple pictures per-page format. It makes this more like a mini-graphic novel than a typical children's book. The drawings--for example, of old New York City and close-ups of character's reactions--make the story so much more clear and really appeals to visually oriented kids! Similarly, the focus on a single theme (of Oskar's father's wise advice) makes for a great unifying narrative -- it's a message of hope and resilience that even very young children can relate to.

Wise advice from a loving father to a son, "Even in bad times, people can be good. You have to look for the blessings." True during the holidays, times of unrest and war, everyday of our lives. A part of everyday is wonderful or magical; you must have the heart to look for it and appreciate it. The

book's suggested age range is Pre-K to 2nd grade. IMO, it is more appropriate for 2nd grade and older. The story is heartwarming. There are many teachable moments and topics. What better time than when your child is snuggled up next to you? Plan to give this a gift this holiday season and will keep a copy for our library.

An amazing book I saw it at my granddaughters book fair and thought wow what a neat Christmas book she looked at the price and put it back. this book held my granddaughters attention. she found the eight blessing to be of great interest and it helped her understand the true meaning of a blessing she is only 5. if you are a parent or a grandparent and you believe in a special Christmas book this one is it.

This is a great book, and gives me a lot of opportunities to talk to my kids about some hard issues. History, refugees, looking out for others, etc. Fabulous story and illustrations. I would recommend this book for kids of all ages!

Wonderfully written story, not just for children! It weaves historical details with the journey of a young boy. To gain full understanding, I encourage everyone to read the author's note at the end of the book, as well as the glossary for those unfamiliar with some Jewish terminology. A relatively new book that I expect to see honored with further accolades.

lovely book

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The Adventures of Oskar: Oskar's New School Oskar and the Eight Blessings Oskar Schindler: The Untold Account of His Life, Wartime Activities, and the True Story Behind the List Many-Colored Blessings (Little Blessings) Blessings Every Day: 365 Simple Devotions for the Very Young (Little Blessings) A Child's Book of Prayers and Blessings: From Faiths and Cultures Around the World Color Your Blessings: A Christian Coloring Book for Relaxation, Inspiration and Stress Relief: Scripture Coloring Book with Psalm and Bible Verse ... Coloring Book for Adults) (Volume 1) My Will or Thine: An Inspiring True Story About LDS Priesthood Blessings and Deep Questions Surrounding Beliefs (Understanding Mormon Church Doctrine and Deep Religion Questions of Mormonism Book 2) The Smudging And Blessings Book: Inspirational Rituals to Cleanse and Heal Chicken Soup for the Soul: Twins and More: 101 Stories Celebrating Double Trouble and Multiple Blessings Gods and Goddesses Card Deck: Mantras, Blessings, and Meditations (Mandala Wisdom

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