

JWB Jewish Books in Review

is a service of the JWB Jewish Book Council,
15 East 26th St., New York, N.Y. 10010

Books for Younger Readers

The Golem. Elie Wiesel; illustrated by Mark Podwal. Summit Books, 1983. \$12.95. Ages 10 and up.

A winning partnership of storyteller and artist make the legend of the golem, a creature of clay fashioned by the 16th century rabbi of Prague, Yehuda Loew, (Maharal), a fascinating and memorable tale once again. Wiesel's unique rhythms, which inspire reading aloud, and Podwal's drawings, which reflect the mystical sources of inspiration, combine to satisfy several senses and all ages.

Great Jews in Sports. Robert Slater. Jonathan David Publishers, 1983. \$14.95. Young Adult.

Guaranteed to provide many hours of entertainment for sports enthusiasts and trivia collectors of all ages, this book is filled with biographies of major Jewish sports figures, thumbnail sketches of others, and a section on Israeli sports stars. Photographs, fascinating information about each individual, and the section on the Maccabiah games are particularly interesting. (Of the more than 100 athletes included, all except one are Jewish by Orthodox definition, but referring to them as "great Jews" is misplacing the adjective.)

Jewish Kids Catalog. Written and illustrated by Chaya Burstein. Jewish Publication Society, 1983. \$10.95. paperback. Ages 7-12.

Following the familiar "Catalog" format, this offering for young people is replete with craft ideas (well-illustrated), songs, recipes, charts, cartoons, lists of books, people, etc. Reference material on American Jewish history, Zionism and the Holocaust are included. Ms. Burstein celebrates the joy and pride in being Jewish.

Ike and Momma and Trouble at School. By Carol Snyder. Drawings by Charles Robinson. Coward-McCann, 51 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10010. 1983. Ages 10-14. 110 pages. \$9.95. Reviewed by Rena Rotenberg

Set in the Bronx in the 1920's, this interesting, captivating book depicts the trials and tribulations of 12-year-old Ike Greenberg. Pursued and intimidated by Ziggy, a bully who calls Ike a dirty Jew; scolded and reprimanded by his morning teacher; wanting to see more of Sylvia, a special girl, Ike comes home with a black eye (thanks to Ziggy) and a note from the principal in a sealed envelope to give to his parents. Fearful of the note's contents, Ike does not hand the envelope to his mother. What follows are a series of events and adventures that happen to Ike, from his mother inviting Ziggy to a Sabbath Eve dinner, to Ike's sister, Bessie, tattletaling, to Ike's asking his paper route employer to be his "father" at a meeting with the school principal. The book ends on an upbeat, positive note.

Carol Snyder does a skillful,



masterly job of making the reader feel part of the setting, from the description of the Greenberg's fabric store to the depicting of the Democratic Party picnic. Each personality is so clearly drawn that a young reader can easily identify with these characters of the book. What pre-teen or early teen has not experienced the unfair anger and scolding of a teacher? How many brothers have been the object of unjust tale-bearing by a sister?

Each occurrence, each happening, is replete with descriptive phrases and much dialogue which add so much to its enjoyment.

After reading this book which I thoroughly enjoyed, I asked my 11-year-old daughter, Ruth, to read it and give me her impressions. Ruth: "The book is great." Mother: "Why?" Ruth: "Because I can understand each person and each thing seems so real."

Rena Rotenberg is Director of the Early Childhood Education Department, Baltimore Board of Jewish Education.



"The lion's in the cage. 'Cause he is in a rage."
The lion's rage is depicted by (L to R) Josh Hirsch, Alexis Kropp, Marcie Goldstein, Elissa Golembe, Nicole Kossove, Jeffrey Binnick. (Picture taken at Temple Israel Pre-School.)

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