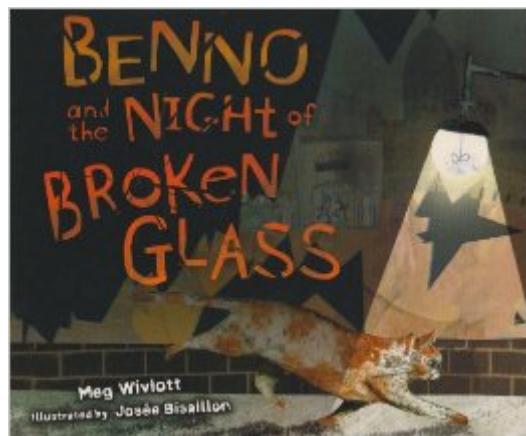


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# Benno And The Night Of Broken Glass (Holocaust)



## Synopsis

A neighborhood cat observes the changes in German and Jewish families in its town during the period leading up to Kristallnacht, the Night of Broken Glass that becomes the true beginning of the Holocaust. This cats-eye view introduces the Holocaust to children in a gentle way that can open discussion of this period.

## Book Information

Series: Holocaust

Paperback: 28 pages

Publisher: Kar-Ben Publishing; 01-Apr-10 edition (January 1, 2010)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0822599759

ISBN-13: 978-0822599753

Product Dimensions: 8.7 x 0.1 x 10.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 12.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 starsÂ  See all reviewsÂ  (18 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #509,338 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #100 inÂ  Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > Holocaust #178 inÂ  Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Religious Fiction > Jewish #1314 inÂ  Books > Children's Books > Animals > Cats

Age Range: 3 - 8 years

Grade Level: 1 - 3

## Customer Reviews

Benno was a mottled orange and white cat who lived at Number 5 Rosenstrasse. He was curled up in the window for everyone to admire, for you see he belonged to everyone in the neighborhood. Hans the Hausmeister made sure he had a warm, cozy bed to cuddle up in at night and some "fresh milk" to soothe his tummy. If he rounded the corner past the street light he would pass Gerber's Grocery to the end of the block where Mitzi Stein's dress shop was, zig zag this way and that he would find himself at Neue Synagogue. Such was the makeup of his neighborhood, but it was his people that he tended to that he was known for. On the Sabbath it was time to visit the Adler family in 3A. The candles were lit and young Sophie would sing before she "fed him scraps of chicken." On Sundays it was time to visit the Schmidts across the hall where Inge, Sophie's friend, "sneaked bits of schnitzel to him under the table." When the girls were off to school he would wend his way around

the neighborhood to get his ears scratched, his nose rubbed or take a nap at Mitzi's. Everyone loved him, including Professor Goldfarb in 2G. Who didn't even seem to notice when he curled up on top of his papers. Such was the life of a mottled orange and white cat named Benno who lived in Berlin. Something was wrong when those who once had time for him no longer cared or shooed him away abruptly. There were bright orange and red flames that spread eerie shadows along the brick walls of the neighborhood and lit up the night and books were added to fuel the fire. People were somehow not where they were supposed to be and faces were downcast, sad and frightened.

This book is a good introduction to the Holocaust for younger children. By using the (fictional) story of Benno the Cat, the book comes at the Holocaust from an oblique angle that allows a bit of protective distance for younger kids who may still be too sensitive to learn about the Holocaust more directly. Benno the Cat lives in an apartment building where he wanders freely among the apartments. The inhabitants of the apartments are a mixed bunch, including both Germans and Jews, who seem to get along quite well together. The German girl Inge and her Jewish friend Sophie walk to school and play games together. All the residents, and all of the business owners on Rosenstrasse, welcome Benno and care for him, from the grocer's wife Frau Gerber who scratches his ears to Mitzi Stein the dressmaker who lets him sleep in her shop window. Life is very pleasant. But then things take an unpleasant turn. People shoo him out of their apartments and stores. They no longer have scraps for him or the time to scratch him. They have other concerns and worries. Inge and Sophie don't play together any more. Then one night the sounds of screams and breaking glass fill the air. Shops - at least certain ones - are destroyed and looted by men with brown shirts and heavy black boots. The Neue Synagogue is set on fire. Herr Goldfarb is dragged away in the night, trying to protect his books. In the morning, Benno waits for life to return to normal. But Sophie's family's apartment is locked. Herr Goldfarb doesn't come back. The butcher is never seen again. But Frau Gerber still scratches his ears and Inge still leaves for school every day.

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