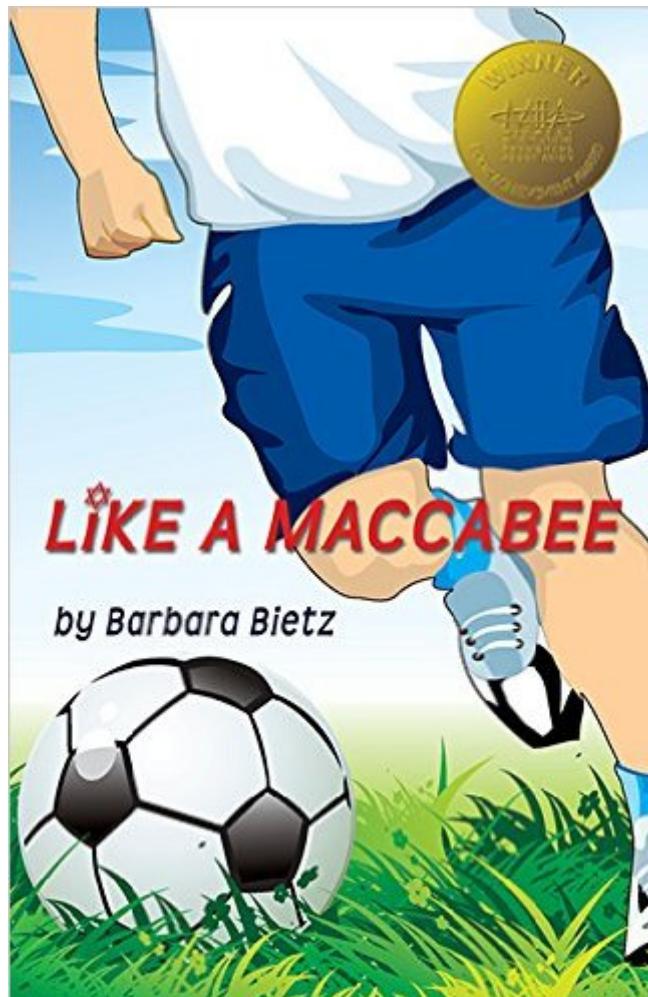


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# Like A Maccabee



## **Synopsis**

Days before Hanukkah, ten-year-old Ben's soccer team makes the league championships. Only one thing stands between Ben and victory: the rival teams best defender, a school bully whose favorite sport, other than soccer, is tormenting Ben. No one at home seems to understand. And now he has to share his bedroom and his family's attention with his grandfather, who has recently come to live with them. Facing humiliation at school and misunderstood by those who love him most, Ben finds an unexpected friend in his grandfather, learning ancient wisdom and steadfast strength, enough for the big game...and beyond.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Ten-year-old Ben is thrilled when his soccer team has made the finals for the league championship, but concerned about Travis, the rival team's best defender who enjoys bullying Ben at school and on the field. When Ben turns to his parents for support, they are too busy preparing for their big family Hanukkah celebration and also preoccupied with Ben's grandfather who is moving into their household. Since Ben is now forced to share his room with his grandfather, he cannot ignore him! As Ben begins to listen to his grandfather's stories each night during Hanukkah, his frustration turns to admiration, for despite their age difference, Ben realizes that he and his grandfather share many similarities, including a love of sports. Ben's grandfather becomes the inspiration for his school assignment for "Family Celebration Day" and guides Ben to find the confidence he is lacking to be a great team member. Through his new relationship with his grandfather, Ben understands that playing "like a Maccabee"-being strong and doing your best, is the key to winning, especially against a bully! Using the backdrop of the Hanukkah holiday, the author realistically captures the challenges

of peer pressure and positive ways to overcome adversity against a bully. Written for children of all backgrounds, the story of Hanukkah is retold through the narration of the grandfather. Black and white cartoon-like pen illustrations add a comical flair and complement Ben's age appropriate and comic musings. Directions to play the dreidel game and a recipe for latkes are included at the end of the book. An important addition to the meager amount of Jewish-themed early chapter books, this heartwarming novel marks a promising debut for this first time author. Kids will enjoy this book at Hanukkah time or throughout the year. Ages 8-10. Reviewed by Debby Gold

Written by education expert Barbara Bietz and award-winning artist Anita White, *Like A Maccabee* is a large-type novel for young adults about Ben, a young Jewish boy who loves soccer but has a fierce and intimidating rival - the other team's best defender, a bully who enjoys teasing and tormenting Ben. Ben feels humiliated at school and misunderstood by his family, and when his grandfather comes to live with them, Ben has to share his room. Just when Ben's life seems to be at its worst, his grandfather shows him wisdom about his own heritage dating back thousands of years, and ways to tap into steadfast strength in order to face not only the upcoming big soccer game, but also the many challenges of life that lay beyond. Highly recommended.

This book had a good message, but what sets it apart from other young adult books trying to influence young minds with positive life experiences, was that it truly was a very good read. I'm not a kid anymore and I loved it. It's hard to believe that this politically correct story of a soccer playing boy who has his grandfather move into his bedroom could actually be a true page turner. This is the best book I have read this year.

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