

Our story this week is about why Jewish people celebrate Hanukkah





A dusting of frost forms across the busy city. The winter sun is starting to set and shoppers are heading for home. Chanukah, the Festival of Lights, is near.

"Hurry!" calls Max, as he pulls on his grandpa's hand. "Tonight, I get to light the first candle!"







When they reach the warmth of home,  
Max's grandma unwraps a special box.  
Inside is a beautiful menorah.  
"Small and silver. Old as time," she smiles.



The family gather around and say prayers  
as Max's mum helps him light the candle.

They sing ancient Hebrew songs.  
Across the street, Lara's family  
are singing them too.





The next day brings rain. Max and Lara splash through puddles as they race home from school.



"Today it's my turn to light the candles!" calls Lara, waving Max goodbye.

From the kitchen wafts the smell of delicious jam donuts.



When there are too many . . .



... Lara and her dad share them  
with their neighbours.



Later they return home, the two tall  
candles in the window lighting their way.  
The night grows colder and the first flakes  
of snow start to fall . . .





... and by late afternoon the next day,  
the streets wear a white blanket.



Ellie and Sam wait by the window.  
Uncle Matthew, Auntie Lucy and baby Lev  
are coming to stay!  
"His hands are so small!" whispers Ellie.



Food is shared, the chatter is loud.  
Three candles dance in the kitchen window,  
the room around them glowing with warmth.



On the fourth night of Chanukah,  
four candles flicker and dance.



“Let’s play dreidel!” announces Uncle Matthew.  
“I have a pocket full of chocolate coins,”  
smiles Auntie Lucy, piling them on the rug.  
Who will win? Sam spins the dreidel first.

*“Hey, shin, nun . . .”*



“Gimel!” cheers Sam, as he takes  
the chocolates in the pile.

He shares them with his family,  
the gold foil shimmers bright . . .



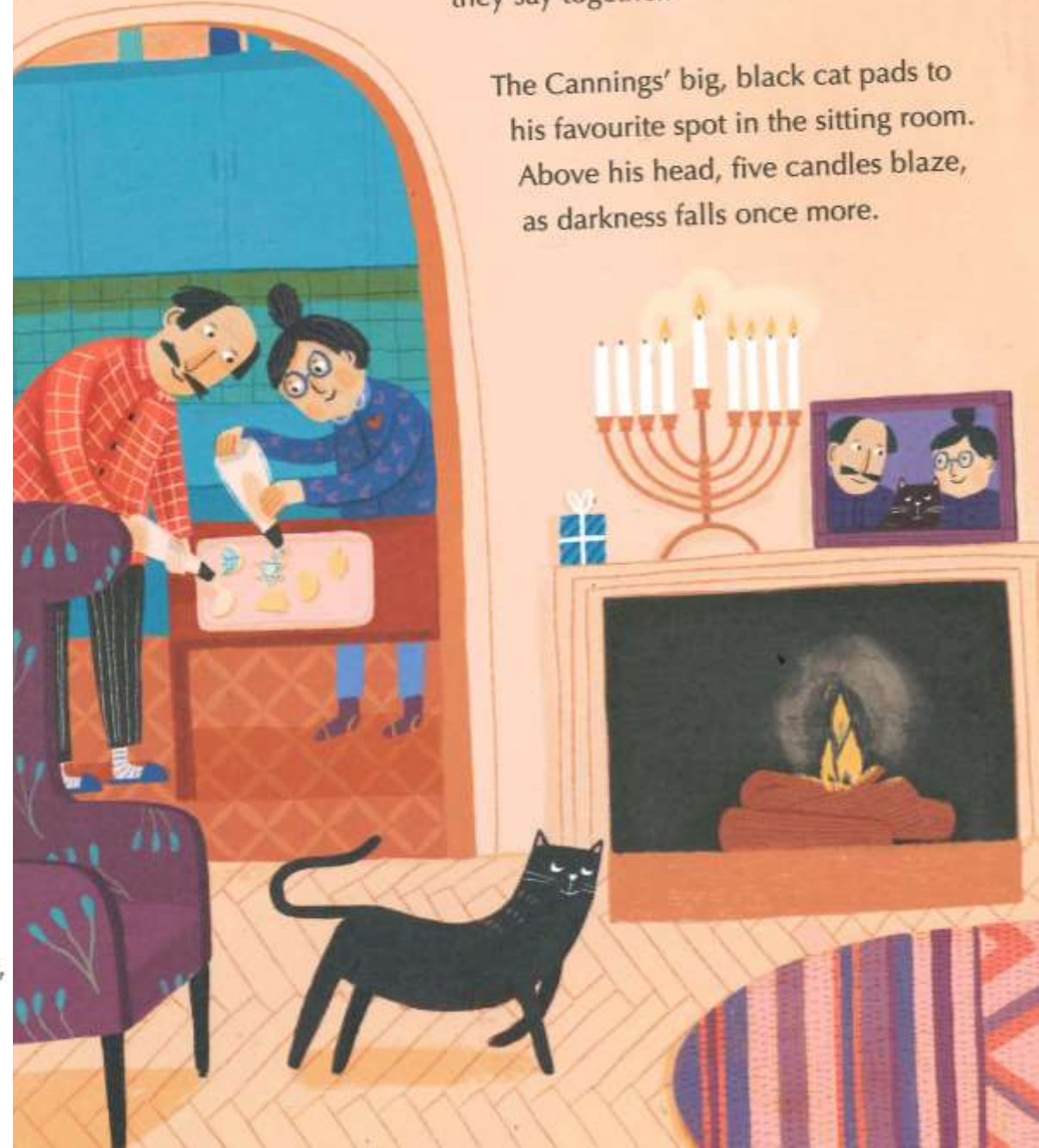
as bright as the sun that rises the next day. The sky over the city is as clear as glass and the sidewalks are slick with ice.



"Whoah!" wobbles Mrs Canning.  
"Let's not fall over," smiles Mr Canning,  
"before we deliver these donations and  
ice our cookies."

"Ready for the party at the synagogue,"  
they say together.

The Cannings' big, black cat pads to  
his favourite spot in the sitting room.  
Above his head, five candles blaze,  
as darkness falls once more.





A busy day has passed – from sunrise to sunset.  
Now, in their apartment, Yael, Meir and Micah  
are opening their Chanukah gifts.



There is a book.



Some stickers.



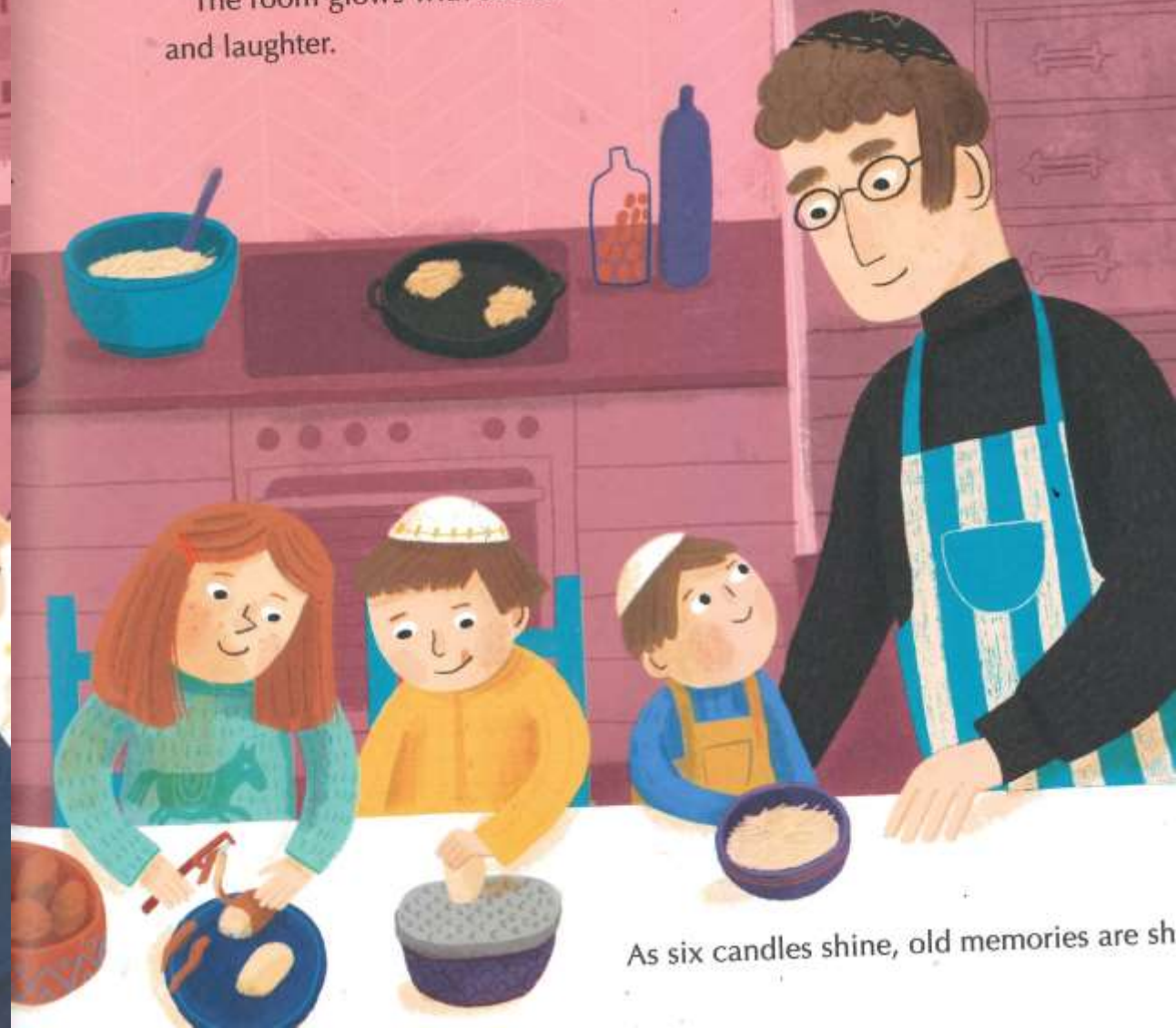
And a box of colouring pencils!



Later they help Dad make latkes.

The apartment is filled with the  
sound of oil popping in the pan.

The room glows with stories  
and laughter.



As six candles shine, old memories are shared.



... and by the next night new ones are made.

David and Jillian have moved into their new home. They are surrounded by bags and boxes as night begins to fall.

"Found it!" Jillian shouts, pulling her mother's menorah out of a bag.



Tired, but happy, the couple light the seven candles together. Then they position the menorah on their windowsill and the bright light of Chanukah blesses their new house with love.



Seven nights of fun and friendship have passed.  
Tonight is the eighth night.

The synagogue is busy with chatter.

But when Rabbi Rubin speaks, everyone listens.

He tells the story of Chanukah. How, long ago  
in Jerusalem, King Antiochus forced the Jewish  
people to give up their religion.



"Why?" Brock asks.

"He didn't like the Jewish  
people," Lauren whispers.



"So his guards destroyed the  
Temple and the jars of oil  
used to light the menorah

But a brave family fought back . . .  
And they won!"





"They rebuilt the Temple and lit the menorah. There was enough oil for one night but the lamp burned for eight nights, just enough time to make more oil. It was a miracle! And it's why we light a candle for eight nights."

"Why was the king so mean?" asks Brock. Lauren says, "I think it was because he was scared. People can be scared when they see differences in others that they don't understand. But we are all different . . . that's what makes everyone special."



The eighth candle is lit.  
Eight lights for eight nights.

Singing echoes throughout  
the hall and light pours out  
of the synagogue onto  
the dark street . . .





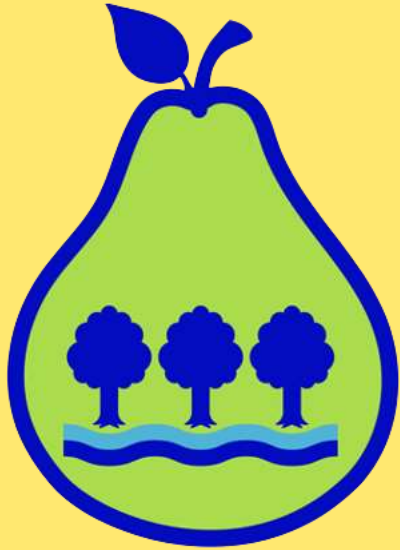
... as fireworks burst overhead.

Max looks out at his street. It is full of different houses, filled with many different people.

But their windows all burn bright with light.  
And it looks beautiful.







## School Reflection

This is our school,

Let peace dwell here,

Let the rooms be full of contentment.

Let love abide here,

Love of one another,

Love of mankind,

Love of life itself.

Let us remember

That as many hands build a house,

So many hearts make a school

Help us to learn, play and share together.

We hope our school will be a place of great discovery, adventure and creativity.

May it be a place where we love to learn and where we learn to love,

A place where everyone is respected, and all are deeply valued.