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Review of *Bear and Fred: A World War II Story* by Iris Argaman

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Bear and Fred: a World War II Story

Argaman, Iris

Illustrated by Avi Ofer

Translated by Annette Appel

Amazon Crossing Kids, 2020

9781542018210

Many times, children will choose a favorite toy, one that they take with them everywhere. The more worn and distressed the toy is, the more obvious it is that they were well loved. *Bear and Fred* follows the story of a young boy and his very favorite toy, who was his best friend during a very hard time in his life. Though never explicitly stated in the book, it becomes obvious through contextual clues that Fred and his family are Jews, and they are in grave danger in their home in Holland. Because of this, Fred must separate from the rest of his family and live far away in Amsterdam. However, Fred does not separate from Bear. Even when Bear is damaged by a dog and worn down by time and being squeezed, Fred loves Bear all the same. Bear and Fred are inseparable, and stay together all through Fred's life. But when Fred becomes an old man, Bear must leave him and stay in another place—a museum! To this day, Bear still lives in his new home, telling the story of how he helped Fred stay safe for all who come to see. *Bear and Fred* tells the true story of Fred Lessing, a Dutch boy who was forced to escape his home during World War II, and the bear he brought along with him. Today, Bear resides in Yad Vashem, the World Holocaust Remembrance Center. This book creates an environment for young children to learn about the injustices caused by the Holocaust and the impact it had on people of all ages, while still maintaining a child-like innocence and designing a story that even the youngest child can understand. *Bear and Fred* is a perfect example of supplementary material for a historical topic, and is highly recommended. **Recommended.** *Katie Gosman, Centennial Library Intern, Cedarville University.*