

The Dancing Bear - A Mountain Village

'Snow cuts us off for at least three months of every winter, sometimes more, and then we are left to ourselves. But it's a peaceful place at any time of year. The winding road from the valley ends in the village square. Beyond us are the mountains, and beyond the mountains, the sky . . . Nothing ever really disturbed our life until some ten years ago, when a small bear came down the mountains.'

(The Dancing Bear, page 10)

'In no time at all, Bruno became one of the village; nobody was afraid of him, as he was always gentle and biddable. He'd go splashing with them in the streams; he'd romp with them in the hay barns; he'd curl himself up in a ball and roll with them helter-skelter down the hillsides. He was more than a playmate, though. He was our mascot, the pride of the village.'

(The Dancing Bear, page 16)

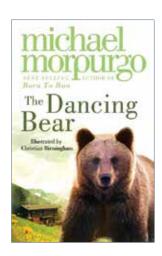
'Then someone wrote an article about Bruno in a local newspaper and there was a piece on the radio. People flocked to the village to see the bear...'

(The Dancing Bear, page 21)

Imagine you are a visitor to the mountain village and you meet Bruno the bear. Write a postcard to a friend describing your trip.







The Dancing Bear - Wonderment Films

'A film company who called themselves "Wonderment Films" had written to us. The village, they said was an ideal location for their film.'

(The Dancing Bear, page 24)

'Now rehearsals went like clockwork. By lunchtime they were already filming. The ladies screamed as they should, the rats ran in packs along the streets and didn't trip over, the children sang and danced just as children do, and the Mayor and the Corporation looked suitably scheming and smug. (Madame D'Arblay's chins wobbled wonderfully). (The Dancing Bear, page 50)

'Niki and Roxanne and Bruno led the procession of singing children into the hills never to return. And when Tiny came back, limping just the way I'd taught him, and told everyone that the children had gone forever, it brought real tears to our eyes.'

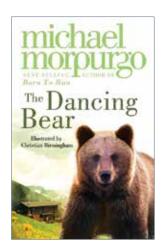
The video that the film crew and villagers make for Niki's song 'Follow me', is based on the story

(The Dancing Bear, page 50)

of the Pied Piper.						
Just like the villagers, can your class perform the story of The Pied Piper?						







The Dancing Bear - Roxanne

'And then Roxanne was beside me. She put a hand on my arm.

"I need you to tell me what to do," she said.

"There's no one else I can ask, there's no one else I can trust."

"What is it?" I said.

"When they go tomorrow Niki wants me to go with him. I'm going to be a singer. Niki says I sing well enough to be famous. Do you think I do?"

"Of course you do," I said. It was an honest answer.

"I think I want to go, but I'm not sure. Grandpa says I should go because I'll be rich. He says that with the money I'll make, he could buy the farm next door. It will make all the difference, he says. And I do like singing. I do. You've always helped me, ever since I was little. Tell me what to do. Please."

(The Dancing Bear, page 55)

Roxanne has lived in the village her whole life. She found and raised Bruno the bear, but she will have to leave him behind.

Write two opposing answers;

1.	Explainin	ig wny	Roxanne	snoula sta	ay in the	village ar	na not leave	e with Nik

2. Explaining why Roxanne should go with Niki and become a singer

