About the Story

Lexile: 930L
(combined)
For qualitative complexity factors, go to Scope Online.

Learning Objective:
to support the analysis of a fictional text with information from a nonfiction text

Key Skills:
inference, mood, figurative language, text structure, theme, key ideas, interpreting text, integrating ideas

Essential Questions:
• What do dreams mean?
• How can we deal with fear?
• What is it like to have a parent with a risky job?

Standards:
This article and lesson support these Common Core anchor standards:
R.1, R.2, R.3, R.4, R.5, R.9, W.1, W.9, SL.1, L.4, L.5, L.6
For more standards information—including TEKS—go to Scope Online.

Audio:
• Story
• Informational text
• Vocabulary words

Activities to print or project:
• DIY Vocabulary (for fiction)
• Vocabulary (for informational text)
• Close Reading and Critical Thinking
• Integrating Ideas: Mike’s Bear Dream
• Core Skills Workout: Inference, Mood*
• Quiz*

Literary Elements:
• Anticipation Guide, Character Thinking Tool
• Contest Entry Form

*Available on two levels

Your Teaching Support Package
Find your full suite of materials at scope.scholastic.com.
Preparing to Read

Complete the Theme Anticipation Guide. (5 minutes, activity sheet online)
As a class, complete the Anticipation Guide to activate prior knowledge and build curiosity. Then ask students to explain their responses.

Reading and Discussing “Bearing Up”

DIFFERENTIATION: Students who need more support should first listen to the audio version.
• Read the story once through as a class.
• Break students into groups to read the story again and discuss the close-reading questions. Have students write answers in the margins or on the Close-Reading Questions handout.

Answers to Close-Reading Questions

1. Inference (p. 23) In all of the dreams, Mike is being chased by some sort of monster. In fact, Mike describes all of these dreams as “the bear dream” because they are so similar.

2. Mood (p. 23) The mood of Mike’s dream is frightening, dangerous, threatening, etc.

3. Figurative Language (p. 23) The similes help you picture the bear as an imposing darkness closing in on Mike. They also help you understand how overcome by horror Mike felt.

4. Text Structure (p. 25) Based on what Mrs. Skinner is saying, the bear in Mike’s dream might represent a fear he is unwilling to think about or deal with.

5. Figurative Language (p. 25) By “the forest,” Mike means parts of his mind, or certain feelings or thoughts. He means that Mrs. Skinner would get him talking about difficult or painful things that he would rather not think about.

6. Text Structure (p. 25) Jonah is suggesting that the bear is trying to get Mike to confront something important that Mike keeps avoiding. This is similar to Mrs. Skinner’s theory that a monster in a nightmare represents some aspect of yourself or some fear that you are avoiding but know, deep down, that you need to deal with.

7. Inference (p. 27) Mike and his mom are worried and anxious. We know this because they are in the kitchen doing nothing but drinking coffee, “trying not to look out the window” (as people do when they are waiting/hoping for someone to appear), and not hungry for dinner.

8. Theme (p. 27) Mike finally faced the bear—which symbolizes Mike’s fear of something happening to his father—and realized that he could deal with that fear. (Answers will vary.)

9. Inference (p. 27) Mike stops having the dream because the night he saw (or imagined he saw) the bear behind his house, he finally confronted his fears about his dad’s safety. Having come face-to-face with that fear, Mike no longer needed his brain to keep bringing it up in dreams.

Reading and Discussing “Why Do You Dream?”

(15 minutes, activity sheet online)
• Preview the Vocabulary Words and Definitions. Highlighted words: confronting, generate, intimately, speculate, supernatural
• Read “Why Do You Dream?” as a class.
• Discuss the questions that follow.

Close-Reading Questions

(5 minutes, activity sheet online)

How has our understanding of dreams changed since ancient times? (key ideas) In ancient times, many believed that dreams were supernatural—that they came from gods and
According to the article, do dreams have meaning? Explain. (key ideas) According to the article, dreams do not have meaning in terms of “if you dream of X, it means Y,” but our dreams do reflect the thoughts, emotions, and experiences of our waking lives.

Consider the quote by Stephen LaBerge at the end of the article. Explain what it means. (interpreting text) The quote means that our dreams are very personal because they are created by our minds and reflect the people, places, and activities in our lives as well as our deepest thoughts and feelings. Our dreams might reflect things about us that we aren't consciously aware of, therefore providing hints about what we might do or how we might act in the future.

Critical-Thinking Questions
(20 minutes, activity sheet online)
Do you think Mike really saw a bear in his backyard? Explain. Answers will vary. Those who say yes may point out that there really were bears in the area that liked to eat blackberries, and Mike was standing near blackberry bushes when the bear appeared. Plus, the details that Mike notices—the sounds and smells—are very specific and make the encounter seem real. On the other hand, no one else sees the bear, and the bear disappears the minute Mike finds out that his father is OK. It seems quite possible that under the extreme stress of his father being missing, Mike imagined seeing the bear.

Why might people have once believed that dreams were messages from gods and demons? Answers will vary. Students might say that people wanted an explanation for where dreams come from, and before our modern understanding of the brain, gods and demons seemed a likely source—in the same way that gods and demons seemed a likely source of natural phenomena, illnesses, luck, etc. Besides, we still don’t understand exactly why we dream, and ideas about “interpreting” dreams or dreams predicting the future linger in our modern world.

4 Skill Building
Featured Skill: Integrating Ideas
(15 minutes, activity sheet online)
To prepare students for the prompt on page 29, have them complete the activity Mike’s Bear Dream. For alternate culminating tasks, see the box below.

Differentiate and Customize

For Struggling Readers
“Why Do You Dream?” says that most researchers agree that our dreams reflect our worries and joys. What worries or joys might Mike’s dream of the bear have reflected? Support your answer with text evidence.

For Advanced Readers
How does the author of “Bearing Up” develop the bear in Mike’s dream as a symbol of Mike’s fear? Does “Why Do You Dream?” support the idea that a dream could represent a real-life fear? Support your answer with text evidence.

For Creative Writers
Imagine that when Jonah says that the bear in Mike’s dream is trying to tell Mike something, Mike opens up about his worries instead of changing the subject. Write a scene in which Mike tells Jonah what’s been on his mind. The scene can be in the form of a story or a play.

For Dreamers
Describe a dream that you have had. Then propose an explanation for what events, experiences, or emotions from your life the dream reflects.