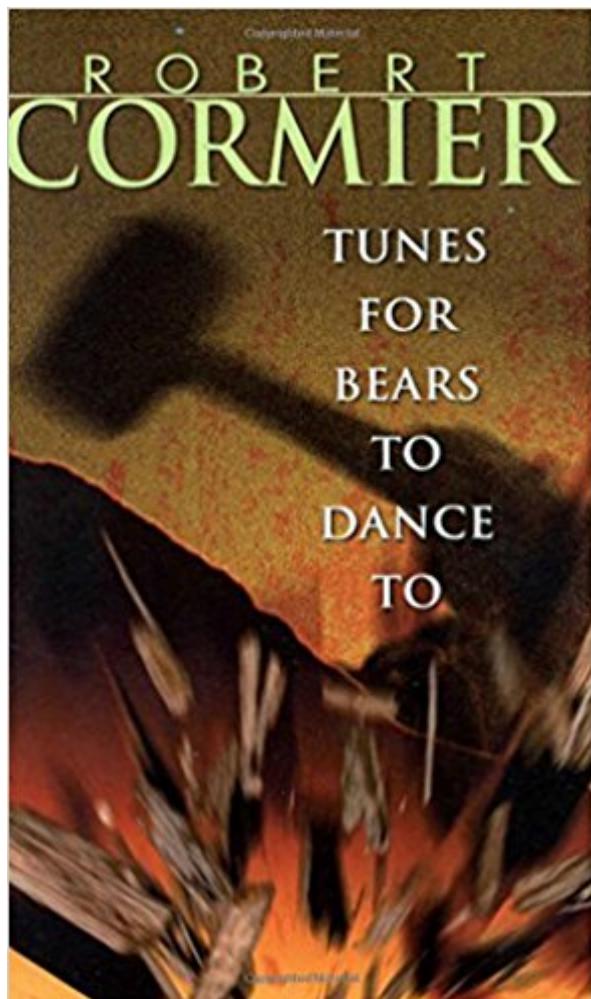


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# Tunes For Bears To Dance To



## **Synopsis**

A masterful portrayal of hatred, prejudice and manipulation that challenges readers to examine how they would behave in the face of evil. Henry meets and befriends Mr. Levine, an elderly Holocaust survivor, who is carving a replica of the village where he lived and which was destroyed in the war. Henry's friendship with Mr. Levine is put to the test when his prejudiced boss, Mr. Hairston, asks Henry to destroy Mr. Levine's village.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Numb and lonely after his brother's death, Henry is befriended by a bigoted new employer, who attempts to involve the boy in an act of cruelty against a Holocaust survivor. Ages 12-up. Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Grade 6-9-- This brief, compelling book conveys the devastating effects of evil, whether its form is as huge and incomprehensible as the Holocaust, or as small and personal as another human being. Henry, a young teenager, is lucky to be employed. Since his brother's recent death, his father is paralyzed by depression; his mother works long hours to support the family. It's the early 1950s, and, with the return of the servicemen, housing and jobs are scarce. Unfortunately, Henry's boss is a bigoted, abusive individual whose hatred of others is so consuming that he intentionally sets out to corrupt the boy's goodness. He forces Henry to commit an ugly, violent act and betray a friendship with an elderly neighbor who has lost his home and family to the Nazis. As part of his

rehabilitative therapy, Mr. Levine lovingly carves his vanished village and its population out of wood. The scenes in which he is ``home'' again demonstrate the Holocaust's horror in a deeply moving manner, and Cormier wrenchingly personalizes the man's grief. *Tunes for Bears to Dance To*, more a parable than a fully realized novel, is sharp, short, and to the point. The characters are fairly one-dimensional and their circumstances are portrayed as black or white. Why they are ``good'' or ``evil'' is not explained, and little room is left for shades of gray. They simply embody the concepts Cormier is exploring. This book has limitations, but it will not be easily forgotten. It will make fascinating material for group discussion. -- Lucinda Snyder Whitehurst, County of Henrico Public Library, Richmond, VA  
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I just finished rereading this book that my son has to read for school - and I was amazed, as I was the first time, how powerful the message is in this story. I thought it was a great story of the coming of age of a young boy who learns so many great life lessons. He learns about the depravity of man in a very powerful and personal way - and that we are all just teetering on the edge of destruction - and we don't need much of a push from this fallen world to send us over that edge. He learns that misery truly does love company - instead of rising up, it really is much easier to tear everyone else down to your level. He learns that integrity is hard to keep in a world seeking to destroy anything whole and good. And he learns about the power of forgiveness. Great story for all ages - don't let this book be relegated solely to the younger readers!

This book chronicles the issues associated with loss, evil and hatred in the world. Consequently it is an excellent primer to prepare students for the study of the holocaust. Without being violent it prepares students to evaluate good and evil and make good choices. I believe that Cormier weaves the narrative in such a way as to make it interesting yet poignant. This was my third read of this book and I find more layers each time I read it.

One of my favorite authors! This book didn't let me down AT ALL! Quick read, no more than an hour! Love the dicotomy of personality types.

This is one of my favorite books. Robert Cormier is a great author. His books usually give some insight into human nature and each person's propensity towards evil. His characters (including those in *Tunes for Bears to Dance to*) are so real, you may think you're reading a story about your

neighbor, your uncle, or yourself.

This book was a fascinating story. It had a deep story line and the main character, Henry, was at possibly the worst time of his life. But it's interesting to see how he manages.

this book was incredible. I loved the ending and the boys decisions. This book is definitely a must read. You will enjoy the characters personalities. Honestly I would recommend this book to anyone who can breath. Download it now!

I read this book for school and did not enjoy it. It has some good qualities but is unfinished with some of the conflicts unsolved.

great classic read.

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