Whatif

Are there times when your mind fills with fear? Have you ever thought,"What if something dangerous happens to me or the people around me?" "What if the world stops revolving around the sun?" "What if the sun does not rise in the morning?"

Here is a poem which talks about some more such "Whatifs".

Last night, while I lay thinking here,
Some Whatifs crawled inside my ear
And pranced and partied all night long
And sang their same old Whatif song:
Whatif I'm dumb in school?
Whatif they've closed the swimming-pool?
Whatif I get beat up?
Whatif there's poison in my cup?
Whatif I start to cry?
Whatif I get sick and die?
Whatif I flunk that test?
Whatif green hair grows on my chest?
Whatif nobody likes me?
Whatif a bolt of lightning strikes me?
Whatif I don't grow taller?
Whatif my head starts getting smaller?
Whatif the fish won't bite?

Whatif the wind tears up my kite?
Whatif they start a war?
Whatif my parents get divorced?
Whatif the bus is late?
Whatif my teeth don't grow in straight?
Whatif I tear my pants?
Whatif I never learn to dance?
Everything seems swell, and then
The night-time Whatif strikes again!

SHEL SILVERSTEIN

WORKING WITH THE POEM

1. (i) Who is the speaker in the poem?

    (ii) With your partner list out the happenings the speaker is worried about.

    (iii) Why do you think she/he has these worries? Can you think of ways to get rid of such worries?

2. Read the following line.

    Some Whatifs *crawled inside my ear*

    Can words crawl into your ear? This is an image. The poet is trying to make an image of what she/he experiences. Now with your partner try and list out some more images from the poem.

3. In groups of four discuss some more 'whatifs' that you experience in your day to day life and list them out.

    (i) _____

    (ii) _____

(iii) _____

(iv) _____

(v) _____

(vi) _____

(vii) _____

(viii) _____

And now write a poem of five or six lines with the 'whatifs' that you have listed.

Know Your Country

Answers

1. Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Orissa and Chattisgarh.

2. Middle Andaman.

   Situated in the Bay of Bengal, the Middle Andaman is India's largest island.