

Honeysuckle
POEM - *WHATIF* by Shel Silverstein
LESSON PLAN

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- The students will be able to identify themselves with other children of their age who have unknown fears.
- They will feel encouraged to stay strong and overcome fears.
- Understand and appreciate **poetry** as a literary art form.
- Analyze the various elements of **poetry**,
- They will be able to frame sentences of their own using the term 'whatif'.

CONTENT

This poem is written in a child's voice and describes her point of view. The narrator is a young girl whose mind is filled with doubts and fears. She wonders what will happen if she loses her power to speak, or if the school closes the swimming pool or she gets beaten up or if someone puts poison in her cup. She worries whether her teeth will grow straight, whether green hair will grow on her chest. Her wild imagination shows that she is a child and her thinking is limited. The poem delves into the psychology of a child who is very timid and fearful. It talks about our irrational fears that disturb our peace of mind and don't let us enjoy the moment. When she wakes up next morning, everything looks normal, but her doubts and fears appear again the next night.

PRE READING

- The teacher can ask the students what their hidden fears are. She can tell them a story and further discuss the ways to overcome them.
- A story on overcoming fears will be shared with the students as a part of pre-reading task.
(Link attached in the Content document)
- Poem Recitation
(Link attached in the Content document)

WHILE READING:

- Learners will be asked to recite the poem with correct rhythm, stress and intonation. After every stanza, questions will be asked followed by a brief discussion. Answers will be elicited from them and factual errors will be corrected.
- Students will identify the key points in each stanza and share with the class.
- Students will be asked to underline the part that contains answers.

- Teacher will explain meaning of each stanza with due emphasis on new vocabulary items.
- Discussion on the purpose of the poem – Overcoming fears and accepting challenges in life.

Post Reading:

- Questions under the heading “Working with the Poem” will be discussed. Students will be divided in groups of four to discuss it first amongst themselves and later with other students.

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