

Poem- WhatIf
Class- IV
Sub: English



About the poet Shel Silverstein

Early life

- Born in Chicago on 25th September
- Writer and composer
- Famous work includes, “The Giving tree”, “Where the Sidewalk ends” and “Falling Up”.
- Served in the US army in 1950, in both Korea and Japan



Poem in a Nutshell

- The poem is about a child who has many fears, doubts, notions, and fancies. The speaker is concerned if he was dumb in school, if they had closed the swimming pool, if he got beaten up, if there was poison in his cup, if he started to cry, if he got sick and died, if he flunked that test, if green hair grew on his chest, if nobody liked him, if a bolt of lightning struck him, if he did not grow taller, if his head started getting smaller, if the fish would not bite, if the wind tore up his kite, if they started a war, if his parents got divorced, if the bus was late, if his teeth did not grow in straight, if he tore his pants, if he never learnt to dance. Hence, everything seemed negative and depressing to him.



Rhyme Pattern

- The rhyme pattern in the poem is AABB.
- For example, we see how in the first stanza it says:

Whatif I'm dumb in school? (A)

Whatif they've closed the swimming-pool? (A)

Whatif I get beat up? (B)

Whatif there's poison in my cup? (B)

- Also this is a narrative poem.



Poetic Devices

- There are various poet devices used in the poem.
- Personification-: “Some Whatifs crawled inside my ear”
(A thought does not crawl into your head therefore it is a personification.)
- Repetition: “Whatif”
(Throughout the poem the speaker repeats the word” Whatif”)
- Alliteration: “Seems swell”
(Both word starts with “s” and follow one another.)



THANK YOU