



What If...
written by Samantha Berger and illustrated by Mike Curato



Reading and Activity Guide

BEFORE READING

- + Share that there are many ways to be creative - through art - which includes drawing, painting, carving, sculpting, taking pictures, making videos, etc. - and dance, musical instruments, singing, writing, building...! *Ask children, What types of things do you enjoy creating?*
- + Ask children *What would you do if suddenly one day, you woke up and there were no more crayons, markers, colored pencils, or paper?! What could you use to create art?*

DURING READING

- + Enjoy the illustrations in this book! Ask the children to closely observe the illustrations - they're not all drawings!! *What materials did the illustrator use to create the pictures? How do you think he did it?*
- + Ask children if they've ever created shadow puppets with their hands!

AFTER READING

- + *Can you remember all the different things the girl was able to create with? Flip back through the story - which would you like to try creating with? Ripped paper? Drawings in the dirt? Your voice? Maybe flower petals and leaves!*
- + Discuss the Jenkins' question: *How have you had to be creative in solving problems during this new school year? Thank God for the blessings you've experienced in the midst of this challenging time.*
- + *Can you think of ways that your creativity can bless others? The Bible talks about using our words to "build each other up" and provide encouragement to each other, and we all know how awe-inspiring it is to experience a beautiful work of art. Or, maybe you can help someone think creatively and help them solve a problem! God often blesses us with talents that we can also use to bless others.*

Springboard Activities:

Activity #1: Creative Artworks - After studying the imaginative way the illustrator created his illustrations, try recreating them or create your own! Gather unusual materials, like leaves, fallen flower petals, sticks, marshmallows, toothpicks, maybe even clean recyclables! What can you create with what you've gathered? An animal? A flower? A forest scene? Try it! (If you purchase the book, there is a lovely note from the author and illustrator about their inspiration for the content and creation of the story.)

Activity #2: Imagine If... - Play this fun group story-telling game in the car, at a mealtime, or at school: One person starts with the beginning/introduction sentence to a made-up story. Then, each person in the group adds the next sentence to the story. Every time you play, you will create a totally different adventure! And when you play with different people, they will bring their own creative flair to your story-telling!

Activity #3: Origami - Did you know that paper was invented in China, around 105 A.D.? Learn about the history and significance of origami, the Japanese art of paper-folding. This video teaches a bit about its history and significance to Japanese culture and this website gives a crash-course introduction to the craft and culture.

