



Dreaming of Heaven

by Kathi Wolfe

Introduction

Helen Keller, who lived from 1880 to 1968, became blind and deaf at age 18 months. Keller said that, before she learned what words meant, she lived like a wild animal. She did not know what to call the people in her family or the names of things, from her dolls to her dog. When she was seven years old, Anne Sullivan Macy taught her the meaning of language. Because Keller could not see or hear, people sometimes believed that she could not know as much as people without disabilities. Even today, some people are surprised to learn that Keller engaged frequently in conversation and wrote many books and letters. She was able to surmount the barriers posed by her limitations by finding alternative ways of communicating.

Sometimes poets imagine what it would be like to be someone famous. After doing some research and using their imagination, they write a poem in that person's "voice." In "Dreaming of Heaven" the poet, Kathi Wolfe, imagines what Helen Keller was thinking and chooses to make Keller the speaker of the poem. Keep this in mind as you answer the questions below.

Discussion Questions

4. In the poem, Helen Keller is