

Question1

What, according to the author, did exist in place of Antarctica six hundred and fifty million years ago?

Answer

Six hundred fifty million years ago in place of present day Antarctica a giant amalgamated southern super continent - Gondwana existed. Things were quite different then. Then humans had not arrived on the global scene. The climate was much warmer. There was a huge variety of flora and fauna.

Question2

What is that thing that can happen in a million years and would be 'mind-boggling'?

Answer

In a million years India may push northwards, jamming against Asia to buckle its crust and form the Himalayas. South Africa may drift off to join North America. The Drake Passage may open up to create a cold circumpolar current. Antarctica may remain frigid, desolate and at the bottom of the world.

Question3

Why all earthly sense of perspective and time are lost in Antarctica?

Answer

In Antarctica there are no human markers like trees, billboards and buildings. One feels like walking on a giant ping-pong ball here. He loses all earthly sense of perspective and time.

Question4

What are the microscopic phytoplanktons? How are they important in the food chain and photosynthesis?

Answer

The microscopic phytoplanktons are the grasses of the sea, which nourish and sustain the entire South Ocean's food chain. These single-celled plants use the Sun's energy to assimilate carbon and synthesise organic compounds in the important process called photosynthesis.

Question5

What was the best epiphany that occurred in the Antarctic journey?

Answer

Their vessel got wedged into a thick ice-stretch. The captain decided to turn around and instructed them to walk on the ice. While walking on the ice they saw underneath their feet 180 metres of living, breathing salt water. Crab-eater seals stretching and sunning themselves on the ice floes like stray dogs under a banyan tree. It was the best epiphany.