

## The Laburnum Top

### Question 1.

What do you notice about the beginning and the ending of the poem ?

Answer:

The poem begins with absolute silence on the laburnum tree top. The poem ends with the tree sinking into silence again. In between, the tree comes to life with the arrival of the goldfinch and the noise made by the young birds.

### Question 2.

To what is the bird's movement compared ? What is the basis for the comparison ?

Answer:

The bird's movement is compared to the swift movement of a lizard. The basis for the comparison is their sleekness, smooth and glossy look.

### Question 3.

Why is the image of the engine evoked by the poet ?

Answer:

The poet likens the sudden bustle of the youngones to the noise made by a steam engine when it is started up. The bird as if stokes the fire of the furnace and makes her youngones chirp together.

### Question 4.

What do you like most about the poem ?

Answer:

The poem is simple, the action is common place. What I like most about the poem is its discription, its imagery. The poet builds up a lovely scene using very few words.

Question 5.

What does the phrase 'her barred face identity mask' mean ?

Answer:

The little goldfinch is a singing bird. It has coloured stripes across its face. The bars look like a mask or covering for the face. But they help to identify or recognise the birds.

Question 6

What gives a unique character to the Laburnum tree top ?

Answer:

The Laburnum tree top is all quiet and alone in the forest. But it suddenly comes to life with the arrival of a goldfinch. It starts up as some engine. This noise last for a short time only. As the mother bird flies away, the tree relapses into silence again.

Question 7

What happens to the Laburnum tree in September ?

Answer:

September is an autumn month. In this season the trees shed all their leaves in order to get new ones. The Laburnum's leaves also turn pale and the seeds fall to the ground.

Question 8

What makes the whole tree tremble and thrill ?

Answer:

The whole tree is, as it were, shaken by the loud chirruping of the little birds. They are greatly excited to see and hear the whistling sound of the mother goldfijch.

Question 9

Why does the poet call the whispering of the bird 'eerie' ?

Answer:

The soft two noises made by the goldfinch is loud enough to disturb the silence around the tree suddenly. It is so sudden and unexpected that it startles. It sounds unnatural or strange.

Question 10

How does the poem began and end ?

Answer:

The poem's opening line is 'The Laburnum Top is silent, quite still. Its closing line is 'And the Laburnum subsides to empty'. The tree was all quiet before the goldfinch arrived. The same silence returned to the tree after the bird flew away.