

## MAIN POINTS

- The poet is Ted Hughes.
- The poet describes how the laburnum tree's top is silent and lifeless.
- The tree top is empty.
- Its leaves are turning yellow and all the seeds have fallen.
- The bird goldfinch comes and sits on the tree.
- The coming of the sweet singing bird makes all the difference.
- The yellow singing bird comes suddenly and abruptly.
- The tree comes to life with chirrupings, chitterings and trillings.
- The tree comes to life with excitement.
- The bird hides itself among the leaves and flirts from one branch to the other.
- The tree becomes empty and silent again the moment the bird flies away.

## MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

- The poet of the poem 'The Laburnum Top' is .....**
  - Shirley Toulson
  - Elizabeth Jennings
  - Walt Whitman
  - Ted Hughes
- Which tree's top has been mentioned in the poem?**
  - Willow
  - Laburnum
  - Banyan
  - Pine
- How has the poet described the laburnum tree top in the beginning of the poem?**
  - Silent and still
  - Active and moving
  - Silent and motionless
  - Shaking
- The month that has been mentioned in the poem is ....**
  - December
  - October
  - September
  - November
- What has happened to the leaves?**
  - They are yellowing
  - They have fallen
  - They are green
  - They have dried
- The bird that flies to the tree is ....**
  - Sparrow
  - Hornbill
  - Pigeon
  - Goldfinch
- How does the goldfinch come to the tree?**
  - With a twitching chirrup
  - With a loud noise
  - With a bang
  - Silently
- The time of the day described in the poem is....**
  - Noon
  - Afternoon
  - Morning
  - Night
- How does the September sunlight appear?**
  - Yellow
  - Red
  - Bright
  - Orange
- The laburnum tree top remains..... till the goldfinch comes.**
  - Noisy
  - Silent and quite still
  - Shaking
  - Vibrant
- How does the goldfinch sit at the branch end?**
  - With a jerk
  - With a bang
  - With a suddenness and startlement
  - Silently
- The goldfinch is compared to a....**
  - Spider
  - Lizard
  - Insect
  - Scorpion
- Why is the goldfinch compared to a lizard?**
  - Because she is silent
  - Because she is jerking her wings
  - Because she is sleek
  - Because she is noisy

14. **How is the movement of the goldfinch?**  
 a. Slow and lazy  
 b. Slow and careless  
 c. Alert and abrupt  
 d. Abrupt and careless
15. **What does 'thickness' mean in the poem?**  
 a. Among the leaves and branches  
 b. Thickness of the branches  
 c. Thickness of the leaves  
 d. None of these
16. **Trillings are .....**  
 a. Short high sounds  
 b. Long high sounds  
 c. Short low sounds  
 d. Long low sounds
17. **A machine starts up of .....**  
 a. Chitterings                      b. Tremor of wings  
 c. Trillings                        d. All of these
18. **The whole tree trembles and thrills with.....**  
 a. The wind  
 b. The arrival of the goldfinch  
 c. The songs of birds  
 d. None of these
19. **"It is the engine of her family." 'It' here stands for:**  
 a. The goldfinch                  b. The wind  
 c. The lizard                      d. The laburnum tree
20. **What is the identity sign of the goldfinch?**  
 a. Her wings  
 b. Her barred face  
 c. The colour of her feathers  
 d. Her eyes
21. **'barred face' means .....**  
 a. Dark face  
 b. Covered by leaves  
 c. Face having strips  
 d. Covered by hair
22. **What does the phrase "the barred face identity mask" mean?**  
 a. Her face is coloured  
 b. Bird's striped face has become her identity and her symbol of recognition  
 c. Her face is hard to recognize  
 d. None of these
23. **How can a goldfinch be recognized?**  
 a. By her barred face      b. By her chirrupings  
 c. By her beak              d. By her feathers
24. **What is the meaning of the word 'eerie'?**  
 a. Strong                      b. Stone  
 c. Strange                    d. Store
25. **The "whistle-chirrup whisperings" of the goldfinch are :**  
 a. Loud and strange      b. Low and frequent  
 c. Strange and delicate   d. Loud and strong
26. **The meaning of "launches away" is.....**  
 a. Starts                        b. Flies away  
 c. Silences                    d. None of these
27. **Which figure of speech is used in 'September sunlight'?**  
 a. Simile                      b. Personification  
 c. Metaphor                  d. Alliteration
28. **"The infinite" means....**  
 a. The endless sky  
 b. The infinite leaves and branches  
 c. The limitless chirrupings  
 d. The infinite trees
29. **"She launches away". She here stands for:**  
 a. The poet                      b. A woman  
 c. A bird                        d. The goldfinch
30. **What happens to the laburnum tree after the goldfinch flies away?**  
 a. Silent                        b. Empty  
 c. Empty and silent again   d. Dry

### ANSWER KEY

1-d, 2-b, 3-a, 4-c, 5-a, 6-d, 7-a, 8-b, 9-a, 10-b, 11-c, 12-b, 13-c, 14-c, 15-a, , 16-a, 17-d, 18-b, 19-d, 20-b, 21-c, 22-b, 23-a, 24-c, 25-c, 26-b, 27-d, 28-a, 29-d, 30-c

### VERY SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. **How has the laburnum tree top been described in the beginning of the poem?**  
 Ans. The laburnum tree top has been described as silent and quite still.
2. **What time of the day has been mentioned in the poem?**  
 Ans. The time of day mentioned in the poem is afternoon.

**3. Who is the poet of the poem 'The Laburnum Top'?**

Ans. Ted Hughes

**4. Why is the laburnum tree top silent and still?**

Ans. The laburnum tree top is silent and still because of the absence of the bird goldfinch.

**5. To what is the goldfinch compared?**

Ans. The goldfinch has been compared to a lizard.

**6. How does the silent and lifeless laburnum tree come to life?**

Ans. With the arrival of the goldfinch the silent and lifeless laburnum tree comes to life.

**7. What has been called the identity symbol of the goldfinch?**

Ans. The striped face of the goldfinch has been called its identity symbol.

**8. What becomes "the engine of her family"?**

Ans. The laburnum tree becomes "the engine of her family".

**9. How is the movement of the goldfinch?**

Ans. The movement of the goldfinch is alert and abrupt.

**10. Where does the goldfinch fly away?**

Ans. The goldfinch flies away towards the infinite sky.

**SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS**

**1. Describe the laburnum tree's top in the beginning.**

Ans. At the beginning of the poem, we see that the laburnum tree top is empty and silent. There are no activities and sounds. In the yellow September sunlight, some of its leaves are turning yellow and all its seeds have fallen. The tree represents a picture of inactivity, emptiness and lifelessness.

**2. Describe the movement of the goldfinch.**

Ans. The poet has compared the movement of the goldfinch to the movement of a lizard. We see that the bird comes at a branch end with a suddenness and startlement. Just like a lizard, her movements are abrupt and alert.

**3. What difference does the coming of the goldfinch make to the laburnum tree?**

Ans. The goldfinch's coming to the laburnum tree top makes all the difference. The tree was silent

and still. The tree comes to life with the bird's movements and her chitterings and trillings.

**4. How can a goldfinch be identified?**

Ans. The face of a goldfinch has stripes on it. The striped face of the goldfinch has become her identity mark or sign of recognition. The bird can be identified by her barred face.

**5. Read the given lines of the poem and answer the questions that follow.**

Then with eerie delicate whistle-chirrup whisperings

She launches away, towards the infinite

And the laburnum subsides to empty.

**a. Whom does 'She' in the second line refer to?**

Ans. 'She' in the second line refers to the goldfinch.

**b. How are the 'whistle-chirrup whisperings' of the goldfinch?**

Ans. The 'whistle-chirrup whisperings' of the goldfinch are strange and delicate.

**c. Where does the bird fly away?**

Ans. The bird flies away towards the infinite sky.

**d. What happens to the laburnum tree when the bird flies away?**

Ans. When the bird flies away towards the infinite sky, the tree again becomes empty and silent.

**LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS**

**1. Describe the difference that the arrival of the goldfinch makes to the laburnum tree.**

Ans. In the beginning of the poem the poet describes how the laburnum tree remains silent and still. There is no activity on the tree. The tree seems to be lifeless. This state of the tree remains so till the goldfinch comes and perches on the tree.

The coming of the sweet singing yellow bird makes all the difference. The bird comes with a twitching chirrup. She makes sharp, sudden and surprising chirrups. Her movements are abrupt. She enters the thickness of leaves and branches. There she starts a machine of chitterings, a tremor of wings and trillings. The whole tree trembles with activity and excitement with the singing of the goldfinch. The tree which was silent, still and lifeless comes to life. It is no longer empty, silent and still.

**2. To what is the bird's movement compared ?**

**Why has this comparison been done so?**

Ans. The bird's movement has been compared to the movement of a lizard. It is alert and watchful. Its movement is abrupt and quick. The goldfinch comes to the tree with a twitching chirrup. With a suddenness and startlement she perches on a branch end. Her body is sleek as the body of a lizard. She is alert like a lizard. Just like a lizard she moves on the branches abruptly and with alertness.

**3. Describe the relationship of the laburnum tree and the goldfinch.**

Ans. The laburnum tree is silent, still and empty in the absence of the goldfinch. The tree seems to be lifeless. There is no activity and sound . But with the arrival of the goldfinch a transformation comes in the state of the tree. The sudden and abrupt arrival of the bird brings life to the tree. The whole tree trembles and thrills with the chitterings, trillings and with the tremor of wings. The moment the bird flies away, the tree becomes empty and silent again.