

CBSE CLASS XI WORKSHEET (SET A)

Poem: "The Laburnum Top" by Ted Hughes

English Core (Hornbill)

Time Allowed: 45 Mins

Max Marks: 25 (with Solution)

EXTRACT-BASED SOURCE MATERIAL

*The Laburnum top is silent, quite still
In the afternoon yellow September sunlight,
A few leaves yellowing, all its seeds fallen.
Till the goldfinch comes, with a twitching chirrup
A suddenness, a startlement, at a branch end.*

SECTION A: EXTRACT-BASED QUESTIONS — [8 MARKS]

Q1. What is the condition of the Laburnum tree before the goldfinch arrives? (1 Mark)

EASY MODEL ANSWER:

Before the goldfinch arrives, the Laburnum tree is completely silent, empty, and still. It looks lifeless.

Q2. Which poetic device is used in the phrase "yellow September sunlight"? (1 Mark)

- (a) Simile
- (b) Alliteration
- (c) Metaphor
- (d) Oxymoron

EASY MODEL ANSWER:

(b) Alliteration (because of the repetition of the 's' sound in "September sunlight").

Q3. What causes the "suddenness" and "startlement" at the branch end? (2 Marks)

EASY MODEL ANSWER:

The sudden arrival of the goldfinch bird causes this change. Her quick and unexpected movements at the end of the branch startle the quiet tree.

Q4. What does the "yellowing" of leaves and "fallen seeds" signify about the season? (1 Mark)

EASY MODEL ANSWER:

They signify the autumn season, a time when leaves change color and trees shed their seeds.

Q5. State whether the following statement is TRUE or FALSE: (1 Mark)

The arrival of the goldfinch makes the tree even quieter than before.

EASY MODEL ANSWER:

FALSE. The goldfinch's arrival fills the tree with lively sounds, chirping, and motion.

Q6. Find a word from the extract that means "a sudden quick movement of a body part". (1 Mark)

EASY MODEL ANSWER:

Twitching.

SECTION B: SHORT ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS — [12 MARKS]

Q7. Why is the goldfinch compared to a lizard in the poem? (3 Marks)

EASY MODEL ANSWER:

The goldfinch is compared to a lizard because her movements are very smooth, quick, and alert. Just like a lizard moves carefully and swiftly to avoid danger, the bird enters the thick leaves safely.

Q8. What acts as the "engine" of the bird's family, and how does the bird "stoke" it? (3 Marks)

EASY MODEL ANSWER:

The nest full of hungry young chicks acts as the "engine." The mother bird "stokes" it by bringing food to feed them, which suddenly starts all the noisy chirping and movement in the tree.

Q9. What does the phrase "barred face identity mask" mean? Explain. (3 Marks)

EASY MODEL ANSWER:

The goldfinch has unique stripes on her face. Since the rest of her body is yellow and hides perfectly in the yellow leaves, only her striped face is visible, acting as her identity card or mask.

Q10. How does the behavior of the bird change from the time she enters the tree to the time she leaves it? (3 Marks)

EASY MODEL ANSWER:

When the bird enters the tree, she is highly alert, smooth, and quick like a lizard to protect her family. However, when she leaves the tree, she makes a soft, mysterious whistling sound and flies away peacefully into the sky.

SECTION C: LONG ANSWER TYPE QUESTION — [5 MARKS]

Q11. Discuss the relationship between the Laburnum tree and the goldfinch bird. How do they help or fulfill each other? (5 Marks)

EASY MODEL ANSWER:

The relationship between the Laburnum tree and the goldfinch is mutually beneficial, meaning they both help each other.

Before the bird arrives, the tree is silent and looks dead. The goldfinch brings life, energy, and joy to the tree with her lively presence and the chirping of her chicks. On the other hand, the tree provides a safe, hidden place for the bird to build her nest and protect her young family from danger. Together, they turn a silent tree into a cheerful house.