

Chapter 3: Birds of Paradise

Match the poetic words (Column A) with their correct meanings (Column B):

Column A

Delicate; easily broken
Shining suddenly and brightly
No longer in existence
Having a rhythmic flow
Made a high, clear ringing sound
Moved in circles or spirals
Appropriate; belonging naturally
A sharp, high sound made by air
Extremely delicate, heavenly
Delightfully charming

Column B

Flashing
Cadenced
Wheeled
Extinct
Whistled
Ethereal
Enchanting
Tinkled
Fragility
Proper

Read each line from the poem and choose the most accurate interpretation:

1. "Golden-winged, silver-winged, / Winged with flashing flame"

- a) The birds are literal firebirds, with wings made of burning gold and silver.
- b) The birds are dangerous creatures that can ignite objects with their wings.
- c) The colours symbolize wealth, suggesting the birds are rare and valuable.
- d) The poet uses metallic and fiery imagery to emphasize the birds' radiant, otherworldly beauty.

2. "Birds without a name: / Singing songs in their own tongue"

- a) The birds are silent, communicating only through gestures.
- b) Their namelessness and unique language highlight their mystical, untamed nature.
- c) The poet forgot the birds' names and invented a language for them.
- d) They mimic human speech but in a garbled, unintelligible way.

3. "High above my head they wheeled, / Far out of reach"

- a) The poet feels jealous because he cannot fly like the birds.
 - b) The birds fly in predictable, mechanical circles like a Ferris wheel.
 - c) Their soaring flight symbolizes freedom and the unattainable divine.
 - d) The birds are afraid of humans and deliberately stay far away.
4. "The wind it whistled through their wings, / Where in heaven they sang"
- a) The wind creates actual music by blowing through their feathers.
 - b) Their song is so beautiful it seems to merge with the sounds of nature.
 - c) The poet imagines the birds are angels singing in the sky.
 - d) The line describes a storm approaching, signalled by the whistling wind.
5. "Birds of Paradise" (Title)
- a) Literal birds that live in tropical rainforests.
 - b) A scientific term for birds with exceptionally long tails.
 - c) A metaphor for unattainable dreams or lost wonders.
 - d) A reference to birds kept in cages for human entertainment.

Multiple Choice Questions

1. What is the primary effect of describing the birds as "Golden-winged, silver-winged, / Winged with flashing flame"?
- a) It creates a vivid image of their radiant, almost supernatural beauty.
 - b) It suggests the birds are artificial, crafted from precious metals by humans.
 - c) It implies the birds are dangerous and can burn anyone who touches them.
 - d) It indicates the birds are wealthy, symbolizing prosperity and abundance.
2. Why does the poet emphasize that the birds are "without a name"?
- a) To show they are unimportant and unworthy of human attention.

- b) To highlight their mysterious, untamed existence beyond human labels.
- c) To suggest the poet forgot their names while writing the poem.
- d) To criticize scientists for failing to classify these birds properly.

3. The phrase "Singing songs in their own tongue" implies that the birds:

- a) Mimic human languages but in a distorted, mocking way.
- b) Are silent but use their wings to create musical sounds.
- c) Repeat the same monotonous tune over and over.
- d) Communicate in a unique, divine language incomprehensible to humans.

4. How does the line "High above my head they wheeled, / Far out of reach" contribute to the poem's theme?

- a) It shows the birds are showing off their flying skills to impress humans.
- b) It suggests the poet feels superior because he cannot fly like the birds.
- c) It reinforces the idea of the birds as transcendent, unattainable beings.
- d) It indicates the birds are lost and trying to find their way home.

5. The 'cadenced clang of the birds' wings suggests:

- a) A harsh, jarring noise that frightens the poet.
- b) A rhythmic, almost musical quality to their flight.
- c) The sound of metal crashing as the birds fight each other.
- d) An irregular pattern that disrupts the peace of the scene.

6. What does the poet mean by 'Song of songs' in the poem?

- a) The most beautiful and divine song imaginable.
- b) A literal reference to a specific religious hymn.
- c) A song so complex it cannot be written down.
- d) A chorus sung by thousands of birds at once.

7. The line 'The wind it whistled through their wings' primarily appeals to the sense of:

- a) Sight, as it describes the visual movement of the wind.
- b) Hearing, as it evokes the sound created by their flight.
- c) Touch, as it makes the reader feel the wind's pressure.
- d) Smell, as it suggests the scent of the birds' feathers.

8. The poem's tone can best be described as:

- a) Angry and accusatory toward hunters who threaten the birds.
- b) Nostalgic, mourning the loss of the birds' natural habitat.
- c) Awe-struck, celebrating the birds' mystical beauty.
- d) Humorous, mocking the birds' unusual appearance.

9. The birds' lack of a nest on earth symbolizes:

- a) Their carelessness and inability to build proper homes.
- b) The poet's belief that they are actually fallen angels.
- c) A scientific fact about this species' migratory habits.
- d) Their connection to heaven rather than the mortal world.

10. The poem's central message is:

- a) A celebration of nature's fleeting, magical wonders.
- b) A warning about the dangers of deforestation to bird species.
- c) A critique of humans who try to cage wild birds.
- d) A call to study these birds more closely before they vanish.

