

Lesson- 13

A Boy's Song

Because I set no snare
But leave them flying free,
All the birds of the air
Belong to me.

From the blue-tit on the sloe
To the eagle on the height,
Uncaged they come and go
For my delight

And so the sunward way
I soar on the eagle's wings,
And in my heart all day
The blue-tit sings.

- Wilfrid Wilson Gibson

About the Poem

Wilfrid Wilson Gibson was born at Hexham in England in 1878. He was a good friend of the famous poet Rupert Brooke. The poem 'A Boy's Song' appeared in his first verse called 'Mountain Cover', brought out in 1902. Gibson died in 1962.

The poem is about nature's precious gift of freedom to all its inhabitants. Like men birds are also important manifestations of life that add to the beauty of nature and joy of humanity only when they are allowed to fly free in the open air and the vast expanses of the limitless sky. The poem expresses the poet's feelings of intense joy which spring from his realization that all birds uncaged and free to fly from place to place, from the green trees to the bright skies belong to him because he does not set traps and cage them. The poet successfully establishes an emotional bond with the birds and thus shows a tendency towards empathy.

GLOSSARY:

blue-tit (n)-a type of small common bird

sloe (n) - a small bluish-black wild plum

delight (n) - joy, pleasure

sunward (adj) - towards the sun

soar (v) - to rise and fly high in the sky

ACTIVITY - 1: COMPREHENSION:

A. Say whether the following statements are True or False. Write 'T' for true and 'F' for false.

1. The speaker in the poem is the poet himself.
2. The poet sets the traps for the birds.
3. The poet is all for the freedom of the birds.
4. Birds flying freely in the open air give the poet great pleasure.
5. The poet really rides on the eagle's wings.
6. The song of the blue-tit fills the poet's heart with joy.
7. The poet has only a few birds and the rest belong to others.

B. Answer the following questions in about 20-30 words each:

1. Why do all the birds belong to the poet?
2. Why are the birds able to come and go for the poet's joy?
3. Which birds does the poet mention in the poem in particular?
4. What does the expression 'sun-ward way' in the poem mean?

C. Answer the following questions in about 60-80 words each:

1. How does the poet articulate his views on the birds in the poem 'A Boy's Song'?
2. Why do all the birds, according to the poet, belong to him? What does the word 'all' suggest to include here?
3. Summarize the poet's views as expressed in the poem 'A Boy's Song' in your own words.

ACTIVITY - 2: SPEECH ACTIVITY:

1. Prepare a list of the famous wildlife and bird sanctuaries and read it out before the Morning Prayer Assembly of your school to promote wildlife tourism.
2. Teachers are advised to show Harry Potter and the Jungle Book movies (English) in the class and ask students to discuss them.

ACTIVITY - 3: COMPOSITION :

1. Draft an invitation for the inaugural function of the District Posters Exhibition on Wildlife Conservation to be held in your school next month.
2. Write a letter to your friend describing your recent visit to the Sariska Tiger Reserve.