

The Robin

from *The Secret Garden* by Frances Hodgson Burnett

Almost the next moment, a wonderful thing happened. She heard a soft little rushing flight through the air – and it was the bird with the red chest flying over to them. He sat on a large pile of earth near the gardener's foot.

"Here he is," chuckled the gardener and he continued to speak to the bird.

"Where have you been?" he said. "I've not seen you yet today."

The bird put his tiny head on one side and looked up at him with his soft bright eyes which were like black dewdrops. He seemed very friendly and not at all afraid. He hopped about and pecked the earth, looking for seeds and insects. Mary loved watching the bird because he was so pretty and cheerful. He had a tiny plump body and a delicate beak, and slender legs.

"Will he always come when you call him?" Mary asked the gardener in almost a whisper.

"Yes, he will. I've known him since he was a fledgling. He came out of the nest in the other garden and when he first flew over here, he was too weak to fly back again and he was lonely. So, we became friends."

"What kind of bird is he?" asked Mary.

"Don't you know?" replied the gardener. "He's a robin redbreast and they are the friendliest most curious birds alive." He looked at the plump little bird with the scarlet waist coat fondly.



Questions about ‘The Robin’

Section I - RECALL

1. What colour was the bird’s chest?

2. What was the bird looking for when he ‘pecked the earth’.
Find two things.

a) _____

b) _____

3. Who was friends with the robin?

4. Match which words or phrases are used to describe parts
of the bird. One has been done for you.

chest	—	red
beak		like black dewdrops
legs		slender
body		plump
eyes		delicate

Section 2 - Vocabulary

5. Find and copy a word that means laughed.

6. The word delicate is used to describe the bird's beak.

What does this tell us about his beak?

7. '...they are the friendliest most curious birds alive.'

What does the word curious tell us about robin redbreasts?

Tick one.

they are friendly

☐

flying in the sky

☐

they want to find things out

☐

not scared

☐

Section 3 - Inference

8. Why do you think the gardener asked where the robin had been?

9. ‘*Mary asked the gardener in almost a whisper.*’
Why do you think Mary was whispering?

10. Can you explain why the gardener looked at the Robin fondly?

Section 4 - Sequencing and Predicting

11. Number these to show the order that they happened.
Use the numbers 1 – 3.

- ☐ The bird came out of the nest from the other garden.
- ☐ The bird and the gardener became friends.
- ☐ The bird was too weak to fly back.

12. Do you think that the gardener and Mary will see the robin again? Circle one.

YES NO

13. What makes you think this?
