

# An Ember in the Ashes

by Sabaa Tahir

## Pre-Reading Vocabulary Practice

Optional Post-Reading Quiz Included

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### Contents & Printing Notes

Unlike our most popular resources, this one's auto-selected.  
Review before use, or edit the DOCX from the Resources menu.

#### PRE-READING ACTIVITY

Answer Key — Preview .....	2	teacher use / self-check only
Vocabulary Preview .....	3	

#### OPTIONAL POST-READING QUIZ

Vocabulary in Context .....	5	
Answer Key — In Context .....	7	teacher use only

Pages are ordered for double-sided printing.

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#### About the Pre-Reading Activity

Open-dictionary; ungraded or completion grade. Students preview 20 words from the upcoming reading, each in a sentence that supports understanding. They choose the best meaning from 3 choices.

#### About the Optional Post-Reading Quiz

Use after reading, or skip. The same words appear in excerpts from the text.

**Practice words:** cunning, dais, defer (2), delicacy (2), faction, focus (2), indecision, infirmary, interrogate, martial, pallet, pragmatic, sheer (2), tantalize, tentative (2)



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# ANSWER KEY

## Vocabulary Preview

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#	KEY
1	B
2	B
3	A
4	B
5	A
6	C
7	C
8	A
9	C
10	C
11	B
12	A
13	A
14	B
15	A
16	C
17	A
18	C
19	A
20	C

## Vocabulary Preview

### An Ember in the Ashes

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Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Period \_\_\_\_\_

*Read each prompt. Then choose the best meaning for the bold word.*

1. The worst mix -- greedy, cunning, and without morals.
  - A. stupid and impatient
  - B. clever and deceitful
  - C. strong and cruel
2. A bomb was planted under the dais.
  - A. park bench
  - B. raised platform
  - C. large truck
3. She asked to defer cross-examination until the morning.
  - A. delay
  - B. cancel
  - C. schedule
4. He almost always defers to her wishes about which movie to see.
  - A. presents argument
  - B. submits
  - C. add more
5. If you act like a bull in a china shop, the negotiations will fail. Delicacy is required.
  - A. sensitivity and tact
  - B. teamwork
  - C. thoughtful strategy
6. Her delicacy in blending flavors makes her an outstanding chef.
  - A. quick manner
  - B. creativity
  - C. elegance
7. She's part of the far-right faction of the Republican Party.
  - A. sub-group (that is made up of 10% or less of a larger group)
  - B. enthusiastic sub-group
  - C. sub-group
8. This week, I'm focusing on finishing my research paper.
  - A. concentrating
  - B. depending
  - C. getting help
9. The discussion brought into focus an important difference of opinion.
  - A. hiding
  - B. conflict
  - C. view
10. She suffers from doubt and indecision.
  - A. a tool for cutting grass that has a curved blade and a long handle that is held with both hands
  - B. embodiment (as to take physical form or for something physical to represent something else)
  - C. a general tendency to leave decisions unmade
11. I walked her to the campus infirmary.
  - A. security office
  - B. health service
  - C. library
12. Officers will interrogate the witnesses separately to compare their accounts.
  - A. question closely
  - B. politely greet
  - C. quietly observe

13. The army practiced martial drills before the inspection.
- A. related to war
  - B. related to music
  - C. related to farming
14. One of her jobs was to air out the slaves' pallets.
- A. winter jackets
  - B. straw-filled mattresses
  - C. sleeping quarters
15. Successful politicians are pragmatists. Compromise is built into the system.
- A. practical
  - B. personable
  - C. busy
16. It was a demonstration of sheer stupidity.
- A. mixed
  - B. misguided
  - C. complete
17. A sheer cliff drops from the lighthouse to the sea.
- A. steep
  - B. ragged
  - C. rock
18. The previews are tantalizing.
- A. misleading
  - B. causing disappointment
  - C. arousing interest
19. She took a tentative step to see if her injured ankle would support her weight.
- A. careful
  - B. brave
  - C. confident
20. I have a tentative plan, but don't want to make any promises until I discuss it with some friends.
- A. action without forethought; or such a tendency
  - B. intended to deceive -- usually for financial gain
  - C. subject to change (likely or possibly going to change)

## Vocabulary in Context

### An Ember in the Ashes

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Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Period \_\_\_\_\_ Score \_\_\_\_\_ / 20

Read each prompt. Then choose the best meaning for the bold word.

- 1 *Against the Serric steel of a Martial blade, the knife will only shatter.*
  - A. relating to war, the military, or fighting
  - B. mental activity of which one is self-aware
  - C. without involvement of anything in between
- 2 *He'll spend weeks in interrogation, and after that they'll either sell him as a slave or kill him.*
  - A. the process of asking a series of questions of someone
  - B. an electronic component that acts like a one-way valve
  - C. any substance that tends to increase the flow of urine
- 3 *Helene says this without a trace of irony, and I wince at the sheer idiocy of the idea.*
  - A. more religious; or having more enthusiastic support (for something)
  - B. more trustworthy with secrets and/or less conspicuous or obtrusive
  - C. complete and without restriction OR pure -- without other reasons
- 4 *The rope is thirty feet long, and this close to the base of the watchtower, the cliffs aren't as sheer.*
  - A. so steep it is almost vertical
  - B. ragged (with lots of rocky outcroppings)
  - C. in the shade
- 5 *There are only fourteen of the red-eyed bastards, but on the rare occasions that they appear, everyone defers to them.*
  - A. presents argument
  - B. submits or yields
  - C. pretends to be ignorant
- 6 *But you faltered when faced with Vcturius, deferring to his wishes.*
  - A. postponing
  - B. unwrapping
  - C. satisfying
- 7 *Hel pokes at the mash and takes a tentative sniff.*
  - A. careful or unsure
  - B. not demonstrating
  - C. able to challenge
- 8 *A plan forms in my head, tentative, outlandish, and mad enough that it just might work.*
  - A. not capable of being suffered through (or put up with)
  - B. the degree to which something can be solved or settled
  - C. subject to change (likely or possibly going to change)
- 9 *Fighters from both factions eye their leader warily.*
  - A. sympathies
  - B. main roads
  - C. sub-groups
- 10 *I look past her, into the distance as I've been trained to, and her cold glare bores into me with the delicacy of a blunt knife.*
  - A. sensitivity and tact
  - B. basic rule or belief
  - C. the act of forgiving
- 11 *I cut open her shirt with my dagger, jolted for a moment by the delicacy of her skin.*
  - A. learns, discovers, or decides
  - B. in the way mentioned or shown
  - C. pleasant subtlety or fineness
- 12 *She delivers a terse speech from a raised dais, and when it comes time to take our oaths to the Empire, I only know to stand because everyone around me does.*
  - A. dramatic change
  - B. raised platform
  - C. in disagreement

- 13 *Numbly, I stand, shutting out the searching looks of my classmates, the glee on Marcus's face, the indecision on Zak's.*
- of the philosophical & religious system based on the teachings of Laozi (also spelled Taoist)
  - a response to an offer that proposes a different agreement while rejecting the previous offer
  - leaving a decision unmade due to uncertainty; or a general tendency to leave decisions unmade
- 14 *There's a Mercator girl in a tantalizingly flimsy dress eyeing me from the door leading to the crowded garden.*
- with a desire to see others suffer; or in a threatening manner
  - in a brave manner -- especially when adventurous or determined
  - in a manner that makes someone excited about getting something
- 15 *The men in his legions worshipped him not only for his courage and cunning but for his uncanny ability—to evade death even when facing appalling odds.*
- related to the natural world (life, air, water, land...)
  - good at achieving goals through cleverness and deception
  - relating to logical examination to improve understanding
- 16 *I want her to say she's assigned to the kitchens or the infirmary, where slaves aren't scarred or missing body parts.*
- people who do not believe in the existence of god
  - a small facility where patients receive treatment
  - a state in which there is little ability to think
- 17 *Seventeen years of Scholar pragmatism protest the existence of creatures that are supposed to be nothing but legend.*
- concern with practical matters
  - doubt (that something is true)
  - between daylight and darkness
- 18 *When I arrive back at Blackcliff, I attack my tasks with a single-minded focus, losing myself in the polishing of floors and scrubbing of baths so that I might escape the cyclone of thoughts in my head.*
- concentration
  - make one's home in; or live in; or stay (in a place)
  - a real estate loan; or pledging something for a loan
- 19 *My next is of blunt, consuming rage as Keenan's face swims into focus.*
- software that stops uninvited software from spreading between computers and causing damage to data and software
  - a condition where the body cannot properly regulate blood sugar levels because it produces little or no insulin
  - view (a state where something can be seen clearly)
- 20 *My mind is like tar, my body racked with dull pain, but I'm aware enough to know that if I don't rise from this pallet, I really am dead.*
- the quality of or ability to bounce back light (or more rarely: heat, sound, electromagnetic waves...)
  - a simple, austere bed
  - a medical condition in which there is a tendency to remain in a fixed stuporous state for long periods

# ANSWER KEY

## Vocabulary in Context

### An Ember in the Ashes

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#	KEY	WORD	NOTE
1	A	martial	Used 52 times in this book.
2	A	interrogate	Used 18 times in this book.
3	C	sheer ( <i>as in: sheer fun</i> )	Used 4 times in this book; 2 meanings in this book.
4	A	sheer ( <i>as in: a sheer cliff</i> )	Used 3 times in this book; 2 meanings in this book.
5	B	defer ( <i>as in: deferred to her wishes</i> )	2 meanings in this book.
6	A	defer ( <i>as in: deferred the decision</i> )	2 meanings in this book.
7	A	tentative ( <i>as in: said it tentatively</i> )	High-utility academic word; 2 meanings in this book.
8	C	tentative ( <i>as in: a tentative plan</i> )	High-utility academic word; 2 meanings in this book.
9	C	faction	Used 13 times in this book.
10	A	delicacy ( <i>as in: discuss with delicacy</i> )	2 meanings in this book.
11	C	delicacy ( <i>as in: delicacy of the brushwork</i> )	2 meanings in this book.
12	B	dais	Used 19 times in this book.
13	C	indecision	Used 3 times in this book.
14	C	tantalize	Used 3 times in this book.
15	B	cunning ( <i>as in: a cunning thief</i> )	Used 12 times in this book.
16	B	infirmary	Used 20 times in this book.
17	A	pragmatic	High-utility academic word; used 2 times in this book.
18	A	focus ( <i>as in: Turn your focus to question #2.</i> )	High-utility academic word; 2 meanings in this book.
19	C	focus ( <i>as in: bring into focus; or out of focus</i> )	2 meanings in this book.
20	B	pallet ( <i>as in: a sleeping pallet</i> )	Used 8 times in this book.

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