

Death and the King's Horseman

by Wole Soyinka

Pre-Reading Vocabulary Practice

Optional Post-Reading Quiz Included

Contents & Printing Notes

Unlike our most popular resources, this one's auto-selected.
Review before use, or edit the DOCX via "View / Print / Edit Web
Quiz" on 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.

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: abominable, abyss, agitate, bewilder, blasphemy, cloying, contradict, deceive, desecrate, heed, however (2), obstruct, perpetual, precede, sever, shirk, stallion, teem, venerate



More Vocabulary Printables

verbalworkout.com

(all resources free)

ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary Preview

Death and the King's Horseman

by Wole Soyinka

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

Vocabulary Preview
Death and the King's Horseman

by Wole Soyinka

Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

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

1. That was before she was trained, when her work was **abominable**.
 - A. showing early promise
 - B. incomplete
 - C. exceptionally bad
2. Our foot is stuck on the accelerator, and we are headed towards an abyss.
 - A. turning point
 - B. dangerous situation
 - C. major opportunity
3. She gets **agitated** whenever the topic comes up.
 - A. calm and thoughtful
 - B. gloomy (sad)
 - C. emotionally disturbed
4. I am trying to understand her, but I am **bewildered**.
 - A. confused
 - B. bored
 - C. distracted
5. Even in the 21st century, high school teachers in the country are still occasionally imprisoned and/or lashed for **blasphemy**.
 - A. disrespect of something considered sacred
 - B. a dispute where there is strong disagreement
 - C. a serious logical error
6. Her **cloying** compliments felt fake after a while.
 - A. overly sweet or sentimental
 - B. overly harsh and critical
 - C. too vague and confusing
7. Does the sentence **contradict** what is said in the previous paragraph?
 - A. disagree with
 - B. reinforce
 - C. expand upon
8. The fake article was written to attract attention and **deceive** readers.
 - A. entertain
 - B. attract
 - C. lie to or mislead
9. In the U.S., the protected right of free speech makes it legal to **desecrate** the flag and other sacred symbols.
 - A. disrespect
 - B. oppose
 - C. burn
10. She didn't **heed** the storm warnings and got caught in the heavy rain.
 - A. pass through
 - B. tell others of
 - C. pay attention to
11. I hope to take the ACT just once. However, I will take it early, so there is time to study and take it again if my scores aren't high enough.
 - A. but
 - B. also
 - C. and

12. However safe we make it, there will always be risk.
- A. on-the-other-hand
 - B. in addition
 - C. no matter how
13. Fallen branches obstruct the hiking trail after last night's heavy storm.
- A. clean and clear
 - B. block or hinder
 - C. widen or expand
14. He has a perpetual fear of forgetting important deadlines.
- A. joyful
 - B. constant
 - C. secret
15. In English, most adjectives precede the noun they modify.
- A. follow
 - B. describe
 - C. go before
16. The company chose to sever its partnership after the dispute.
- A. cut off
 - B. strengthen
 - C. delay briefly
17. He always tries to shirk his responsibilities at work.
- A. get out of doing
 - B. speed through
 - C. argue about
18. The powerful stallion galloped across the open field.
- A. wild deer
 - B. young calf
 - C. male horse
19. The plaza is teeming with undercover policemen.
- A. empty (has none)
 - B. slowly losing
 - C. filled (has many)
20. Many people venerate leaders who devoted their lives to justice.
- A. quietly question
 - B. openly avoid
 - C. deeply respect

Vocabulary in Context

Death and the King's Horseman

by Wole Soyinka

Name _____ Date _____ Period _____ Score _____ / 20

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

- 1 Hear him Mutter spells to ward off penalties For an **abomination** he did not intend.
 - A. people who do not believe in the existence of god
 - B. an impressive country house (or castle) in France
 - C. something that is exceptionally bad or detestable
- 2 PRAISE-SINGER The gourd you bear is not for **shirking**.
 - A. avoiding
 - B. fighting
 - C. changing
- 3 And let me tell you, women— I like this farewell that the world designed, Unless my eyes **deceive** me, unless We are already parted, the world and I, And all that breeds desire is lodged Among our tireless ancestors.
 - A. tell (a story)
 - B. bad or harmful
 - C. lie or mislead
- 4 I saw, I touched, I wooed, rarely was the answer No. The honour of my place, the **reverence** I Received in the eye of man or woman Prospered my suit and Played havoc with my sleeping hours.
 - A. because of a basic rule or belief
 - B. interacts, interests, or attracts
 - C. feelings of respect and reverence
- 5 And they tell me my eyes were a hawk In **perpetual** hunger.
 - A. having the characteristics of a monk (often inclined toward self-denial)
 - B. continuing forever without change; or occurring so frequently it seems constant
 - C. about things beyond the physical world, such as existence, reality, or the soul
- 6 Once they told him, Howu, a **stallion** does not feed on the grass beneath him: he replied, true, but surely he can roll on it!
 - A. a large, elongated gland located behind the stomach that secretes digestive enzymes and insulin
 - B. of the philosophical & religious system based on the teachings of Laozi (also spelled Taoist)
 - C. a male horse that has not been castrated (gelded) -- especially one used for breeding purposes
- 7 PRAISE-SINGER Iyaloja, mother of multitudes in the **teeming** market of the world, how your wisdom transfigures you!
 - A. empty (has none)
 - B. slowly losing
 - C. filled (has many)
- 8 It is those who stand at the gateway of the great change to whose cry we must pay **heed**.
 - A. a non-doctor who assisted a women in childbirth
 - B. adjusted excessively or made up for excessively
 - C. pay close attention to; or do what is suggested
- 9 He **peeps** through, and observes the dancing couple, reacting with what is obviously a long-standing **bewilderment**.
 - A. a feeling of extreme confusion
 - B. a type of small portable radio
 - C. a change; or a changed version
- 10 JANE It isn't my preaching you have to worry about, it's the preaching of the missionaries who **preceded** you here.
 - A. wrongly understood
 - B. influenced opinion
 - C. went or was before
- 11 A swelling, **agitated** hum of women's voices rises immediately in the background.
 - A. concentrated, look at, or paid attention to
 - B. thought carefully and made a judgment about
 - C. not calm; or stirred up (often emotionally)

- 12 Tell these women to stop **obstructing** me in the performance of my duty.
- A. attractive or desirable
 - B. blocking or interfering
 - C. making or manufacturing
- 13 Even the richest food **cloys** when eaten days on end; in the market, nothing ever cloy.
- A. overly sweet or sentimental in a way that becomes unpleasant or excessive -- on the tongue or in sentiment
 - B. treats something in an educated, intellectual way -- often excluding emotional or practical considerations
 - C. (of an injury) gets inflamed and creates pus OR (generally) gets worse -- especially through inattention
- 14 In a night which falls before our eyes
However deep, we do not miss our way.
- A. people who are good at or spend much time studying, thinking, and reasoning
 - B. aka analysis -- psychiatric treatment; or a theory of psychiatric treatment
 - C. regardless of how
- 15 However, it doesn't really interest me.
- A. a word used to connect contrasting ideas as when using *though, in spite of that, in contrast, nevertheless*, etc.
 - B. in keeping with or in agreement with what was just stated
 - C. therefore (for that reason)
- 16 OLUNDE [mildly] And that is the good cause for which you **desecrate** an ancestral mask?
- A. violate the sacred nature of something
 - B. appropriate in size, amount, or degree
 - C. examine in detail to better understand
- 17 No. I mean, is there no mourning in the home of the bereaved that such **blasphemy** is permitted?
- A. disrespectful of something considered sacred
 - B. found a condition or substance to be present
 - C. Nazi organization for children aged 10 to 18
- 18 Did you think it all out before, this plan to push our world from its course and **sever** the cord that links us to the great origin?
- A. to end or cut off completely -- either physically or in relationships
 - B. a way of doing something; or a route that leads to a particular place
 - C. change the direction of something or the purpose for which it is used
- 19 PILKINGS I wish to ask you to search the quiet of your heart and tell me—do you not find great **contradictions** in the wisdom of your own race?
- A. things that disagree with themselves; or (more rarely) acts of disagreeing
 - B. things about which one feels angry or unhappy due to having to accept them
 - C. acts of move something out of an interacting position; or acts of stopping
- 20 I needed you as the **abyss** across which my body must be drawn, I filled it with earth and dropped my seed in it at the moment of preparedness for my crossing.
- A. of the American Indian civilization of Yucatan and Belize and Guatemala that reached its peak between AD 300 and 900
 - B. a hole or dropoff so deep the bottom cannot be seen -- often used figuratively to imply a frightening bottomless pit
 - C. removal and examination of tissues or liquids from the living body to determine the existence or cause of a disease

ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary in Context

Death and the King's Horseman

by Wole Soyinka

#	KEY	WORD	NOTE
1	C	abominable	Used 3 times in this book.
2	A	shirk	Used 2 times in this book.
3	C	deceive	Used 2 times in this book.
4	C	venerate	Used 2 times in this book.
5	B	perpetual	High-utility academic word; used 2 times in this book.
6	C	stallion	Used 4 times in this book.
7	C	teem	High-utility academic word; used 2 times in this book.
8	C	heed	Used 2 times in this book.
9	A	bewilder	Used 2 times in this book.
10	C	precede	High-utility academic word; used 3 times in this book.
11	C	agitate	High-utility academic word; used 2 times in this book.
12	B	obstruct	Used 2 times in this book.
13	A	cloying	Used 2 times in this book.
14	C	however (<i>as in: However much she tried...</i>)	2 meanings in this book.
15	A	however (<i>as in: However, complications may...</i>)	High-utility academic word; 2 meanings in this book.
16	A	desecrate	Used 2 times in this book.
17	A	blasphemy	Used 3 times in this book.
18	A	sever	Used 3 times in this book.
19	A	contradict	High-utility academic word
20	B	abyss	Used 2 times in this book.