

For Esme:—with Love and Squalor

by J. D. Salinger

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 from the Resources menu.

PRE-READING ACTIVITY

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OPTIONAL POST-READING QUIZ

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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: acquaint, candid, compassion, contradict, cunning, duration, however (2), inclined, listless, perish, poise, posterity, propensity, protrude, resolve, squalid, squalor, superficial, trifle



More Vocabulary Printables

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ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary Preview

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

Vocabulary Preview

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Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

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

- One of the objectives in my literature class is to **acquaint** my students with different cultures.
 - make surprised
 - make a list for
 - make familiar
- My **candid** opinion is that their team is much better than ours, but an upset isn't impossible.
 - honest
 - expert
 - tactful
- It is not enough to be **compassionate**. We must act. It is not enough to act. We must act with intelligence.
 - lucky
 - sympathetic
 - talented
- Does the sentence **contradict** what is said in the previous paragraph?
 - disagree with
 - reinforce
 - expand upon
- The worst mix -- **greedy, cunning**, and without morals.
 - stupid and impatient
 - clever and deceitful
 - strong and cruel
- The **duration** of the flight from New York to London is about seven hours.
 - length of time
 - total cost
 - distance covered
- 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.
 - but
 - also
 - and
- However** safe we make it, there will always be risk.
 - on-the-other-hand
 - in addition
 - no matter how
- I was **inclined** to laugh, but I overcame the urge.
 - disinclined
 - afraid
 - tending
- She accepted her fate with **listless** resignation.
 - unenergetic
 - frustrated
 - lonely
- We can work together or **perish** separately.
 - work
 - die
 - fail

12. The once self-conscious girl is now a woman with considerable poise.
- A. style
 - B. education
 - C. composure
13. She recorded her family history for posterity, hoping her great-grandchildren would one day read it.
- A. personal amusement
 - B. future generations
 - C. academic records
14. As a group, the people with a family history of heart disease have a higher propensity to develop the condition themselves.
- A. avoidance
 - B. tendency
 - C. fear
15. She is operating to repair the muscle wall through which the hernia protrudes.
- A. heals over
 - B. shrinks back
 - C. sticks out
16. I resolved to never drink again.
- A. was forced
 - B. was encouraged
 - C. firmly decided
17. The refugees lived in squalid conditions with no clean water or proper shelter.
- A. clean and pleasant
 - B. loud and crowded
 - C. filthy and unpleasant
18. While my living conditions are not what I would like, they are far better than the kind of squalor I read of in Charles Dickens novels.
- A. slum
 - B. cruelty
 - C. confusion
19. Her thinking was superficial.
- A. deep
 - B. shallow
 - C. creative
20. Don't waste my time with trifling matters.
- A. other's
 - B. future
 - C. unimportant

Vocabulary in Context

For Esme:—with Love and Squalor

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Name _____ Date _____ Period _____ Score _____ / 20

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

- The next thing I knew, the young lady was standing, with enviable **poise**, beside my table.*
 - to dominate harshly and unfairly OR to deny equal rights to others or make them suffer
 - persuade someone to want something (often sex or love) by tempting with something desired
 - composure or grace
- My guest, **however**, calmly moved her chair an inch or two so that her back broke all possible further communication with the home table.*
 - though (used to connect contrasting ideas)
 - in keeping with or in agreement with what was just stated
 - therefore (for that reason)
- He thought if he wrote a letter to an old friend of his in New York there might be some quick, **however** slight, therapy in it for him.*
 - people who are good at or spend much time studying, thinking, and reasoning
 - aka analysis -- psychiatric treatment; or a theory of psychiatric treatment
 - regardless of how
- I'm training myself to be more **compassionate**.*
 - did not find a condition or substance to be present
 - feeling or showing sympathy for another's suffering
 - to support by providing money or other economic aid
- They were quite well mated, though, in a **superficial** way.*
 - comprehensive (thorough)
 - relating to a surface (perhaps appearances) rather than to anything deep or penetrating
 - deep and creative
- To be quite **candid**, Father really needed more of an intellectual companion than Mother was.*
 - honest and straightforward
 - complete or total
 - greater than zero
- This was a statement of faith, not a **contradiction**, and I quickly switched horses.*
 - something (typically a statement) that disagrees with itself; or (more rarely) the act of disagreeing
 - something made of the brownish metal with the same name -- such as a sculpture or a third place medal
 - nerve cells running from the base of the skull to the lower back and enclosed by vertebrae in adults
- I'm saving a number of his letters for **posterity**.*
 - not thinking carefully
 - all future generations
 - lacks adequate funding
- "Are you at all acquainted with **squalor**?"
I said not exactly but that I was getting better acquainted with it, in one form or another, all the time,*
 - filth -- especially a place that is extremely dirty and unpleasant
 - the act, process, or instance of telling a story
 - a general feeling of not being as good as others
- My mother had a **propensity** to spoil him.*
 - interaction or interest
 - tendency or inclination
 - a subtle characteristic
- Are you at all **acquainted** with squalor?*
 - not having taken power or responsibility
 - compensated for a loss; or paid a reward
 - familiar with
- This is the **squalid**, or moving, part of the story, and the scene changes.*
 - with the involvement of other people or things
 - the state or degree of being greater than zero
 - unpleasant (possibly repulsive)

- 13 *I'm still around, but from here on in, for reasons I'm not at liberty to disclose, I've disguised myself so **cunningly** that even the cleverest reader will fail to recognize me.*
- A. aka analytically -- in a manner that relates to a theory of psychiatry
 - B. cleverly
 - C. in a manner that impacts the natural world (life, air, water, land...)
- 14 *He opened the envelope, loosely **resolved** to read the letter straight through, but read only the top half of the first page.*
- A. changed
 - B. adapted
 - C. decided
- 15 *A comb with a fountain-pen clip **protruded**, familiarly, from the right-hand pocket of his olive-drab shirt.*
- A. disagreed
 - B. continued
 - C. stuck out
- 16 *"Show it to ya later," Clay said, **listlessly**.*
- A. with a lack of energy and normal enthusiasm
 - B. in a manner that stops or hinders something
 - C. in a manner involving only one part or side
- 17 *Clay looked surprised, almost a **trifle** hurt.*
- A. leave a place, job or position previously occupied
 - B. someone (or something) taking the place of another
 - C. little
- 18 *17,--ROAD, --DEVON JUNE 7, 1944 DEAR SERGEANT X, I hope you will forgive me for having taken 38 days to begin our correspondence but, I have been extremely busy as my aunt has undergone streptococcus of the throat and nearly **perished** and I have been justifiably saddled with one responsibility after another.*
- A. examined in detail to better understand
 - B. died, was destroyed, or ceased to exist
 - C. moved into position to work; or started
- 19 *Sincerely yours, ESMA P.S. I am taking the liberty of enclosing my wristwatch which you may keep in your possession for the **duration** of the conflict.*
- A. the time during which something continues
 - B. a particular understanding or explanation
 - C. meticulousness (care about small details)
- 20 *Please write as soon as you have the time and **inclination**.*
- A. wrong understanding
 - B. act of hiring again
 - C. desire (are in the mood)

ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary in Context

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#	KEY	WORD	NOTE
1	C	poise	Used 2 times in this story.
2	A	however (<i>as in: However, complications may...</i>)	High-utility academic word; 3 meanings in this story.
3	C	however (<i>as in: However much she tried...</i>)	3 meanings in this story.
4	B	compassion	Used about 10 times per 10 books in our high school library.
5	B	superficial	High-utility academic word
6	A	candid (<i>as in: your candid opinion</i>)	High-utility academic word
7	A	contradict	High-utility academic word
8	B	posterity	Used about 2 times per 10 books in our high school library.
9	A	squalor	Used 5 times in this story.
10	B	propensity	Used about once per 10 books in our high school library
11	C	acquaint	Used 2 times in this story.
12	C	squalid	Used 2 times in this story.
13	B	cunning (<i>as in: a cunning thief</i>)	Used about 7 times per 10 books in our high school library.
14	C	resolve (<i>as in: I resolved to stop drinking.</i>)	High-utility academic word
15	C	protrude	Used about 7 times per 10 books in our high school library.
16	A	listless	Used about 3 times per 10 books in our high school library.
17	C	trifle (<i>as in: a trifling matter</i>)	Used 5 times in this story.
18	B	perish	High-utility academic word
19	A	duration	Used about 3 times per 10 books in our high school library.
20	C	inclined (<i>as in: I'm inclined to</i>)	High-utility academic word