

Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets

Chapters 10–13

by J. K. Rowling

Pre-Reading Vocabulary Practice

Optional Post-Reading Quiz Included

Practice words: acrid, aghast, bated breath, decrepit, docile, malevolent, relish, somber, vermin, writhing

PRE-READING ACTIVITY

Vocabulary Preview 2

Answer Key — Preview 3

Caution: share only if self-checking

OPTIONAL POST-READING QUIZ

Vocabulary in Context 4

Answer Key — In Context 5

Caution: do not share with students

About the Pre-Reading Activity (open-dictionary; ungraded or completion grade):

Students preview 10 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):

Same words, now in real excerpts from the text, with questions that build reading and analytical skills.

Vocabulary Sections for this Book:

Section 1 · Chapters 1–5 · Harry's miserable summer with the Dursleys

Section 2 · Chapters 6–9 · The new term at Hogwarts begins

Section 3 · Chapters 10–13 · Quidditch and the search for answers

Section 4 · Chapters 14–18 · The Ministry comes to Hogwarts

Bold = this section. Other sections are available at verbalworkout.com.



verbalworkout.com

(all resources free)

Vocabulary Preview

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Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

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

1. The **acrid** smoke from the fire made everyone cough.

- A. thick and heavy
- B. damp and musty
- C. sharp and bitter

2. She stood **aghast** when she saw the wrecked car.

- A. filled with sudden horror
- B. filled with sudden anger
- C. overcome with deep sadness

3. We waited with **bated breath** for the winner to be announced.

- A. calm patience
- B. growing boredom
- C. tense anticipation

4. They lived in a **decrepit** old house with a sagging roof.

- A. worn out and run-down
- B. dark and full of shadows
- C. cold and badly heated

5. The **docile** pony let the children climb onto its back.

- A. calm and easy to control
- B. curious and always alert
- C. playful and full of energy

6. The **malevolent** villain plotted to ruin the whole town.

- A. greedy for money and power
- B. wishing harm to others
- C. sneaky and hard to catch

7. He told the funny story with great **relish**.

- A. clear nervousness
- B. keen enjoyment
- C. deep impatience

8. He gave a **somber** nod and walked away without a word.

- A. slow and thoughtful
- B. grave and gloomy
- C. stiff and formal

9. The health inspector warned that **vermin** had taken over the kitchen.

- A. spoiled food
- B. harmful germs
- C. loathsome pests

10. The worm kept **writhing** on the hot pavement.

- A. twisting and squirming
- B. drying out in the sun
- C. crawling in slow circles

Reading Helpers

(Not quizzed — helpful for this text.)

parselmouth — a person who can talk to snakes

phoenix — a mythical bird that bursts into flame at death and is reborn from its own ashes

ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary Preview

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#	KEY
1	C
2	A
3	C
4	A
5	A
6	B
7	B
8	B
9	C
10	A

Vocabulary in Context
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Name _____ Date _____ Period _____ Score _____ / 10

Read each excerpt carefully. Then choose the best answer to each question.

1 “We house-elves were treated like vermin, sir!”

As it is used in the passage, the word ‘vermin’ most nearly suggests that house-elves were treated as...

- A. prized, well-kept servants
- B. dangerous, feared enemies
- C. loathsome, worthless pests

2 “Harry, three beds away, caught the acrid smell of burnt plastic.”

In context, the word ‘acrid’ emphasizes that the burnt plastic gave off a smell that was...

- A. sharp and bitter
- B. warm and pleasant
- C. sweet and faint

3 “A bad idea, Professor Lockhart,” said Snape, gliding over like a large and malevolent bat.”

The passage most strongly suggests that, as Snape glides over, he means to seem...

- A. menacing and hostile
- B. playful and teasing
- C. kind and reassuring

4 “Harry watched, aghast, as a long black snake shot out of it, fell heavily onto the floor between them, and raised itself, ready to strike.”

According to the passage, how does Harry react the moment the snake shoots out of the wand?

- A. with cheerful surprise
- B. with sudden horror
- C. with calm boredom

5 “And miraculously – inexplicably – the snake slumped to the floor, docile as a thick, black garden hose, its eyes now on Harry.”

Describing the snake as ‘docile’ indicates that it is...

- A. sound asleep
- B. no longer dangerous
- C. flat on the ground

6 “Standing on a golden perch behind the door was a decrepit-looking bird that resembled a half-plucked turkey.”

Which detail best supports the idea that the bird looked decrepit?

- A. it resembled a half-plucked turkey
- B. it was behind the office door
- C. it stood on a golden perch

7 “Dumbledore came in, looking very somber.”

The passage most strongly suggests that Dumbledore enters in a mood that is...

- A. light and cheerful
- B. grave and troubled
- C. calm and content

8 “... his insides started writhing as though he’d just swallowed live snakes ...”

According to the passage, what happens inside Harry as he swallows the potion?

- A. he feels nothing at all
- B. his insides feel calm
- C. his insides twist and squirm

9 “Harry and Ron waited with bated breath: Malfoy was surely seconds away from telling them it was him ...”

It can reasonably be inferred that Harry and Ron hold their breath because they are...

- A. tensely hoping Malfoy confesses
- B. afraid Malfoy has spotted them
- C. trying hard not to laugh

10 “‘I hope it’s Granger,’ he said with relish.”

Which statement about Malfoy is best supported by the passage?

- A. He wants to keep Granger safe
- B. He admires Granger’s talent
- C. He’d be glad if Granger were attacked

ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary in Context

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#	KEY	NOTE
1	C	
2	A	
3	A	
4	B	
5	B	
6	A	
7	B	
8	C	
9	A	Event comprehension.
10	C	Character comprehension.

Teacher Context: Chapters 10–13

Fear spreads through the school as more victims are found. Harry, Ron, and Hermione brew Polyjuice Potion to interrogate Draco, and Harry discovers Tom Riddle's mysterious diary, which shows him a vision blaming Hagrid. The break falls after the diary's first revelation, just before the Ministry intervenes.