

Julius Caesar

Act 5

by William Shakespeare

Pre-Reading Vocabulary Practice

Optional Post-Reading Quiz Included

Practice words: disconsolate, engendered, ensign, gentle, misconstrued, parley, peevish, presage, spoil, triumph

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 Play:

Section 1 · Act 1 · Caesar's triumph in the streets of Rome

Section 2 · Act 2 · Brutus alone in his orchard at night

Section 3 · Act 3 · Caesar arrives at the Capitol

Section 4 · Act 4 · New rulers divide power in Rome

Section 5 · Act 5 · The armies meet on the plains of Philippi

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. She sat **disconsolate** after losing the championship.

- A. miserable beyond comfort
- B. exhausted and worn out
- C. stunned and confused

2. The new policy **engendered** fierce debate among voters.

- A. grew out of
- B. drew attention to
- C. gave rise to

3. The soldiers raised their **ensign** high above the fort.

- A. a war shield
- B. a flag or banner
- C. a signal horn

4. Only those of **gentle** birth could enter the royal court.

- A. mixed or uncertain
- B. recent or foreign
- C. noble and high-born

5. Critics **misconstrued** the author's blunt remark.

- A. repeated exactly
- B. misinterpreted
- C. openly mocked

6. The two rival captains called a **parley** before dawn.

- A. a count of the troops
- B. a talk between enemies
- C. a surprise camp raid

7. Tired from the long trip, she grew **peevis**h by evening.

- A. sleepy and dull
- B. shy and quiet
- C. irritable and cross

8. Dark clouds on the horizon **presage** a coming storm.

- A. foretell; be a sign of
- B. hold back or delay
- C. come right after

9. After the battle, the soldiers turned to **spoil** in the conquered town.

- A. looting or plunder
- B. rest and feasting
- C. repair and rebuilding

10. After his conquest, the general was awarded a **triumph** by the Senate.

- A. a victory parade
- B. a chest of gold
- C. a higher command

Reading Helpers

(Not quizzed — helpful for this text.)

vessel — a person regarded as a container or holder (here, of grief)

ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary Preview

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

Vocabulary in Context

Julius Caesar

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Name _____ Date _____ Period _____ Score _____ / 10

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

1 *"They stand and would have parley."*

As it is used in the passage, the word 'parley' most nearly suggests that...

- A. the sides will talk before fighting
- B. one side demands surrender
- C. the armies are about to retreat

6 *"His soldiers fell to spoil,
Whilst we by Antony are all enclosed."*

The passage most strongly suggests that Brutus's soldiers...

- A. fled the field in fear
- B. were surrounded before fighting
- C. broke ranks to loot

2 *"A peevish schoolboy, worthless of such honor,
Joined with a masker and a reveler!"*

In the passage, Octavius is characterized as...

- A. bold and ruthlessly ambitious
- B. childish and ill-tempered
- C. calm but untested in war

7 *"All disconsolate,
With Pindarus his bondman, on this hill."*

In the passage, Cassius is characterized as...

- A. grief-stricken beyond comfort
- B. quietly hopeful of rescue
- C. calmly resolved to fight on

3 *"Now I change my mind
And partly credit things that do presage."*

It can reasonably be inferred that Cassius now puts faith in...

- A. his fellow generals' counsel
- B. his soldiers' fighting skill
- C. signs that foretell the future

8 *"O error, soon conceived,
Thou never com'st unto a happy birth
But kill'st the mother that engendered thee!"*

Messala says error kills 'the mother that engendered' it mainly to...

- A. praise Cassius's brave death
- B. blame Pindarus for the death
- C. show Cassius's error destroyed him

4 *"Coming from Sardis, on our former ensign
Two mighty eagles fell, and there they perched ..."*

According to the passage, the two eagles perched on...

- A. a hilltop near Sardis
- B. the army's battle standard
- C. the soldiers' raised spears

9 *"Alas, thou hast misconstrued everything."*

It can reasonably be inferred that, by 'misconstrued everything,' Titinius means Cassius...

- A. misread it and died needlessly
- B. ignored Titinius's clear advice
- C. rightly judged the day lost

5 *"Then, if we lose this battle,
You are contented to be led in triumph
Thorough the streets of Rome?"*

As it is used in the passage, the word 'triumph' most nearly refers to...

- A. a monument honoring victory
- B. a parade displaying captives
- C. a rush of joyful success

10 *"His life was gentle and the elements
So mixed in him that nature might stand up
And say to all the world "This was a man."*

In Antony's tribute, 'gentle' characterizes Brutus as...

- A. a noble, honorable man
- B. a mild, timid man
- C. a fierce, ruthless man

ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary in Context

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#	KEY	NOTE
1	A	
2	B	
3	C	
4	B	
5	B	The Roman 'triumph' paraded conquered captives through the city; Cassius means the shame of being shown off as a prisoner.
6	C	
7	A	
8	C	Event comprehension. The 'mother' is Cassius, whose own mistaken error led to his death.
9	A	Event comprehension. Cassius killed himself believing Titinius captured, though Titinius was in fact being crowned victor.
10	A	Here 'gentle' means noble or high-born, not mild; this closes the play's most famous tribute.

Teacher Context: Act 5

The opposing armies confront each other at Philippi and exchange taunts before the battle. The fighting goes badly for the conspirators, and the act follows the fortunes of Brutus and Cassius to the play's resolution. Section runs to the end of the play.