

Macbeth

Act II

by William Shakespeare

Pre-Reading Vocabulary Practice

Optional Post-Reading Quiz Included

Practice words: amazed, appals, augment, contend, counterfeit, frailties, mars, quenched, repetition, shame

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 I · The witches' prophecy on the heath

Section 2 · Act II · Night at Inverness castle

Section 3 · Act III · Banquo's suspicions at Forres

Section 4 · Act IV · Return to the witches' cave

Section 5 · Act V · Night watch at Dunsinane castle

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 sudden thunderclap left the hikers **amazed**.
 - A. delighted and thrilled
 - B. stunned and bewildered
 - C. curious and alert
2. The thought of speaking on stage **appals** her.
 - A. fills with sadness
 - B. fills with dread
 - C. fills with impatience
3. She took a second job to **augment** her savings.
 - A. to increase
 - B. to replace
 - C. to protect
4. Each spring the farmers **contend** with floods and mud.
 - A. to keep watch for
 - B. to grow weary of
 - C. to struggle against
5. Experts examined the coin and declared it a **counterfeit**.
 - A. a fake copy
 - B. a foreign piece
 - C. a rare find
6. Old age had brought a host of **frailties** he could not hide.
 - A. bodily weaknesses
 - B. quiet regrets
 - C. stubborn habits
7. A single careless remark **mars** an otherwise perfect evening.
 - A. changes or delays
 - B. spoils or ruins
 - C. shortens or ends
8. Heavy rain **quenched** the last of the campfire.
 - A. covered up
 - B. spread wider
 - C. put out
9. Her **repetition** of the story left the whole room silent.
 - A. a criticism
 - B. an interruption
 - C. a retelling
10. I **shame** to admit that I forgot her name entirely.
 - A. to feel disgraced
 - B. to make excuses
 - C. to be reluctant

Reading Helpers

(Not quizzed — helpful for this text.)

cleave — cling to, side with — the opposite of the modern 'split'

informs — takes shape; the murder in my mind is what is forming this vision

Tarquin's ravishing strides — Tarquin, the Roman prince who crept to Lucrece's bed and raped her

physics — cures or eases — a verb here, not the science

trifled former knowings — made everything I knew before seem trivial

ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary Preview

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#	KEY
1	B
2	B
3	A
4	C
5	A
6	A
7	B
8	C
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 "So I lose none
In seeking to augment it, but still keep
My bosom franchised, and allegiance clear,
I shall be counselled."

As it is used in the passage, the word 'augment' most nearly means...

- A. to increase
- B. to display
- C. to defend

2 "That which hath made them drunk hath made me bold:
What hath quenched them hath given me fire."

It can reasonably be inferred that the king's attendants...

- A. are still awake and on guard
- B. have been dulled into a stupor
- C. have grown loud and quarrelsome

3 "Whence is that knocking? How is't with me, when every noise appals me?"

In the passage, the speaker is characterized as...

- A. shaken by dread at every sound
- B. coolly alert to danger
- C. furious at being interrupted

4 "My hands are of your color, but I shame
To wear a heart so white."

The excerpt's word choices characterize the speaker as...

- A. sickened by remorse
- B. contemptuous of cowardice
- C. fearful of discovery

5 "... therefore much drink may be said to be an equivocator with lechery: it makes him, and it mars him; it sets him on, and it takes him off; it persuades him, and disheartens him ..."

According to the passage, drink 'mars' a man in that it...

- A. takes away his power to act
- B. loosens his tongue to lie
- C. stirs up his desire

6 "Shake off this downy sleep, death's counterfeit,
And look on death itself!"

The speaker calls sleep 'death's counterfeit' most likely in order to...

- A. make the alarm sound gentler
- B. hint the sleepers are near death
- C. set a false death against the real one

7 "O gentle lady,
'Tis not for you to hear what I can speak:
The repetition, in a woman's ear,
Would murder as it fell."

It can reasonably be inferred that the speaker believes...

- A. the mere telling of it could kill her
- B. the sight of the body would madden her
- C. the killer may strike her next

8 "Who can be wise, amazed, temperate, and furious,
Loyal and neutral, in a moment? No man."

As it is used in the passage, the word 'amazed' most nearly means...

- A. delighted and impressed
- B. stunned and confused
- C. watchful and wary

9 "And when we have our naked frailties hid,
That suffer in exposure, let us meet,
And question this most bloody piece of work
To know it further."

It can reasonably be inferred that the speaker wants the group first to...

- A. conceal their fears from the rest
- B. arm themselves for defense
- C. dress themselves properly

10 "And Duncan's horses (a thing most strange and certain),
Beauteous and swift, the minions of their race,
Turned wild in nature, broke their stalls, flung out,
Contending 'gainst obedience, as they would make
War with mankind."

According to the passage, Duncan's horses...

- A. sickened and refused to eat
- B. fled in terror into the night
- C. fought against all control

ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary in Context

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#	KEY	NOTE
1	A	
2	B	
3	A	
4	B	'Shame' here is a verb — 'I would be ashamed' — and the 'heart so white' she scorns is a bloodless, cowardly one.
5	A	
6	C	
7	A	'Repetition' means the retelling itself — the report, not a repeated act; Macduff means the report alone would strike like a blow.
8	B	An older sense: stunned into bewilderment, as if lost in a maze — not the modern 'delighted'. Macbeth is performing the state, not feeling it.
9	C	'Naked frailties' is literal — weak, barely covered bodies suffering in the cold — not weakness of character.
10	C	

Teacher Context: Act II

Macbeth murders Duncan in the night and the crime is discovered at dawn. Duncan's sons flee the country, suspicion falls on them, and Macbeth is named king.