

# Macbeth

## Act III

by William Shakespeare

### Pre-Reading Vocabulary Practice

Optional Post-Reading Quiz Included

**Practice words:** appal, Blood, causes, challenge, foully, free, general, order, overcome, pitiful

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#### 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

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#### 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](http://verbalworkout.com).



[verbalworkout.com](http://verbalworkout.com)

(all resources free)

# Vocabulary Preview

## Macbeth

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Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Period \_\_\_\_\_

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

1. The wreckage was enough to **appal** a hardened rescuer.

- A. to fill with sudden anger
- B. to fill with horror or dismay
- C. to fill with deep confusion

2. **Blood** between rival clans passed from father to son.

- A. violent killing; bloodshed
- B. a sworn oath of loyalty
- C. bitter hatred and grudge

3. He set aside all other **causes** and finished the race.

- A. considerations to be weighed
- B. groups working for a goal
- C. reasons or explanations

4. She rose to **challenge** him in front of the whole council.

- A. to doubt the truth of
- B. to call to account; rebuke
- C. to dare to a contest

5. He won the election **foully** and everyone knew it.

- A. in a cruel and violent way
- B. in a rude and offensive way
- C. by treacherous, dishonest means

6. He gave **free** thanks to everyone who had helped him.

- A. given willingly, untainted
- B. loose and unrestrained
- C. costing nothing at all

7. The moor felt **general** after weeks shut up in town.

- A. flat and featureless
- B. unbounded; without limit
- C. calm and untroubled

8. No one dared break the **order** of the ceremony.

- A. the fixed sequence, by rank
- B. a calm and tidy condition
- C. the rule set by an authority

9. Storms like that **overcome** the hills each spring.

- A. to defeat completely
- B. to darken and chill
- C. to pass over or sweep across

10. The **pitiful** nurse sat all night with the sick child.

- A. sad and mournful
- B. feeble and helpless
- C. full of compassion

### Reading Helpers

*(Not quizzed — helpful for this text.)*

**filed** — defiled — stained and corrupted

**borne in hand** — led along with promises he never meant to keep

**close** — heal shut — the wound closes and the snake is whole again

**weal** — the commonwealth — the state and its common good

**security** — overconfidence — feeling safe, which is exactly what destroys people

# ANSWER KEY

## Vocabulary Preview

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

# Vocabulary in Context

## Macbeth

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Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Period \_\_\_\_\_ Score \_\_\_\_\_ / 10

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

**1** "Thou hast it now,—king, Cawdor, Glamis, all,  
As the Weird Women promised, and, I fear,  
Thou playedst most foully for't."

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

- A. played his part with all his strength
- B. acted rashly to win his titles
- C. gained his titles by treachery

**2** "Come, seeling night,  
Scarf up the tender eye of pitiful day;  
And with thy bloody and invisible hand  
Cancel and tear to pieces that great bond  
Which keeps me pale!"

As used in the passage, the word 'pitiful' most nearly means...

- A. full of compassion
- B. feeble and helpless
- C. gloomy and mournful

**3** "Then comes my fit again: I had else been perfect;  
Whole as the marble, founded as the rock;  
As broad and general as the casing air:  
But now I am cabined, cribbed, confined, bound in  
To saucy doubts and fears."

The author most likely includes the phrase 'general as the casing air' in order to...

- A. stress how far his power now extends
- B. show how vague his fears have grown
- C. picture the freedom Macbeth has lost

**4** "Here had we now our country's honor roofed,  
Were the graced person of our Banquo present;  
Who may I rather challenge for unkindness  
Than pity for mischance!"

As used in the passage, the word 'challenge' most nearly means...

- A. to call to account
- B. to dare to a contest
- C. to question the truth of

**5** "Ay, and a bold one, that dare look on that  
Which might appal the devil."

In context, the word 'appal' most nearly suggests that what Macbeth looks on...

- A. would horrify even the devil
- B. was sent to him by the devil
- C. would fascinate even the devil

**6** "Can such things be,  
And overcome us like a summer's cloud,  
Without our special wonder?"

As used in the passage, the word 'overcome' most nearly means...

- A. to darken and chill
- B. to defeat utterly
- C. to pass over

**7** "Stand not upon the order of your going,  
But go at once."

It can reasonably be inferred from 'Stand not upon the order of your going' that...

- A. guests usually waited for a command to go
- B. leave-taking normally followed rank
- C. the seating ignored the guests' ranks

**8** "It will have blood, they say. Blood will have blood.  
Stones have been known to move, and trees to speak."

From 'Blood will have blood,' it can reasonably be inferred that Macbeth expects...

- A. the stains of his crime to fade in time
- B. his killing to be answered with killing
- C. his own kin to claim the throne from him

**9** "More shall they speak; for now I am bent to know,  
By the worst means, the worst.  
For mine own good,  
All causes shall give way."

From 'All causes shall give way,' it can reasonably be inferred that Macbeth will...

- A. let no other concern stand in his way
- B. shift the blame for his acts onto others
- C. act without giving reasons for his deeds

**10** "... Give to our tables meat, sleep to our nights;  
Free from our feasts and banquets bloody knives,  
Do faithful homage, and receive free honours,  
All which we pine for now."

According to the passage, the speaker hopes Scotland may again receive honours that are...

- A. given to everyone without restriction
- B. granted willingly and untainted
- C. awarded without cost to the crown

# ANSWER KEY

## Vocabulary in Context

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| #  | KEY | NOTE                                                                                                                                                                             |
|----|-----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1  | C   |                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 2  | A   | 'Pitiful' here is the exact reverse of the modern 'contemptible' sense: day is tender-hearted, which is why night must blind its eye. Students reliably read this one backwards. |
| 3  | C   |                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 4  | A   | The inverted syntax reads: 'whom I hope I may rebuke for discourtesy rather than pity for an accident' — Macbeth publicly scolds the guest he has had murdered.                  |
| 5  | A   |                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 6  | C   | Not the modern 'defeat': Macbeth asks how such a sight can pass over them, like a summer's cloud, without amazing them.                                                          |
| 7  | B   |                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 8  | B   |                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 9  | A   |                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 10 | B   | 'Free' works twice in the excerpt: 'Free from... bloody knives' means rid of; 'free honours' means honours given willingly, untainted. The question targets the second use.      |

#### Teacher Context: Act III

Macbeth, now king, has Banquo killed to block the prophecy that Banquo's heirs will reign, though Fleance escapes. Banquo's ghost appears to Macbeth at a state banquet, and Scotland begins turning against him.