

Macbeth

Act IV

by William Shakespeare

Pre-Reading Vocabulary Practice

Optional Post-Reading Quiz Included

Practice words: basis, convert, marked, motives, night, office, particulars, resolute, vanquished, wants

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. Trust is the **basis** of any lasting friendship.
 - A. the goal something aims toward
 - B. the foundation something rests on
 - C. the reward something brings
2. They plan to **convert** the old barn into a studio.
 - A. to move something to a new place
 - B. to repair something that is broken
 - C. to change something into another form
3. Few in the crowd **marked** the stranger slipping out the door.
 - A. noticed or paid attention to
 - B. followed or trailed closely behind
 - C. greeted or called out to
4. Her children were the strongest **motives** behind her hard work.
 - A. goals that someone hopes to reach
 - B. rewards that someone earns for effort
 - C. reasons that drive someone to act
5. After years of poverty, the family's long **night** finally ended.
 - A. a long time of quiet waiting
 - B. a long time of hardship
 - C. a long time of deep rest
6. As club treasurer, he took his **office** seriously.
 - A. a room where a person works
 - B. a role or duty a person performs
 - C. a title a person is given as honor
7. She asked for the **particulars** of the job before deciding.
 - A. the specific details
 - B. the likely benefits
 - C. the general reputation
8. She stayed **resolute** even when everyone doubted the plan.
 - A. firmly determined
 - B. openly hopeful
 - C. calmly patient
9. The champion **vanquished** every rival in the tournament.
 - A. completely defeated
 - B. openly challenged
 - C. closely studied
10. The plan **wants** the support of the whole team.
 - A. desires or wishes for
 - B. depends or relies on
 - C. lacks or is without

Reading Helpers

(Not quizzed — helpful for this text.)

impress — conscript into an army — can anyone draft a forest as soldiers?

jealousies — suspicions — my distrust of you, not envy

affeered — legally confirmed — a court term; your title to your wrongs is settled, so keep them

modern — ordinary, everyday — the opposite of the modern sense

nice — precise, exact in detail — not 'pleasant'

ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary Preview

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

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 “Come, high or low; Thyself and office deftly show!”

As used in the passage, the word ‘office’ most nearly means...

- A. place of business
- B. proper role or duty
- C. high government post

2 “Be bloody, bold, and resolute; laugh to scorn
The power of man, for none of woman born
Shall harm Macbeth.”

As used in the passage, the word ‘resolute’ most nearly means...

- A. firmly determined
- B. savagely cruel
- C. rash and impulsive

3 “Macbeth shall never vanquished be, until
Great Birnam wood to high Dunsinane hill
Shall come against him.”

According to the passage, what will never happen until Birnam wood comes to Dunsinane?

- A. Macbeth’s vanishing from sight
- B. Macbeth’s exile from Scotland
- C. Macbeth’s defeat in battle

4 “He loves us not:
He wants the natural touch; for the poor wren,
The most diminutive of birds, will fight,
Her young ones in her nest, against the owl.”

The speaker most likely brings up the wren in order to...

- A. suggest her family can fend off danger
- B. show the protective instinct he lacks
- C. picture the tenderness he longs for

5 “Why in that rawness left you wife and child,
Those precious motives, those strong knots of love,
Without leave-taking?”

As used in the passage, the word ‘motives’ most nearly suggests that the wife and child...

- A. gave him every reason to stay
- B. urged him to leave without farewell
- C. knew the secret purpose of his flight

6 “Bleed, bleed, poor country!
Great tyranny, lay thou thy basis sure,
For goodness dare not check thee!”

In the passage, the word ‘basis’ most nearly suggests that tyranny...

- A. depends on the people’s support
- B. has lawful grounds for its rule
- C. is free to entrench itself firmly

7 “It is myself I mean, in whom I know
All the particulars of vice so grafted
That, when they shall be opened, black Macbeth
Will seem as pure as snow ...”

According to the passage, the speaker claims that...

- A. only small faults stain his nature
- B. each specific form of vice lives in him
- C. he has studied Macbeth’s crimes closely

8 “... Where sighs, and groans, and shrieks, that rent
the air,
Are made, not marked; where violent sorrow seems
A modern ecstasy.”

It can reasonably be inferred from the phrase ‘made, not marked’ that...

- A. grief is too common to draw notice
- B. people hide their sorrow indoors
- C. the tyrant has outlawed mourning

9 “Be this the whetstone of your sword.
Let grief
Convert to anger; blunt not the heart, enrage it.”

In urging grief to ‘convert,’ the speaker most likely wants his listener to...

- A. mourn in private until the war ends
- B. calm his heart before he acts
- C. channel his loss into armed revenge

10 “Receive what cheer you may;
The night is long that never finds the day.”

As it is used in the passage, the word ‘night’ most nearly suggests that...

- A. their time of suffering will end
- B. darkness will hide their attack
- C. evil is strongest after dark

ANSWER KEY

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#	KEY	NOTE
1	B	
2	A	
3	C	
4	B	
5	A	
6	C	
7	B	Malcolm is slandering himself to test Macduff's loyalty — the vices are invented, and he retracts them later in the scene; hence the stem's 'claims.'
8	A	
9	C	
10	A	The closing couplet is proverbial: the 'night' is their long ordeal, and the line promises that every such night ends in day.

Teacher Context: Act IV

Macbeth seeks out the witches and receives a second set of prophecies that leave him falsely confident. He orders the slaughter of Macduff's family, and Macduff joins Malcolm in England to raise an army.