

Murder On The Orient Express

Part 3: Poirot Sits Back and Thinks

by Agatha Christie

Pre-Reading Vocabulary Practice

Optional Post-Reading Quiz Included

Practice words: carry out, caste, exigency, fancy, jury, loquacious, my world, put forward, retire, see the light

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 · Part 1: The Facts · Poirot boards the Orient Express

Section 2 · Part 2: The Evidence · Questioning the train's passengers

Section 3 · Part 3: Poirot Sits Back and Thinks · Poirot sits back and thinks

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 soldiers were ordered to **carry out** the mission at dawn.

- A. to perform or complete
- B. to report back on
- C. to plan ahead of time

2. He could never marry outside his **caste**.

- A. a religious community
- B. a circle of close friends
- C. a hereditary social class

3. Such an **exigency** allowed no time for second thoughts.

- A. an urgent demand
- B. a state of panic
- C. a burst of energy

4. They **fancy** themselves great singers, though no one else agrees.

- A. wish they could become
- B. enjoy pretending to be
- C. imagine themselves to be

5. The **jury** filed back into the courtroom to announce its decision.

- A. lawyers who argue the case
- B. people who decide the verdict
- C. officials who keep order

6. Our **loquacious** aunt always has a story for every occasion.

- A. very curious
- B. very cheerful
- C. very talkative

7. When my children were born, they instantly became **my world**.

- A. my usual way of life
- B. everything precious to me
- C. my main responsibility

8. At the meeting, she **put forward** a bold plan to save money.

- A. to propose or suggest
- B. to clearly explain
- C. to quietly support

9. When the meeting grew tense, he chose to **retire** rather than argue.

- A. to withdraw or leave
- B. to remain and listen
- C. to apologize at once

10. After hours stuck on the riddle, she finally began to **see the light**.

- A. to grow calm and relaxed
- B. to understand the truth
- C. to feel more hopeful

ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary Preview

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

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 *“Even the loquacious Mrs. Hubbard was unnaturally quiet.”*

As used in the passage, “loquacious” most nearly suggests that Mrs. Hubbard is usually...

- A. very nosy
- B. very talkative
- C. very cheerful

2 *“This man who was killed is the man who murdered my baby niece, who killed my sister, who broke my brother-in-law’s heart. Three of the people I loved best and who made up my home—my world!”*

In context, by calling the three victims “my world,” Helena most strongly suggests that they...

- A. merely shared her home
- B. were her only relatives
- C. were everything to her

3 *“I believe, Messieurs, in loyalty—to one’s friends and one’s family and one’s caste. ... In this case I consider that justice—strict justice—has been done.”*

In the passage, Princess Dragomiroff is characterized as someone who is...

- A. loyal to her own class
- B. eager to help the police
- C. devoted to the law

4 *“And then, Messieurs, I saw light. They were all in it.”*

In the passage, the words ‘I saw light’ primarily function to...

- A. reveal Poirot’s exhaustion
- B. mark Poirot’s sudden realization
- C. show Poirot’s lingering doubt

5 *“A jury is composed of twelve people—there were twelve passengers—Ratchett was stabbed twelve times.”*

Which detail best supports the claim that the passengers acted as a jury?

- A. Ratchett feared his enemies
- B. the murder happened at night
- C. there were twelve passengers

6 *“I visualised a self-appointed jury of twelve people who had condemned him to death and who by the exigencies of the case had themselves been forced to be his executioners.”*

In context, the word “exigencies” emphasizes...

- A. the plan’s secrecy
- B. the situation’s urgent demands
- C. the murderers’ cruelty

7 *“Then in a soft rich dreamy voice, quite unlike the one she had used throughout the journey, Mrs. Hubbard said: I always fancied myself in comedy parts.”*

In saying she “fancied myself in comedy parts,” the speaker most likely means she...

- A. once acted only in comedies
- B. enjoyed watching comedies
- C. thought she had a gift for comedy

8 *“Society had condemned him—we were only carrying out the sentence.”*

Mrs. Hubbard most likely says they were “only carrying out the sentence” in order to...

- A. cast the killing as a just execution
- B. shift all blame onto society
- C. deny that any crime occurred

9 *“In my opinion, M. Poirot, he said, the first theory you put forward was the correct one—decidedly so. I suggest that that is the solution we offer to the Jugo-Slavian police when they arrive.”*

Which statement is best supported by the passage?

- A. M. Bouc backs Poirot’s first theory
- B. M. Bouc rejects both solutions
- C. M. Bouc accuses the police

10 *“Then, said Poirot, having placed my solution before you, I have the honour to retire from the case.”*

The passage most strongly suggests that in offering to “retire from the case,” Poirot intends to...

- A. step away from the matter
- B. stop working as a detective
- C. rest after his success

ANSWER KEY
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#	KEY	NOTE
1	B	
2	C	
3	A	
4	B	Event comprehension. 'I saw light' is the idiom 'to see the light'—a sudden flash of understanding.
5	C	Event comprehension.
6	B	
7	C	Character comprehension. Here 'fancy' means to imagine or rate oneself, not the everyday sense 'to like.'
8	A	Theme comprehension.
9	A	Event comprehension.
10	A	Here 'retire' means to withdraw or take one's leave, not to stop working in old age.

Teacher Context: Part 3: Poirot Sits Back and Thinks

Poirot reviews the assembled evidence, weighs a list of unresolved questions, and tests his competing theories against the facts. He gathers the passengers together to lay out his reasoning and present his conclusions. Section runs to the end of the novel.