

Ordinary People

by Judith Guest

Pre-Reading Vocabulary Practice

Optional Post-Reading Quiz Included

Contents & Printing Notes

Unlike our most popular resources, this one's auto-selected.
Review before use, or edit the DOCX via "View / Print / Edit Web
Quiz" on the Resources menu.

PRE-READING ACTIVITY

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OPTIONAL POST-READING QUIZ

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Pages are ordered for double-sided printing.

About the Pre-Reading Activity

Open-dictionary; ungraded or completion grade. Students preview 20 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. The same words appear in excerpts from the text.

Practice words: assimilate, benign, chord, curt, diffuse, earnest, evaluate, illustrate, indifferent, inquire, motive, narrator, ponder, precedent, principle, slander, symphony, technique, undermine, wary



More Vocabulary Printables

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(all resources free)

ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary Preview

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#	KEY
1	A
2	A
3	A
4	C
5	C
6	B
7	A
8	C
9	A
10	B
11	C
12	B
13	A
14	A
15	A
16	B
17	C
18	A
19	B
20	B

Vocabulary Preview

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Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

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

1. The immigrants worked hard to **assimilate** the customs of their new homeland.
 - A. absorb and adopt
 - B. openly reject
 - C. secretly mock
2. She has the power to crush me, but she is **benign** by nature.
 - A. kind or harmless
 - B. full of happiness and joy
 - C. distracted
3. The guitarist strummed a complex **chord**, its rich harmony filling the room.
 - A. three or more notes that blend harmoniously
 - B. a single, sustained musical tone
 - C. a repeated rhythmic pattern
4. I tried asking open-ended questions, but all I could get were curt replies.
 - A. angry
 - B. selfish
 - C. short
5. She helped **diffuse** his ideas throughout the school.
 - A. improve
 - B. discourage
 - C. spread
6. She has a casual, go-with-the-flow personality and doesn't appreciate his **earnestness**.
 - A. frivolous attitude
 - B. seriousness
 - C. falseness
7. I'm **evaluating** job options.
 - A. considering
 - B. creating
 - C. avoiding
8. The example **illustrates** the belief.
 - A. disproves
 - B. proves
 - C. makes clear
9. She was **indifferent** to his anger.
 - A. without interest
 - B. with fear
 - C. with anger
10. I am here to **inquire** about the job.
 - A. answer questions
 - B. ask about
 - C. perform a task
11. A desire for religious freedom was their **motive** for leaving England.
 - A. excuse
 - B. technique
 - C. reason

12. One of the more popular **narrators** in movie history is Morgan Freeman. I especially liked him in *The Shawshank Redemption* where in addition to playing a major role, he narrated the film.
- A. producer who works closest with the actors
 - B. actor who talks directly to the audience
 - C. script writer
13. We **pondered** our fate.
- A. thought about
 - B. feared for
 - C. actively changed
14. Legal **precedent** set by the Supreme Court should be followed by all lower courts.
- A. a decision made at a prior time
 - B. a law passed by the legislature
 - C. an exception to a general rule
15. One **guiding principle** is that everyone should be treated fairly.
- A. rule or belief
 - B. complaint
 - C. answer or result
16. Check your sources or you could be sued for **slander**.
- A. selling a product that is not suitable for its purpose
 - B. hurting someone's reputation by lying
 - C. injuring others with outdated scientific information
17. She was nervous before playing violin with the city **symphony**.
- A. solo singer
 - B. dance troupe
 - C. orchestra
18. One **technique** I use for dealing with anger is to wait ten seconds before responding.
- A. way of doing something
 - B. habit
 - C. solution to anger
19. The purpose of the UN Human Rights Commission is undermined by dictators who have maneuvered to control it.
- A. strengthened
 - B. weakened
 - C. celebrated
20. She looked **wary** as she reached out to pet her friend's new dog.
- A. determined
 - B. distrustful
 - C. excited

Vocabulary in Context

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Name _____ Date _____ Period _____ Score _____ / 20

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

1 *May flies, the narrator explained, know the answer.*

- A. translation
- B. storyteller
- C. quiet voice

2 *There were one or two guiding principles to get him through the day.*

- A. basic rules or beliefs
- B. subtle characteristics
- C. long eventful journeys

3 *He doesn't know exactly what he wants from people except that he prefers indifference to concern.*

- A. without interest
- B. risky investment
- C. chaotic disorder

4 *"Fine," he says curtly.*

- A. in a manner that makes uncomfortable (weighs heavily on the senses or spirit)
- B. in a manner that is the most exciting or important part of a series of events
- C. in a manner that uses few words or is abrupt and perhaps discourteous or rude

5 *The smile is benign.*

- A. kindly, mild, or harmless

(In medicine, a tumor that is not life-threatening, is called *benign*.)

- B. a mental disorder characterized by alternating episodes of major depression and abnormally elevated mood
- C. acts to tendency to engage in acts that resist government authority or attempt to overthrow a government

6 *It pecks inquiringly at the window for a moment; then flies off.*

- A. in a manner that calls or attracts
- B. in a manner that seeks information
- C. in a manner that involves betrayal

7 *If you must ponder it, then do it alone at isolated periods with long intervals in between, so as not to drive yourself bats.*

- A. think deeply or carefully about
- B. stop (something from happening)
- C. fulfill one's highest potential

8 *Diffusion of energy, he called it.*

- A. a computer that uses subatomic particles to tackle some problems that would take ordinary computers thousands of years
- B. the degree to which something is terrible (vile; disgusting) -- worthy of being strongly disliked and looked down upon
- C. to spread; or to soften or calm

or:

to be spread out (not concentrated) -- sometimes implying a lack of organization

9 *It had undermined him, taken away something that he hadn't even realized he possessed; he had regarded it so lightly, so casually.*

- A. wrongly understood
- B. weakened gradually
- C. influenced opinion

10 *Now, on top of the shame, is disgust with himself for his slandering words.*

- A. moving again into position to work; or starting again
- B. lying in a way that damages the reputation of another
- C. spreading one-sided information to influence opinions

- 11 *Beth and Mac are in one corner, consulting earnestly about books, he is sure.*
A. in a self-aware manner
B. sincerely or seriously
C. finally; or in the end
- 12 *Conrad is looking at her warily.*
A. in a manner that involves betrayal
B. in a nervous or distrustful manner
C. with difficulty moving or managing
- 13 *And maybe his big motive was a selfish one.*
A. small quantity or indication
B. the sacred writings of Islam
C. reason (for doing something)
- 14 *Yet all of his reactors are at work—summing up, evaluating, rejecting.*
A. thinking carefully and making a judgment about
B. returning to an undesirable previous condition
C. moving back and forth; or being unsure or weak
- 15 *A series of five-minute telephone calls over a two-week period does not establish much precedent for the evening that now stretches lengthily ahead.*
A. an example from a prior time -- typically used to justify similar occurrences at a later time (especially a judicial decision)
B. related to a mental illness most commonly associated with undeveloped social abilities, language, and other communication skills
C. related to accepting someone's membership through a special procedure such as a ceremony and/or period of instruction and/or test
- 16 *Well, then, did she meet you at the Evanston symphony concert?*
A. treatment with extra kindness or tolerance OR (more rarely) a special pleasure (typically something done in excess of what is thought good -- such as eating too much cake, or being too lazy)
B. a person with or something related to an eating disorder in which overeating is followed by guilt and unhealthy attempts at correction -- especially self-induced vomiting
C. a long, complex piece of music for full orchestra (often in several movements); also, the orchestra or performance of such a work, or by extension any richly harmonious combination of many parts
- 17 *With him, the words are gentler, but the technique is the same.*
A. way of doing something
B. not easily set on fire
C. surrounding conditions
- 18 *He listens to the chords: C and G, D and A. E minor.*
A. a combination of three or more notes that blend harmoniously when sounded together; or figuratively to express harmonious blending or clashing
B. (verb) intentionally angers, challenges, or upsets someone OR (noun) insults or other actions intended to anger, challenge, or upset someone
C. items characterized by narrower parallel folds when closed and wider when open -- such as a door or musical instrument with that characteristic
- 19 *To illustrate, he pulls the cowboy hat lower over his eyes.*
A. work or operate
B. think carefully
C. help make clear
- 20 *Data for assimilation, but later, later.*
A. the process of taking in, transforming, or fitting in
B. a lens that limits light vibrations to a single plane
C. an expert in the branch of geology that studies rocks

ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary in Context

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#	KEY	WORD	NOTE
1	B	narrator	High-utility academic word
2	A	principle	High-utility academic word; used 3 times in this book.
3	A	indifferent	High-utility academic word; used 5 times in this book.
4	C	curt	Used 4 times in this book.
5	A	benign	Used 2 times in this book.
6	B	inquire	Used 4 times in this book.
7	A	ponder	Used 3 times in this book.
8	C	diffuse	Used 2 times in this book.
9	B	undermine	High-utility academic word; used 2 times in this book.
10	B	slander	Used 2 times in this book.
11	B	earnest	High-utility academic word; used 3 times in this book.
12	B	wary	High-utility academic word; used 2 times in this book.
13	C	motive (<i>as in: What is her motive?</i>)	High-utility academic word; used 2 times in this book.
14	A	evaluate	High-utility academic word; used 2 times in this book.
15	A	precedent (<i>as in: sets a precedent</i>)	High-utility academic word
16	C	symphony	Used 4 times in this book.
17	A	technique	High-utility academic word; used 3 times in this book.
18	A	chord (<i>as in: piano chord</i>)	Used 4 times in this book.
19	C	illustrate (<i>as in: as illustrated by this example</i>)	High-utility academic word; used 2 times in this book.
20	A	assimilate	High-utility academic word