

Romeo and Juliet

Act II

by William Shakespeare

Pre-Reading Vocabulary Practice

Optional Post-Reading Quiz Included

Practice words: bounty, conjure, contract, enmity, lamentable, loathsome, perjuries, rancor, rite, rote

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 · Prologue and Act I · Feuding households and Capulet's masked ball

Section 2 · Act II · Romeo in the Capulet orchard

Section 3 · Act III · A hot day in Verona's streets

Section 4 · Act IV · Preparations for a Thursday wedding

Section 5 · Act V · Romeo in exile, awaiting news

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 old woman's **bounty** kept the whole street fed.

- A. generosity; a capacity to give
- B. careful thrift with money
- C. hard work in the fields

2. In the story, the old witch tries to **conjure** at midnight.

- A. to summon a spirit by magic
- B. to cast a curse on someone
- C. to see what is to come

3. They signed a **contract** before the work began.

- A. a list of needed supplies
- B. a schedule of the work
- C. a binding agreement

4. The **enmity** between the two coaches lasted for years.

- A. a contest for the same honors
- B. hostility between enemies
- C. an awkward, distant silence

5. The team's play in the second half was **lamentable**.

- A. deplorable; deserving of grief
- B. confusing and hard to follow
- C. slow and overly cautious

6. A **loathsome** smell rose from the flooded basement.

- A. sharp; stinging
- B. musty; stale-smelling
- C. sickening; disgusting

7. The court records were full of **perjuries** that year.

- A. unpaid court fines
- B. false oaths; broken vows
- C. clerical mistakes

8. Old **rancor** still divides the two families.

- A. a long-running legal dispute
- B. bitter, long-held hatred
- C. an old and stubborn pride

9. The village holds the same **rite** every spring.

- A. a large outdoor market
- B. a contest between farms
- C. a formal ceremony

10. She learned the whole poem by **rote**.

- A. mechanical repetition
- B. study of its meaning
- C. natural talent for memory

Reading Helpers

(Not quizzed — helpful for this text.)

bestride — to sit upon as one would sit on a horse

wherefore — why — (often misread; she is asking why he has to be a Montague, not where he is)

prince of cats — prince of cats — Mercutio mocking Tybalt, whose name sounds like Tibert, a cat in an old animal fable

shrift — confession to a priest — Juliet's cover story for going to Friar Lawrence

conceit — true understanding or imagination — not vanity

ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary Preview

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#	KEY
1	A
2	A
3	C
4	B
5	A
6	C
7	B
8	B
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 "Nay, I'll conjure too.
Romeo! Humors! Madman! Passion! Lover!
Appear thou in the likeness of a sigh."

As used in the passage, the word "conjure" most nearly means...

- A. to summon like a spirit
- B. to search in the dark
- C. to shout in anger

2 "Alack, there lies more peril in thine eye
Than twenty of their swords. Look thou but sweet,
And I am proof against their enmity."

In these lines, the speaker presents himself as...

- A. angry at those who threaten him
- B. bold in the face of hatred
- C. uncertain whether she loves him

3 "Yet, if thou swear'st,
Thou mayst prove false. At lovers' perjuries,
They say, Jove laughs."

It can reasonably be inferred that Jove laughs at "lovers' perjuries" because lovers...

- A. fear the anger of the gods
- B. often break the vows they swear
- C. prefer silence to promises

4 "Although I joy in thee,
I have no joy of this contract tonight.
It is too rash, too unadvised, too sudden,
Too like the lightning, which doth cease to be
Ere one can say 'It lightens.'"

Which choice best describes the speaker's attitude toward the pledge just made?

- A. ashamed of having spoken
- B. impatient to seal it at once
- C. glad, but wary of its haste

5 "My bounty is as boundless as the sea,
My love as deep. The more I give to thee,
The more I have, for both are infinite."

The information in the excerpt primarily functions to...

- A. promise a generous reward
- B. warn that love can fade
- C. stress an endless power to give

6 "If that thy bent of love be honorable,
Thy purpose marriage, send me word tomorrow,
By one that I'll procure to come to thee,
Where and what time thou wilt perform the rite ..."

According to the passage, the speaker asks to be told tomorrow...

- A. when and where they will marry
- B. when and where they must flee
- C. when and where they last met

7 "O, she knew well
Thy love did read by rote, that could not spell."

The speaker most likely adds "that could not spell" in order to...

- A. praise a skillful recital
- B. show the words were not understood
- C. praise her quick memory

8 "In one respect I'll thy assistant be,
For this alliance may so happy prove
To turn your households' rancor to pure love."

As used in the passage, "rancor" most nearly suggests that the two households...

- A. hate each other deeply
- B. quarrel over property
- C. have grown distant lately

9 "Why, is not this a lamentable thing, grandsire,
that we should be thus afflicted with these strange
flies, these fashion-mongers, these 'pardon-me' 's,
who stand so much on the new form that they cannot
sit at ease on the old bench?"

The exaggerated use of "lamentable" shows that the speaker regards these men with...

- A. amused contempt
- B. cautious respect
- C. sincere sorrow

10 "The sweetest honey
Is loathsome in his own deliciousness
And in the taste confounds the appetite."

It can reasonably be inferred that honey becomes "loathsome" when it is...

- A. mixed with bitter herbs
- B. left too long and spoils
- C. too sweet to keep eating

ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary in Context

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#	KEY	NOTE
1	A	
2	B	
3	B	
4	C	In Shakespeare's usage a 'contract' is the betrothal itself — a binding exchange of vows, not a written document.
5	C	Students most often meet 'bounty' as a reward offered for capture; here it is the older sense — the giver's own generosity.
6	A	
7	B	
8	A	
9	A	The speaker is mock-grieving: a word fit for real tragedy is aimed at men who fuss over new manners, and the mismatch is the joke.
10	C	The honey is not spoiled by anything outside itself — its own sweetness is what sickens, which is the point the speaker makes about haste in love.

Teacher Context: Act II

Opening with the Chorus's sonnet, the act runs from the balcony scene — Romeo overhears Juliet in the orchard and they pledge to marry — through the arrangements for the wedding. Friar Lawrence agrees to perform it in the hope of ending the feud, the Nurse carries messages between the lovers, and the act closes at the Friar's cell as the two go to be married.