

Romeo and Juliet

Act IV

by William Shakespeare

Pre-Reading Vocabulary Practice

Optional Post-Reading Quiz Included

Practice words: advanced, case, caught, price, redeem, stifled, sullen, supple, untimely, valor

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. She was **advanced** to captain after only one season.
 - A. praised by the coach
 - B. moved to another team
 - C. raised to a higher rank
2. It was a strange **case**, and we talked about it for days.
 - A. a container for tools
 - B. an argument in court
 - C. a state of affairs
3. The hawk **caught** the field mouse in an instant.
 - A. snatched away suddenly
 - B. spotted from far above
 - C. startled into hiding
4. He said a loyal friend is of great **price**.
 - A. a reward offered
 - B. worth or value
 - C. cost in money
5. His friends worked for months to **redeem** him.
 - A. clear his name in public
 - B. speak up on his behalf
 - C. buy back and set free
6. The thick smoke nearly **stifled** the firefighters inside.
 - A. kept from seeing
 - B. kept from breathing
 - C. kept from leaving
7. A **sullen** gray sky hung over the empty harbor.
 - A. gloomy and mournful
 - B. thin and hazy
 - C. still and silent
8. Years of dance kept her body **supple** and strong.
 - A. bending and moving easily
 - B. lean and lightly built
 - C. steady and well balanced
9. The storm brought an **untimely** end to the picnic.
 - A. coming far too soon
 - B. messy and confused
 - C. unwelcome and unpleasant
10. The firefighter's **valor** was honored at the ceremony.
 - A. long years of service
 - B. courage facing danger
 - C. quick thinking in a crisis

Reading Helpers

(Not quizzed — helpful for this text.)

prorogue — to postpone, delay, or put off

the label — the seal that makes a document binding

as desperate an execution — carrying out of a desperate plan (not a killing)

charnel house — a vault or building where corpses and bones are kept

surcease — to stop or come to an end; to cease

conceit of death — the imagining of death (picturing it in the mind)

ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary Preview

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#	KEY
1	C
2	C
3	A
4	B
5	C
6	B
7	A
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 *"If I do so, it will be of more price
Being spoke behind your back than to your face."*

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

- A. worth or value
- B. cost in money
- C. reward for a favor

2 *"Each part, deprived of supple government,
Shall, stiff and stark and cold, appear like death ..."*

It can reasonably be inferred that, before this change, each part of the body...

- A. obeys only with great effort
- B. aches with cold and stiffness
- C. moves freely and easily

3 *"And this shall free thee from this present shame,
If no inconstant toy nor womanish fear
Abate thy valor in the acting it."*

It can reasonably be inferred that the speaker doubts whether the listener will...

- A. understand what is asked
- B. hold steady when the time comes
- C. keep the plan a secret

4 *"How if, when I am laid into the tomb, I wake
before the time that Romeo Come to redeem me?"*

According to the passage, the speaker fears waking before Romeo arrives to...

- A. set her free from the tomb
- B. pay what her family is owed
- C. bury her beside her kinsmen

5 *"Shall I not then be stifled in the vault, To whose
foul mouth no healthsome air breathes in, And there
die strangled ere my Romeo comes?"*

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

- A. suffocated
- B. poisoned
- C. silenced

6 *"Death lies on her like an untimely frost
Upon the sweetest flower of all the field."*

The speaker most likely calls the frost 'untimely' in order to...

- A. stress that she died too young
- B. show how fragile she was
- C. blame the cold weather

7 *"But one, poor one, one poor and loving child,
But one thing to rejoice and solace in,
And cruel death hath caught it from my sight!"*

Which choice best describes the speaker's attitude toward death?

- A. afraid of dying as well
- B. bitter at being robbed
- C. resigned to heaven's will

8 *"The most you sought was her promotion,
For 'twas your heaven she should be advanced;
And weep you now, seeing she is advanced
Above the clouds, as high as heaven itself?"*

The speaker's words in the excerpt primarily function to...

- A. describe the planned funeral
- B. praise the family's ambition
- C. recast her death as a rise in rank

9 *"... Our solemn hymns to sullen dirges change,
Our bridal flowers serve for a buried corse ..."*

In context, the word 'sullen' emphasizes...

- A. how quickly the plans changed
- B. how loudly the bells will ring
- C. how joyless the music becomes

10 *"Honest good fellows, ah, put up, put up,
For, well you know, this is a pitiful case."*

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

- A. a doctor's diagnosis
- B. a state of affairs
- C. an argument in court

ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary in Context

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#	KEY	NOTE
1	A	'Of more price' means worth more, not costing more. The older sense of 'price' as worth survives in phrases like 'a pearl of great price'.
2	C	'Government' here means control, so 'supple government' is the easy control the limbs normally hold over themselves — exactly what the potion suspends.
3	B	
4	A	'Redeem' literally means to buy back, as with a pawned item, and the rescue sense grows out of that. The commercial root is still audible here.
5	A	
6	A	An 'untimely' frost is one that comes out of season, killing a flower still in bloom. The point is the timing of the death, not its manner.
7	B	'Caught' is an older past tense of 'catch', and here it means snatched away — the speaker is accusing death of theft, not describing a capture.
8	C	The Friar plays on two senses of 'advanced' — promoted in rank, which is what the family wanted, and raised up to heaven, which is what they got.
9	C	In older usage 'sullen' means gloomy or mournful rather than sulky. A dirge is already a funeral song, so the word is there to deepen the gloom.
10	B	The musician's reply just after this line turns on his pun that uses <i>case</i> in the sense of <i>the box his pipe travels in</i> .

Teacher Context: Act IV

Desperate to escape the match with Paris, Juliet obtains from Friar Lawrence a potion that will counterfeit death for forty-two hours. She feigns obedience to her father, drinks the potion alone that night, and the household discovers her seemingly dead on the morning set for the wedding.