

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead

by Tom Stoppard

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: afflict, amnesia, anguish, arbitrary, credulous, doting, factor, irony (2), melancholy, nevertheless, obscure, phenomenon, plausible, pragmatic, precedent, rhetoric, unobtrusive, vengeance, with a vengeance



More Vocabulary Printables

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ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary Preview

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

Vocabulary Preview
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Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

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

1. She has been **afflicted** with migraines since childhood.
 - A. worried about
 - B. surprised by
 - C. made to suffer
2. **Amnesia** is much more common in the movies than it is in life.
 - A. a minor gunshot wound
 - B. loss of memory
 - C. love at first sight
3. Her guilt led to **anguish** until she committed her life to good.
 - A. extreme solitude
 - B. extreme distress
 - C. extreme depression
4. The rules felt **arbitrary**, changing from one day to the next without clear explanation.
 - A. impulsive
 - B. strict
 - C. cruel
5. She is so **credulous** she believes everything she reads.
 - A. very skeptical
 - B. easily fooled
 - C. deeply thoughtful
6. She **dotes** upon her children.
 - A. criticizes
 - B. worries
 - C. adores
7. In the second paragraph, the narrator's focus shifts from factors making her unhappy to identification of possible solutions to her unhappiness.
 - A. things that are unfair
 - B. things (that influence an outcome)
 - C. examples of illnesses
8. **Ironically**, her strongest supporters undermined her popularity through their extremism.
 - A. when what happens is exactly what usually happens
 - B. when what happens is very different than what might be expected
 - C. when what happens is very fitting for the situation
9. Her voice was dripping with irony as she said, "You look beautiful."
 - A. sincerity
 - B. sarcasm
 - C. kindness
10. This weather makes me **melancholy**. I can't wait for spring.
 - A. happy
 - B. sad
 - C. feel like singing
11. She loves him. Nevertheless, she is determined to stop seeing him unless he stops drinking.
 - A. also
 - B. despite that
 - C. in addition

12. She left instructions for us, but they are so **obscure** we can't agree on what they are.
- A. unrelated to the subject at hand
 - B. controversial
 - C. not clearly expressed or understood
13. The **phenomenon** was first noticed by Marie Curie.
- A. thing of interest
 - B. thing that is growing
 - C. thing that is hidden
14. Her theory was neat, **plausible**, and wrong.
- A. reasonable
 - B. praiseworthy
 - C. foolish
15. Successful politicians are **pragmatists**. Compromise is built into the system.
- A. practical
 - B. personable
 - C. busy
16. 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
17. Students analyzed the senator's **rhetoric** before writing their essays.
- A. persuasive language
 - B. family history
 - C. voting record
18. She sat **unobtrusively** in the rear of the room.
- A. without drawing attention
 - B. while shouting loudly
 - C. while crying softly
19. Her evolutionary benefit theory of **vengeance** is supported by studies showing that a person's desire for revenge increases when others see their mistreatment.
- A. fairness
 - B. status
 - C. revenge
20. She threw herself into work with a **vengeance**.
- A. with reluctance
 - B. with intensity
 - C. with careful thought

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 Two, *probability* is not operating as a **factor**.
 - A. job, reservation, booking, or activity
 - B. thing that affects a result or outcome
 - C. something that is made or manufactured
- 2 GUIL: The scientific approach to the examination of **phenomena** is a defence against the pure emotion of fear.
 - A. things that exists or happened -- often of special interest
 - B. computer code modules each of which perform a specific task
 - C. stock markets during times of generally rising stock values
- 3 GUIL: You and I, Alfred--we could create a dramatic **precedent** here.
 - 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 though a special procedure such as a ceremony and/or period of instruction and/or test
- 4 GUIL: He's always talking about us--there aren't two people living whom he **dotes** on more than us.
 - A. moves back and forth; or is unsure or weak
 - B. is most powerful, important, or noticeable
 - C. demonstrates love and uncritical affection
- 5 GUIL: Difficult to say, really--some kings tend to be **amnesiac**, others I suppose--the opposite, whatever that is.... ROS: Yes--but GUIL: Elephantine ...?
 - A. someone who expels or gets rid of
 - B. someone who has lost their memory
 - C. someone who mocks or makes fun of
- 6 He's **afflicted**.
 - A. not judged in a negative way
 - B. told someone about something
 - C. suffering from something
- 7 ROS: Why don't you go and have a look?
GUIL: **Pragmatism**?!--is that all you have to offer?
 - A. concern with practical matters -- especially where quick results and/or practical experience triumph over theory
 - B. doubt (that something is true)
 - C. between daylight and darkness
- 8 If we start being **arbitrary** it'll just be a shambles:
 - A. doing things based on chance or impulse
 - B. able to meet and talk with
 - C. the quality of disagreeing
- 9 Then GUIL claps solo with slow measured **irony**.
 - A. soft leather shoe traditionally worn by Native Americans
 - B. saying one thing while meaning the opposite
 - C. belief or opinion formed by viewing things a certain way
- 10 Between "just desserts" and "tragic **irony**" we are given quite a lot of scope for our particular talent.
 - A. lymph node -- one of many bean-sized organs that filter bacteria and other toxins from circulating white-blood-cell filled lymph fluid
 - B. when what happens is very different than what might be expected
 - C. someone who believe behavior should be guided by high ideals or standards -- often with the implication that the person is unrealistic

- 11 *And so here you are—with a vengeance.*
 A. available cash
 B. with intensity
 C. very important
- 12 *GUIL (fear, vengeance, scorn): Your experience!*
 A. something that stands out
 B. something made from parts
 C. the act of taking revenge
- 13 *PLAYER: It's about a King and Queen....*
GUIL: Escapism! What else?
PLAYER: Blood
GUIL: -Love and rhetoric.
 A. the use of words to make a point
 B. the quality of being very bad (deserving no respect)
 C. the state or degree of being optimistic or agreeable
- 14 *GUIL: He's-melancholy.*
 A. relating to the outside
 B. a sad feeling or manner
 C. about (but not exactly)
- 15 *ROS: Nevertheless, I suppose one might say that this was a chance.... One might well ...accost him.... Yes, it definitely looks like a chance to me.... Something on the lines of a direct informal approach ...man to man ...straight from the shoulder.... Now look here, what's it all about ...sort of thing.*
 A. in keeping with or in agreement with what was just stated
 B. despite that (used to connect contrasting ideas)
 C. therefore (for that reason)
- 16 *...we are tied down to a language which makes up in obscurity what it lacks in style.*
 A. a particular way of seeing or thinking about things
 B. a place of worship for a people of the Jewish faith
 C. the quality of being difficult to understand
- 17 *It's just a man failing to reappear, that's all —now you see him, now you don't, that's the only thing that's real: here one minute and gone the next and never coming back—an exit, unobtrusive and unannounced, a disappearance gathering weight as it goes on, until, finally, it is heavy with death.*
 A. fitting in so as not to attract much attention or disturb
 B. the state of not being aware or concerned about something
 C. a state similar to sleep where one is unaware of anything
- 18 *His face and his hands indicate his incredulity.*
 A. social event or ceremony
 B. a state of not believing
 C. Islamic religious leader
- 19 *It doesn't sound very plausible.*
 A. likely (reasonable that it would be true)
 B. in a manner that takes on or adopts
 C. full of strong desire for something
- 20 *GUIL: But why? Was it all for this? Who are we that so much should converge on our little deaths? (In anguish to the PLAYER:) Who are we?*
 A. extreme introversion
 B. extreme pain, suffering, or distress
 C. extreme depression

ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary in Context

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#	KEY	WORD	NOTE
1	B	factor (<i>as in: It was the deciding factor.</i>)	High-utility academic word; used 6 times in this play.
2	A	phenomenon	High-utility academic word; used 2 times in this play.
3	A	precedent (<i>as in: sets a precedent</i>)	High-utility academic word; used 3 times in this play.
4	C	doting	Used about 2 times per 10 books in our high school library.
5	B	amnesia	Used 2 times in this play.
6	C	afflict	Used 9 times in this play.
7	A	pragmatic	High-utility academic word
8	A	arbitrary	High-utility academic word; used 3 times in this play.
9	B	irony (<i>as in: verbal irony</i>)	2 meanings in this play.
10	B	irony (<i>as in: situational irony</i>)	2 meanings in this play.
11	B	with a vengeance (<i>as in: with a vengeance</i>)	2 meanings in this play.
12	C	vengeance (<i>as in: vengeance is mine</i>)	2 meanings in this play.
13	A	rhetoric	High-utility academic word; used 10 times in this play.
14	B	melancholy	Used 4 times in this play.
15	B	nevertheless	High-utility academic word; used 2 times in this play.
16	C	obscure (<i>as in: the view or directions are obscure</i>)	Used 4 times in this play.
17	A	unobtrusive	Used about 2 times per 10 books in our high school library.
18	B	credulous	Used about 2 times per 10 books in our high school library.
19	A	plausible	High-utility academic word; used 3 times in this play.
20	B	anguish	Used 5 times in this play.