

The Book Thief

Parts 3–4

by Markus Zusak

Pre-Reading Vocabulary Practice

Optional Post-Reading Quiz Included

Practice words: callous, capitulate, decipher, emaciated, futile, innate, morose, rebuke, reproach, succumb

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 · Prologue and Parts 1–2 · Liesel arrives on Himmel Street

Section 2 · Parts 3–4 · Secrets in the Hubermann house

Section 3 · Parts 5–6 · War comes closer to Molching

Section 4 · Parts 7–8 · Difficult choices in wartime Molching

Section 5 · Parts 9–10 and Epilogue · Liesel's story nears its end

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 manager's **callous** attitude surprised the new workers.

- A. rude and impatient
- B. cruel and uncaring
- C. strict and demanding

2. After a long debate, she refused to **capitulate**.

- A. to change the subject
- B. to raise her voice
- C. to surrender or give in

3. I struggled to **decipher** the doctor's messy handwriting.

- A. to work out the meaning
- B. to copy out neatly
- C. to read aloud quickly

4. After the long illness, she looked pale and **emaciated**.

- A. weary and confused
- B. anxious and tense
- C. extremely thin and weak

5. Bailing water from the sinking boat felt **futile**.

- A. dangerous and risky
- B. exhausting and slow
- C. pointless or useless

6. Some people seem to have an **innate** talent for music.

- A. inborn, not learned
- B. strong and intense
- C. rare and unusual

7. He sat alone in the corner, **morose** and silent.

- A. tired and bored
- B. gloomy and sullen
- C. nervous and uneasy

8. The coach would **rebuke** any player who showed up late.

- A. to push to work harder
- B. to scold or criticize
- C. to watch with suspicion

9. The teacher's **reproach** echoed in the silent classroom.

- A. blame or disapproval
- B. a stern command or order
- C. a confusing mix of words

10. He was too proud to **succumb**, no matter the pressure.

- A. to give in or yield
- B. to show any fear
- C. to ask for help

Reading Helpers

(Not quizzed — helpful for this text.)

skyline — the outline of a city against the sky; Hans speaks to the indifferent Stuttgart skyline because the friend he addresses is dead, so the empty horizon stands in for the answer that will never come

shaking and shaken — physically trembling ('shaking') and emotionally broken ('shaken') at once — the doubled word fuses Max's exhaustion with his terror as he arrives to beg for refuge

ANSWER KEY

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#	KEY
1	B
2	C
3	A
4	C
5	C
6	A
7	B
8	B
9	A
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 "... the woman wore an expression not of reproach, but utter distance."

As it is used in the passage, the word "reproach" most nearly means...

- A. a look of fondness
- B. a look of open fear
- C. a look of blame or disapproval

2 "She began to rebuke herself."

It can reasonably be inferred that, as she rebukes herself, Liesel feels...

- A. proud of how she behaved
- B. puzzled by the woman's silence
- C. ashamed of how she behaved

3 "When it refused to let go of her, she succumbed to it."

The passage most strongly suggests that the "it" Ilsa Hermann succumbs to is...

- A. her own grief and suffering
- B. pressure from her husband
- C. the pull of Liesel's visits

4 "... she felt an innate sense of power."

The author most likely calls Liesel's sense of power "innate" to suggest that it...

- A. feels inborn and natural to her
- B. will soon fade away
- C. was taught to her by others

5 "He called out the futile words of the robbed: 'I'll have you arrested!'"

Calling the farmer's threats "futile" best conveys the narrator's view that they are...

- A. sure to get the thieves caught
- B. powerless to change anything
- C. crueler than the theft itself

6 "When she stopped and stole one last look at the foreigner in the kitchen, she could decipher the outline of a book on the table."

Which statement about Liesel's last look into the kitchen is best supported by the passage?

- A. She saw nothing at all
- B. She made out only the book's outline
- C. She read the title on the cover

7 "As is often the case, the family surrounded the bed and watched him capitulate."

It can reasonably be inferred that, at the bedside, the uncle is capitulating to...

- A. the illness that is killing him
- B. the demands of his relatives
- C. a quarrel he has with Max

8 "When she was finished, she found the young man at the kitchen table, utterly morose."

Describing Max as "utterly morose" at the table characterizes him as...

- A. cheerful and relieved
- B. restless and chatty
- C. gloomy and downcast

9 "For starters,' he said, 'I will take each and every one of your books—and I will burn them.' It was callous."

The narrator adds "It was callous" mainly to underscore that Papa's threat is...

- A. empty and unserious
- B. harsh and unfeeling
- C. kind and reassuring

10 "Slowly then, the drop sheets were dragged aside and the emaciated body and face of Max Vandenburg appeared."

In context, the word "emaciated" emphasizes that Max's body and face are...

- A. wasted thin from hunger
- B. bruised from fighting
- C. flushed with fever

ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary in Context

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#	KEY	NOTE
1	C	The text says her look was 'not of reproach'; the question tests what reproach itself means.
2	C	
3	A	Character comprehension. 'It' is the suffering Ilsa has chosen to embrace over her dead son.
4	A	
5	B	
6	B	
7	A	Event comprehension. The uncle is on his deathbed; he surrenders to the illness, not to any person.
8	C	
9	B	
10	A	

Teacher Context: Parts 3–4

Through flashback we learn how Hans came to own his accordion, and a young Jewish man, Max Vandenburg, makes his way to Himmel Street, where the Hubermanns hide him in their basement. Max and Liesel form a bond over words and shared nightmares. Parts 3 and 4 are grouped to keep Max's arrival and the early months of hiding in one section.