

The Celestial Railroad

by Nathaniel Hawthorne

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: benevolent, conscience, contort, dismal, edifice, eminent, emit, illustrious, infernal, ingenious, ingenuity, inhabitant, malice, moreover, persecution, pilgrimage, pragmatic, recollect, reputable, visage



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ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary Preview

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

Vocabulary Preview

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Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

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

1. She thinks of herself as a **benevolent** dictator.
 - A. ruthless
 - B. kind
 - C. calm
2. I will vote as my **conscience** demands.
 - A. sense of right and wrong
 - B. memory of past events
 - C. fear of public ridicule
3. She lay **contorted** in pain.
 - A. twisted
 - B. faced downward
 - C. flushed
4. When she graduated from college the job market was **dismal**.
 - A. especially good
 - B. promising but unusual
 - C. terrible or depressing
5. Their offices are housed in an imposing **edifice**.
 - A. building
 - B. neighborhood
 - C. color
6. Despite her **eminent** status in the art world, she remained humble and approachable.
 - A. respected and well-known
 - B. newly acquired
 - C. barely noticed
7. The plant **emits** a noxious odor.
 - A. produces (sends out)
 - B. questions
 - C. hates or detests
8. The **illustrious** scientist received another prestigious award for her research.
 - A. famous and admired
 - B. unknown and ordinary
 - C. controversial but rich
9. That **infernal** alarm clock kept going off every five minutes.
 - A. annoying
 - B. expensive
 - C. antique
10. Her **ingenious** plan let the class finish the project with only a few supplies.
 - A. clever and original
 - B. quick but careless
 - C. plain and ordinary
11. It's going to take a lot of **ingenuity**, but I think we can save the company.
 - A. creativity
 - B. money
 - C. time
12. The **inhabitants** of the village were very friendly.
 - A. tourists
 - B. residents
 - C. visitors

13. Words can be like baseball bats when used **maliciously** against someone who is sensitive.
- A. carelessly
 - B. mockingly
 - C. evilly
14. Many graduates have high college debt. Moreover, too many of them haven't found good-paying jobs.
- A. in contrast to that
 - B. in addition to that
 - C. as a result of that
15. In that country people who are gay are **persecuted** by law.
- A. forced to leave
 - B. ignored
 - C. treated badly
16. Many devout Hindus undertake a **pilgrimage** to the holy city of Varanasi in India, where they perform rituals and prayers along the banks of the sacred Ganges River.
- A. cultural festival
 - B. religious journey
 - C. historical reenactment
17. Successful politicians are **pragmatists**. Compromise is built into the system.
- A. practical
 - B. personable
 - C. busy
18. I don't **recollect** her name, but I'd recognize her.
- A. pronounce properly
 - B. spell properly
 - C. remember
19. No **reputable** scientist believes that.
- A. thoughtful
 - B. trusted and respected
 - C. under the age of 30
20. She gazed at her reflection in the mirror, studying her own **visage** with a critical eye.
- A. body
 - B. clothing
 - C. face

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 It interested me much to learn that by the public spirit of some of the **inhabitants** a railroad has recently been established between this populous and flourishing town and the Celestial City.
A. things accepted as true (without proof)
B. people (who live in a particular place)
C. things designed to stop something else
- 2 Being, **moreover**, a director of the railroad corporation and one of its largest stockholders, he had it in his power to give me all desirable information respecting that praiseworthy enterprise.
A. despite that (used to connect contrasting ideas)
B. in addition to what has just been said
C. even though -- used to connect contrasting ideas
- 3 Some **malicious** persons it is true deny the identity of this reputable character with the Evangelist of old times, and even pretend to bring competent evidence of an imposture.
A. exceedingly important, serious, or dangerous
B. designed to be useful; or capable of working
C. the intention or desire to see others suffer
- 4 Some malicious persons it is true deny the identity of this **reputable** character with the Evangelist of old times, and even pretend to bring competent evidence of an imposture.
A. indicating approval or agreement
B. respected (with good reputation)
C. able to be taken on as one's own
- 5 Among the gentlemen were characters of deserved **eminence**—magistrates, politicians, and men of wealth, by whose example religion could not but be greatly recommended to their meaner brethren.
A. famous, respected, or important within a particular field or profession
B. the act of finding fault and telling others; or a description of faults
C. the process of thinking carefully and making a judgment about something
- 6 One great convenience of the new method of going on **pilgrimage** I must not forget to mention.
A. portray or create in a particular way OR interpret, translate, or extract from
B. a journey to a special place -- especially a sacred place for religious purposes
C. removing the favoring any side in a contest, war, disagreement, or other dispute
- 7 Another thing, likewise, the **benevolent** reader will be delighted to understand.
A. not thoughtful about the past
B. kind, generous, or charitable
C. not able to be disagreed with
- 8 This dispute, much to the credit as well of the **illustrious** potentate above mentioned as of the worthy and enlightened directors of the railroad, has been pacifically arranged on the principle of mutual compromise.
A. famous and admired; or worthy of admiration
B. the state or degree of being bad or harmful
C. able to be taken up or received into heaven
- 9 The engine at this moment took its station in advance of the cars, looking, I must confess, much more like a sort of mechanical demon that would hurry us to the **infernal** regions than a laudable contrivance for smoothing our way to the Celestial City.
A. very bad; or very annoying; or characteristic of hell or the underworld
B. relating to classical music plays in which most of the dialogue is sung
C. strict, firm, or hard (not giving in, not giving way, or not giving up)
- 10 We greeted the two pilgrims with many pleasant gibes and a roar of laughter; whereupon they gazed at us with such woful and absurdly compassionate **visages** that our merriment grew tenfold more obstreperous.
A. circular movements around something
B. short parts of longer written works
C. someone's face or facial expression

- 11 At some distance from the railroad Mr. Smooth-it-away pointed to a large, antique **edifice**, which, he observed, was a tavern of long standing, and had formerly been a noted stopping-place for pilgrims.
- A. a building or structure -- especially a large one
- or:
- a conceptual or organizational framework
 - B. something that encourages something else to happen; or the process of something being encouraged
 - C. a colonnade (series of regularly spaced columns) surrounding a building or enclosing a courtyard
- 12 Though I plead guilty to some foolish palpitations of the heart during our headlong rush over the causeway here constructed, yet it were unjust to withhold the highest encomiums on the boldness of its original conception and the **ingenuity** of those who executed it.
- A. ability to solve problems in smart creative ways
 - B. the act, process, or instance of telling a story
 - C. a general feeling of not being as good as others
- 13 It struck me as a peculiarity that the laborers at the forge and those who brought fuel to the engine, when they began to draw short breath, positively **emitted** smoke from their mouth and nostrils.
- A. sent out
 - B. restored
 - C. not said
- 14 They looked dark, wild, and smoky, with a singular resemblance, indeed, to the native inhabitants, like whom, also, they had a disagreeable propensity to ill-natured gibes and sneers, the habit of which had wrought a settled **contortion** of their visages.
- A. the act of twisting or bending to an unnatural shape
 - B. the process of controlling (how something turns out)
 - C. the taking on or adoption of power or responsibility
- 15 As I purposed to make a considerable stay here, it gratified me to learn that there is no longer the want of harmony between the town's-people and pilgrims, which impelled the former to such lamentably mistaken measures as the **persecution** of Christian and the fiery martyrdom of Faithful.
- A. aka analyst -- psychiatrist
 - B. something taken on or adopted
 - C. very bad and unfair treatment
- 16 These **ingenious** methods constitute a sort of machinery, by which thought and study are done to every person's hand without his putting himself to the slightest inconvenience in the matter.
- A. showing cleverness and originality
 - B. a tendency to think back on things
 - C. aware or concerned about something
- 17 There was a sort of stock or scrip, called **Conscience**, which seemed to be in great demand, and would purchase almost anything.
- A. feeling or appraisal of having personally behaved in a morally right or wrong manner
 - B. a complex carbohydrate that is the chief constituent of all plant tissues and fibers
 - C. not planning to kill a person, but then intentionally killing in the heat of passion
- 18 Tracts of land and golden mansions, situate in the Celestial City, were often exchanged, at very disadvantageous rates, for a few years' lease of small, **dismal**, inconvenient tenements in Vanity Fair.
- A. irrelevant or unimportant
 - B. important or significant
 - C. depressing or gloomy
- 19 One of them—his name was Stick-to-the-right—perceived in my face, I suppose, a species of sympathy and almost admiration, which, to my own great surprise, I could not help feeling for this **pragmatic** couple.
- A. concerned with practical matters
 - B. another battle with the same foe
 - C. describing someone as antisocial
- 20 My **recollections** of the journey are now, for a little space, dim and confused, inasmuch as a singular drowsiness here overcame me, owing to the fact that we were passing over the enchanted ground, the air of which encourages a disposition to sleep.
- A. restores
 - B. thoughts
 - C. memories

ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary in Context

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#	KEY	WORD	NOTE
1	B	inhabitant	Used 7 times in this story.
2	B	moreover	High-utility academic word; used 2 times in this story.
3	C	malice	High-utility academic word; used 2 times in this story.
4	B	reputable	Used 2 times in this story.
5	A	eminent	High-utility academic word; used 2 times in this story.
6	B	pilgrimage	Used 5 times in this story.
7	B	benevolent	High-utility academic word; used 2 times in this story.
8	A	illustrious	Used 2 times in this story.
9	A	infernal	Used 3 times in this story.
10	C	visage	Used 4 times in this story.
11	A	edifice	Used 3 times in this story.
12	A	ingenuity	Used 2 times in this story.
13	A	emit	Used 2 times in this story.
14	A	contort	Used 2 times in this story.
15	C	persecution	Used 2 times in this story.
16	A	ingenious	Used 4 times in this story.
17	A	conscience	Used 4 times in this story.
18	C	dismal	Used 3 times in this story.
19	A	pragmatic	High-utility academic word
20	C	recollect	High-utility academic word; used 2 times in this story.