

The Fault in Our Stars

Chapters 1–5

by John Green

Pre-Reading Vocabulary Practice

Optional Post-Reading Quiz Included

Practice words: condescending, decrepit, ferocity, fraught, insidious, meager, myriad, oblivion, sedentary, tenuous

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 · Chapters 1–5 · Hazel's support group and a new friend

Section 2 · Chapters 6–10 · Planning the trip to Amsterdam

Section 3 · Chapters 11–15 · Amsterdam and the author Van Houten

Section 4 · Chapters 16–20 · Hazel and Augustus's hardest days

Section 5 · Chapters 21–25 · Hazel after a profound loss

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. Her **condescending** tone annoyed everyone in the room.

- A. rude and impatient
- B. loud and aggressive
- C. acting superior; patronizing

2. Nobody had repaired the **decrepit** barn in decades.

- A. worn out from age
- B. plain and unpainted
- C. empty and unused

3. The storm struck the coast with terrifying **ferocity**.

- A. sudden swiftness
- B. fierce, savage intensity
- C. loud confusion

4. Their final goodbye at the airport was **fraught** and tearful.

- A. awkward and stiff
- B. filled with tension
- C. long and drawn-out

5. A small leak can cause **insidious** damage to a building.

- A. gradually and secretly harmful
- B. lasting and permanent
- C. severe and far-reaching

6. The hikers shared a **meager** supper of crackers.

- A. cold and unappealing
- B. plain and tasteless
- C. small and barely enough

7. The committee weighed a **myriad** of options before deciding.

- A. a confusing tangle
- B. a great number
- C. a careful summary

8. Ancient empires that once ruled have faded into **oblivion**.

- A. a time of peaceful rest
- B. a period of slow decline
- C. a state of being forgotten

9. After his injury he settled into a **sedentary** routine.

- A. inactive; mostly seated
- B. quiet and lonely
- C. strict and disciplined

10. Their friendship grew **tenuous** after years apart.

- A. weak and easily broken
- B. tense and uneasy
- C. cold and formal

Reading Helpers

(Not quizzed — helpful for this text.)

sword of Damocles — a classical allusion to a danger constantly hanging over someone

hamartia — a tragic flaw or error that leads to a character's downfall

ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary Preview

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#	KEY
1	C
2	A
3	B
4	B
5	A
6	C
7	B
8	C
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 "... eking out a meager living by exploiting his concertastic past ..."

As it is used in the passage, the word 'meager' most nearly suggests that Patrick's living is

- A. small and barely sufficient
- B. earned through respected work
- C. steadily improving over time

2 "I looked away, suddenly conscious of my myriad insufficiencies."

It can reasonably be inferred that Hazel views her physical flaws as

- A. impossible ever to change
- B. minor and easily hidden
- C. too numerous to count

3 "I fear oblivion, he said without a moment's pause. I fear it like the proverbial blind man who's afraid of the dark."

The passage most strongly suggests that what Augustus fears most is

- A. being abandoned by his friends
- B. the physical pain of dying
- C. being forgotten and reduced to nothing

4 "The day of the existentially fraught free throws was coincidentally also my last day of dual leggedness."

It can reasonably be inferred that Augustus's last day with both legs was

- A. an ordinary practice session
- B. charged with heavy significance
- C. physically painful for him

5 "... they were not large sedentary creatures, but the young and idealistic and self-sufficient and rugged people they had once been ..."

The contrast in the excerpt primarily functions to show that Hazel's parents have

- A. grown inactive and settled
- B. come to resent their daughter
- C. lost their love for each other

6 "... transmitting items from my plate into my mouth with a speed and ferocity that left me quite out of breath ..."

In context, the word 'ferocity' emphasizes that Hazel ate

- A. with hurried, nervous energy
- B. with eager, greedy delight
- C. with fierce, almost savage intensity

7 "... we were together in some invisible and tenuous third space that could only be visited on the phone."

Describing the 'third space' as tenuous most likely serves to suggest the connection is

- A. real but fragile
- B. warm and lasting
- C. secret and forbidden

8 "It's only been a day, Isaac, she said, vaguely condescending."

Which choice best describes the nurse's attitude toward Isaac?

- A. mildly patronizing
- B. warmly sympathetic
- C. openly hostile

9 "... asked the decrepit volunteer sitting on a stool behind a cash register ..."

It can reasonably be inferred that the gift-shop volunteer is

- A. impatient and unfriendly
- B. elderly and physically worn
- C. new and inexperienced

10 "I imagined the tumor metastasizing into my own bones, boring holes into my skeleton, a slithering eel of insidious intent."

Calling the tumor 'a slithering eel of insidious intent' portrays the cancer as

- A. a sudden, violent attacker
- B. a stealthy, creeping menace
- C. a minor, fading threat

ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary in Context

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#	KEY	NOTE
1	A	
2	C	
3	C	Oblivion here means being forgotten or amounting to nothing, not death itself; the blind-man-and-dark simile names a fear of the void.
4	B	Event comprehension.
5	A	Character comprehension.
6	C	Teachable: 'ferocity' is a fierce, even violent word, applied with comic exaggeration to the ordinary act of eating quickly.
7	A	
8	A	
9	B	
10	B	

Teacher Context: Chapters 1–5

Hazel Grace Lancaster, a teenager living with thyroid cancer, meets Augustus Waters at a cancer support group, and the two bond over books. Hazel shares her favorite novel, *An Imperial Affliction*, whose abrupt ending obsesses her, and Augustus tracks down the reclusive author's assistant. The section is grouped to end as the idea of traveling to Amsterdam to meet the author takes shape, before the practical and medical obstacles arise.