

The Glass Castle

Parts 1-2

by Jeannette Walls

Pre-Reading Vocabulary Practice

Optional Post-Reading Quiz Included

Practice words: cajole, delirium, desolate, devout, evasive, forlorn, ingenuity, perverse, superficial, tentative

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 · Parts 1-2 · A childhood in the desert

Section 2 · Part 3 · The family moves to Welch

Section 3 · Parts 4-5 · Jeannette's new life in New York

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. He tried to **cajole** his sister into lending him her car.

- A. coax with flattery
- B. bribe with money
- C. pester into agreeing

2. By the third day of the desert crossing, thirst pushed him into a **delirium**.

- A. a confused, raving state
- B. a state of sudden panic
- C. a rush of giddy joy

3. The **desolate** moor stretched for miles without a tree or house in sight.

- A. cold and damp
- B. rocky and uneven
- C. empty and lifeless

4. His **devout** grandmother attended church every single morning.

- A. deeply religious
- B. warm and generous
- C. stern and old-fashioned

5. When I asked where he'd been, his **evasive** answers told me nothing.

- A. long and rambling
- B. meant to dodge a question
- C. sharp and impatient

6. The **forlorn** puppy sat by itself in the corner of the cage.

- A. thin and weak
- B. lonely and miserable
- C. lost and confused

7. With remarkable **ingenuity**, she built a radio out of spare parts.

- A. clever inventiveness
- B. patient hard work
- C. careful planning

8. He took a **perverse** pride in being the most disliked man in town.

- A. bitter and resentful
- B. stubbornly contrary
- C. bold and fearless

9. His **superficial** understanding of the subject collapsed under tough questions.

- A. narrow and incomplete
- B. vague and uncertain
- C. shallow and surface-level

10. She gave a **tentative** knock at the unfamiliar door.

- A. quick and sharp
- B. slow and heavy
- C. hesitant and unsure

Reading Helpers

(Not quizzed — helpful for this text.)

skedaddle — the family's term for leaving town suddenly, usually to escape trouble or unpaid debts

gestapo — the Nazi secret police; Dad's exaggerated name for police or other authorities he distrusts

windblownness — the author's coined term for the windbent, permanently leaning state of the Joshua tree.

ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary Preview

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#	KEY
1	A
2	A
3	C
4	A
5	B
6	B
7	A
8	B
9	C
10	C

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 more desolate and isolated a place was, the better Mom and Dad liked it.”

As it is used in the passage, “desolate” most nearly describes a place that is...

- A. empty and lifeless
- B. dry and sun-scorched
- C. dangerous and lawless

2 “Before, whenever we were out of food, Dad was always there, full of ideas and ingenuity.”

The author most likely recalls Dad’s earlier “ingenuity” in order to...

- A. stress his now-lost cleverness
- B. explain how the family found food
- C. praise his lasting inventiveness

3 “So she resorted to evasive tactics. She’d tell Dad she hadn’t cashed her paycheck yet, or she’d pretend she’d left it at school and hide it until she could sneak off to the bank.”

Which statement about Mom is best supported by the passage?

- A. She openly refused Dad’s demands.
- B. She spent her pay before Dad asked.
- C. She avoided confronting Dad directly.

4 “They’d point to the big yellow-and-red sign way up on a pole at the Shell station—the one with the burned-out S—and say with a sort of perverse pride ...”

The author describes the townspeople’s “perverse pride” in order to show that they...

- A. hoped to fix the town’s image
- B. resented outsiders’ insults
- C. embraced the town’s bad name

5 “Although we lived outside the district, Mom begged and cajoled the principal until he allowed us to enroll.”

As it is used in the passage, “cajoled” most nearly means...

- A. coaxed with persistent flattery
- B. pressured with threats
- C. argued with stubbornly

6 “Although she thought nuns were killjoys and she didn’t follow all the Church’s rules word for word—she treated the Ten Commandments more like the Ten Suggestions—Mom considered herself a devout Catholic and took us to mass most Sundays.”

It can reasonably be inferred that Mom’s “devout” faith was...

- A. a show to satisfy other people
- B. sincere even as she bent rules
- C. quietly fading over the years

7 “Mom thought it was superficial to worry about how you looked. She said God thought the same way, so she’d go to church in torn or paint-splattered clothes.”

The detail about Mom’s torn, paint-splattered clothes mainly functions to show that she...

- A. could not afford better clothes
- B. secretly disliked attending mass
- C. saw concern with looks as shallow

8 “Most of the cages were patches of dirt surrounded by iron bars, with forlorn gorillas or restless bears or irritable monkeys or anxious gazelles huddled in the corners.”

Which choice best describes the narrator’s attitude toward the caged animals?

- A. fear of their wildness
- B. pity for their miserable state
- C. amusement at their antics

9 “Dad’s delirium continued for days. When I came home from school, I’d get the jug of water, take up my position by the door, and wait there until bedtime.”

It can reasonably be inferred that Dad’s “delirium” was...

- A. a confused state from quitting alcohol
- B. a daze following a bad fall
- C. a sickness from contaminated water

10 “Within a few more days, Dad seemed almost normal, except that he’d become tentative, even kind of shy.”

The passage most strongly suggests that, after his ordeal, Dad had become...

- A. bitter and quick to anger
- B. hesitant and unsure of himself
- C. bold and full of energy

ANSWER KEY

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#	KEY	NOTE
1	A	
2	A	Character comprehension.
3	C	
4	C	
5	A	
6	B	
7	C	Character comprehension.
8	B	
9	A	Event comprehension. Dad's delirium is alcohol-withdrawal delirium tremens, from the family's attempt to dry him out.
10	B	

Teacher Context: Parts 1-2

Opens with an adult Jeannette spotting her mother foraging in a Manhattan dumpster, then flashes back to her nomadic early childhood. The Walls family – charismatic, alcoholic Rex and free-spirited artist Rose Mary – drift between desert towns, doing 'the skedaddle' whenever money or trouble runs out. Covers Parts 1 and 2, which the source bundles into a single division.