

The Glass Castle

Part 3

by Jeannette Walls

Pre-Reading Vocabulary Practice

Optional Post-Reading Quiz Included

Practice words: audacious, cantankerous, deference, disdainful, ominous, ostentatiously, pariah, pious, precariously, tirade

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. Her **audacious** plan to sneak into the palace amazed her friends.

- A. boldly daring
- B. secret and carefully hidden
- C. long and complicated

2. The **cantankerous** old man waved his cane at the children playing near his yard.

- A. nervous and easily startled
- B. boastful and self-important
- C. bad-tempered and difficult

3. The new clerk treated the manager with great **deference**.

- A. nervous suspicion
- B. cheerful friendliness
- C. respectful yielding

4. She gave the cheap imitation a **disdainful** glance.

- A. weary and bored
- B. scornful and contemptuous
- C. curious and interested

5. Dark, **ominous** clouds gathered over the valley.

- A. huge and overwhelming
- B. strange and unfamiliar
- C. threatening; warning of trouble

6. He **ostentatiously** wore his new gold watch to the meeting.

- A. in a careless, offhand way
- B. in a showy way
- C. in a hurried, rushed way

7. After the scandal, he became a **pariah** in his small town.

- A. a social outcast
- B. a constant troublemaker
- C. an object of pity

8. My **pious** grandmother disapproved of dancing and card games.

- A. gloomy and humorless
- B. devoutly religious
- C. old-fashioned and strict

9. The vase teetered **precariously** at the edge of the shelf.

- A. in a dangerously unsteady way
- B. in a careless, messy way
- C. in a slow, deliberate way

10. The coach launched into a **tirade** after the loss.

- A. an angry, ranting outburst
- B. a rousing pep talk
- C. a long, dull lecture

Reading Helpers

(Not quizzed — helpful for this text.)

genuflect — to lower oneself onto one knee, especially in worship

noblesse oblige — the idea that privilege carries an obligation to act graciously; here used with mock grandeur

full of vinegar — full of energy, high spirits, and feisty confidence

ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary Preview

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#	KEY
1	A
2	C
3	C
4	B
5	C
6	B
7	A
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 “After Mom and Dad left, Erma became even more cantankerous. If she didn’t like the look on our faces, she would hit us on the head with a serving spoon.”

As it is used in the passage, the word ‘cantankerous’ most nearly suggests that Erma was...

- A. forgetful and easily confused
- B. bad-tempered and quick to lash out
- C. anxious and fearful of others

2 “The front, including a drooping porch, juttred precariously into the air, supported by tall, spindly cinder-block pillars.”

The passage most strongly suggests that the porch was...

- A. freshly built and sturdy
- B. unsteady and apt to give way
- C. set firmly into the hillside

3 “The other kids treated her like a total pariah, crowing that her mother was a “hoor” and calling her “lice girl.”

Which statement about Kathy is best supported by the passage?

- A. Other kids treated her as an outcast.
- B. Other kids admired her quiet strength.
- C. Other kids barely noticed her.

4 “Our most spectacular fight, and our most audacious tactical victory—the Battle of Little Hobart Street—took place against Ernie Goad and his friends when I was ten and Brian was nine.”

Which choice best describes the narrator’s attitude toward the Battle of Little Hobart Street?

- A. proud of a bold, daring victory
- B. indifferent to a minor scuffle
- C. ashamed of a reckless overreaction

5 “Dad was disdainful of a fire starter like kerosene. No true frontiersman would ever stoop to use it.”

The author most likely notes that Dad would never ‘stoop to’ kerosene in order to...

- A. explain how the family lit fires
- B. show his scornful frontiersman pride
- C. warn how dangerous kerosene is

6 “Erma’s death brought out Mom’s pious side. While we were waiting for the preacher, she took out her rosary and prayed for Erma’s soul, which she feared was in jeopardy since, as she saw it, Erma had committed suicide.”

It can reasonably be inferred that Mom’s ‘pious side’ showed itself as...

- A. deep personal grief for Erma
- B. calm, practical funeral planning
- C. devout religious faith and prayer

7 “I expected Mom to come back with one of her choice remarks, but she listened to my tirade in silence.”

Which detail best supports the claim that Jeannette’s words were a tirade?

- A. She angrily blamed her parents.
- B. She quietly asked Mom for advice.
- C. She calmly weighed their options.

8 “... the negative thoughts seemed to swoop into her mind the way a big flock of black crows takes over the landscape, sitting thick in the trees and on the fence rails and lawns, staring at you in ominous silence.”

The author most likely describes the silent black crows in order to...

- A. hint the moods passed quickly
- B. reveal Mom’s love of wildlife
- C. show how menacing her dark moods felt

9 “One day after Mr. Becker had come back from lunch and ostentatiously checked the display cases, I was so furious that I looked around to see if there was anything in the entire darn store worth stealing.”

In context, the word ‘ostentatiously’ emphasizes that Mr. Becker checked the cases...

- A. quickly, out of simple habit
- B. carefully, to guard costly rings
- C. showily, to make a point of it

10 “Everyone treated me with the deference accorded only to the school’s top athletes. Even the varsity quarterback caught my eye and nodded.”

It can reasonably be inferred that, after the interview, the other students...

- A. regarded her with admiring respect
- B. treated her with their usual scorn
- C. grew jealous and resentful of her

ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary in Context

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#	KEY	NOTE
1	B	
2	B	
3	A	
4	A	Event comprehension.
5	B	
6	C	'Pious' names sincere religious devotion here; Mom's later grand, public genuflecting makes a good chance to discuss showy versus sincere piety.
7	A	Event comprehension.
8	C	
9	C	Becker's showy inspection was meant to signal he did not trust Jeannette.
10	A	

Teacher Context: Part 3

The family settles in Welch, West Virginia, Rex's hometown, sinking into deep poverty in a dilapidated house with no heat or plumbing. The children grow more self-reliant as the parents' neglect deepens, and the older ones begin scheming and saving to escape to New York. Covers Part 3.