

The Grass is Singing

by Doris Lessing

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

Vocabulary in Context	5	
Answer Key — In Context	7	teacher use only

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: adapt, apathy, contradict, cordial, cultivate, diffident, exasperated, impartial, impersonal, indifferent, indignant, insolent, listless, loathe, obstinate, perpetual, repugnant, rouse, torment, vindictive



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ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary Preview

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

Vocabulary Preview

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Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

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

1. This passage is **adapted** from Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man* ©1952.
 - A. copied
 - B. read
 - C. changed
2. Until she learned to motivate herself, **apathy** led to bad grades.
 - A. lack of interest
 - B. lack of ability
 - C. distraction
3. Does the sentence **contradict** what is said in the previous paragraph?
 - A. disagree with
 - B. reinforce
 - C. expand upon
4. The professor greeted each student **cordially** as they entered.
 - A. in a hurried manner
 - B. in a friendly manner
 - C. in a clumsy manner
5. Creativity can be **cultivated**.
 - A. useful
 - B. developed or grown
 - C. risky or dangerous
6. She is so **diffident**; I can't imagine her as president of the organization.
 - A. young
 - B. unassertive
 - C. argumentative
7. My little brother can be **exasperating**. He's always testing his boundaries.
 - A. very active
 - B. endearing (lovable)
 - C. greatly annoying
8. They trusted her to be **impartial**.
 - A. unbiased
 - B. smart
 - C. forgiving
9. Hospitals can be **impersonal** places, despite the caring staff.
 - A. difficult to truly understand
 - B. lacking warmth or personal connection
 - C. highly efficient and organized
10. She was **indifferent** to his anger.
 - A. without interest
 - B. with fear
 - C. with anger
11. She was **indignant**, but she agreed to be searched when they accused her of shoplifting.
 - A. annoyed at something unjust
 - B. surprised at the unexpected
 - C. defensive about being suspected
12. The **insolent** waiter rolled his eyes when the customer asked for more water.
 - A. boldly disrespectful
 - B. kindly helpful
 - C. shyly quiet

13. She accepted her fate with listless resignation.
A. unenergetic
B. frustrated
C. lonely
14. I loathe that man. He ruined my life.
A. fear
B. avoid
C. hate
15. He is obstinate as a mule and refuses to change his mind.
A. cheerful
B. stubborn
C. graceful
16. He has a perpetual fear of forgetting important deadlines.
A. joyful
B. constant
C. secret
17. His repugnant behavior at the party made everyone want to go home early.
A. warmly welcomed
B. highly amusing
C. deeply offensive
18. The smell of freshly brewed coffee roused her from her sleep.
A. interrupted
B. deepened
C. awakened
19. Bullies made his school days a constant torment he could not escape.
A. severe suffering
B. great enjoyment
C. simple confusion
20. She's not a vindictive person.
A. easy-going
B. revengeful
C. driven

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 His own face was curious: it showed a kind of triumph, a guarded **vindictiveness**, and fear.
 - A. not capable of being suffered through (or put up with)
 - B. desirous of seeking revenge or wanting to hurt someone
 - C. not capable of surviving; or not capable of being done
- 2 From Charlie's point of view, the **adaptability** redeemed them.
 - A. someone bound to serve another without pay -- such as a slave or serf
 - B. a semiconductor device use to amplify (or control) electrical current
 - C. the degree to which something can change to fit a different situation
- 3 He was weak, too, with **repugnance** against this ugly little house which seemed to hold within its walls, even in its very brick and cement, the fears and horror of the murder.
 - A. discouragement
 - B. dissatisfaction
 - C. strong disgust
- 4 For he clung **obstinately** to the belief, in spite of Slatter and the Sergeant, that the causes of the murder must be looked for a long way back, and that it was they which were important.
 - A. in an artificial manner to make an impression
 - B. stubbornly unyielding to the wishes of others
 - C. to almost be so, but not so strictly speaking
- 5 His wife treated him with a cold **indifference**.
 - A. without interest
 - B. risky investment
 - C. chaotic disorder
- 6 She liked things to happen safely one after another in a pattern, and she liked, particularly, the friendly **impersonality** of it.
 - A. "spiritually renew" in a Christian ceremony OR initiate or purify by a challenging experience
 - B. not influenced by personal feelings -- often indicating a lack of warmth of personal connection
 - C. a sexually transmitted disease that, if treated early, can be completely cured with antibiotics
- 7 Yet outside the office and the club her life was entirely dependent upon men, though she would have most **indignantly** repudiated the accusation.
 - A. with anger or annoyance at something unjust or wrong
 - B. with surprise as something unexpected
 - C. with acceptance of something undesired as unavoidable
- 8 And above all, he **loathed** the cinema.
 - A. took (power or responsibility)
 - B. developed or changed gradually
 - C. detested or intensely disliked
- 9 She thought it would be pleasant to live peacefully for a change; she had not realized how exhausted she was, after those years of living geared to a **perpetual** demand for the next thing.
 - A. having the characteristics of a monk (often inclined toward self-denial)
 - B. continuing forever without change; or occurring so frequently it seems constant
 - C. about things beyond the physical world, such as existence, reality, or the soul
- 10 To hide it, he began talking about the house, with **diffidence** because of his poverty, never taking his eyes off her face.
 - A. the act of being in a working position; or the act of starting
 - B. hesitancy and unassertiveness due to a lack of self-confidence
 - C. an expert who shares professional opinions in a specific field
- 11 It had been a drug, a soporific, in the past, reading them; now, as she turned them over **listlessly**, she wondered why they had lost their flavor.
 - A. with a lack of energy and normal enthusiasm
 - B. in a manner that stops or hinders something
 - C. in a manner involving only one part or side

- 12 *But she knew she could not easily ask, and bring that heavy **tormented** look on his face.*
A. caused great mental or physical suffering
B. not altered in an unnatural or untrue way
C. consented reluctantly; or suffered defeat
- 13 *Mary could hear them panting softly, or whining with **exasperation** because of the flies.*
A. relative amount
B. in disagreement
C. great annoyance
- 14 *And they parted **cordially** enough, although Dick could not bring himself to match Charlie's bluff good-humor.*
A. in a pleasing way
B. in a friendly way
C. in a skillful way
- 15 *She was thinking uneasily of that note of contempt in the man's voice, which **contradicted** all her previous ideas of Dick.*
A. disagreed
B. separated
C. satisfied
- 16 *Between the huts were irregular patches of ill-**cultivated** mealies, and pumpkin vines trailed everywhere through plants and bushes and up over the walls and roofs, with the big amber-colored pumpkins scattered among the leaves.*
A. a non-doctor who assisted a women in childbirth
B. developed, grown, or prepared for growing crops
C. not found guilty or forced into a bad situation
- 17 *During this time, in spite of the hard work and her hatred of the natives, all her **apathy** and discontent had been pushed into the background.*
A. lack of interest and enthusiasm
B. poor ability to make a decision
C. non-traditional or non-standard
- 18 *And he stormed against the natives themselves, who refused to work properly, who were **insolent**—and so on.*
A. rudely disrespectful -- especially toward someone in authority
B. the characteristic of being excessively unhappy and unsociable
C. the condition of continuing or seeming to continue without end
- 19 *Once she was **roused** by a noise, and realized it was herself, talking out loud in the living room in a low angry voice.*
A. beyond the permitted boundary or limit
B. explains something in a particular way
C. to awaken, make more active, or excite
- 20 *Mrs. Slatter would have had to be a most extraordinary woman to remain perfectly **impartial** and fair to Mary, after having been snubbed so many times.*
A. without favoritism or bias
B. the quality of disagreeing
C. the quality of being Dutch

ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary in Context

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#	KEY	WORD	NOTE
1	B	vindictive	Used 4 times in this book.
2	C	adapt (<i>as in: adapted to the new rules</i>)	High-utility academic word; used 9 times in this book.
3	C	repugnant	Used 4 times in this book.
4	B	obstinate	Used 7 times in this book.
5	A	indifferent	High-utility academic word; used 21 times in this book.
6	B	impersonal	Used 8 times in this book.
7	A	indignant	High-utility academic word; used 8 times in this book.
8	C	loathe	Used 6 times in this book.
9	B	perpetual	High-utility academic word; used 5 times in this book.
10	B	diffident	Used 5 times in this book.
11	A	listless	Used 5 times in this book.
12	A	torment	Used 8 times in this book.
13	C	exasperated	High-utility academic word; used 9 times in this book.
14	B	cordial (<i>as in: a cordial reception</i>)	Used 3 times in this book.
15	A	contradict	High-utility academic word; used 3 times in this book.
16	B	cultivate	High-utility academic word; used 5 times in this book.
17	A	apathy	Used 5 times in this book.
18	A	insolent	Used 7 times in this book.
19	C	rouse	Used 9 times in this book.
20	A	impartial	High-utility academic word; used 3 times in this book.