

The Hobbit

Chapters 9–12

by J. R. R. Tolkien

Pre-Reading Vocabulary Practice

Optional Post-Reading Quiz Included

Practice words: bleak, desolate, dubious, enmity, esteemed, foreboding, menace, potent, treacherous, wrath

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 1–4 · Bilbo's unexpected party and the road out

Section 2 · Chapters 5–8 · Bilbo alone in the goblin tunnels

Section 3 · Chapters 9–12 · In the halls of the Wood-elves

Section 4 · Chapters 13–15 · Inside the Lonely Mountain

Section 5 · Chapters 16–19 · Under siege at the Lonely Mountain

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. The **bleak** moor stretched for miles without a single tree.

- A. bare and cheerless
- B. wide and open
- C. rough and rocky

2. After the mill closed, the small town looked **desolate**.

- A. cold and damp
- B. dirty and run-down
- C. empty and lifeless

3. The salesman made several **dubious** claims about the new product.

- A. of doubtful truth
- B. bold and forceful
- C. long and detailed

4. Years of **enmity** between the two families made every gathering tense.

- A. quiet jealousy
- B. deep hostility
- C. playful rivalry

5. The **esteemed** professor was invited to speak at the ceremony.

- A. highly respected
- B. much discussed
- C. widely known

6. A strange **foreboding** kept her awake the night before the trip.

- A. a wave of loneliness
- B. a dread of coming trouble
- C. a sense of confusion

7. The growling dog was a real **menace** to everyone on the block.

- A. a noisy pest
- B. a familiar sight
- C. a threat or danger

8. A single cup of the **potent** coffee kept her awake all night.

- A. powerful in effect
- B. low in cost
- C. pleasant in flavor

9. The **treacherous** advisor secretly plotted against the queen.

- A. bold and reckless
- B. disloyal and deceitful
- C. harsh and unkind

10. The king's **wrath** fell on anyone who dared to question him.

- A. harsh judgment
- B. cold suspicion
- C. fierce anger

Reading Helpers

(Not quizzed — helpful for this text.)

Arkenstone — the great white gem at the Mountain's heart, the most prized of the dwarves' treasure; central to the rest of the story

ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary Preview

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#	KEY
1	A
2	C
3	A
4	B
5	A
6	B
7	C
8	A
9	B
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 “It must be potent wine to make a wood-elf drowsy; but this wine, it would seem, was the heady vintage of the great gardens of Dorwinion ...”

As it is used in the passage, the word “potent” most nearly suggests that the wine was...

- A. smooth and sweet
- B. powerful in its effect
- C. rare and costly

2 “The Elvenking was very powerful in those parts and the Master wished for no enmity with him, nor did he think much of old songs ...”

Which statement is best supported by the passage?

- A. The Master defied the Elvenking.
- B. The Master wished to avoid hostility.
- C. The Master trusted the old songs.

3 “Indeed their stores had no need of any guard, for all the land was desolate and empty.”

According to the passage, the stores needed no guard because the land was...

- A. barren and lifeless
- B. claimed by the elves
- C. watched by the dragon

4 “The land about them grew bleak and barren, though once, as Thorin told them, it had been green and fair.”

It can reasonably be inferred that, nearer the Mountain, the land grew more...

- A. bare and cheerless
- B. steep and rocky
- C. wild and crowded

5 “Now is the time for our esteemed Mr. Baggins, who has proved himself a good companion on our long road ...”

The passage most strongly suggests that Thorin regards Bilbo with...

- A. doubt and suspicion
- B. pity and concern
- C. respect and high regard

6 “... dwarves are not heroes, but calculating folk with a great idea of the value of money; some are tricky and treacherous and pretty bad lots ...”

In context, the word “treacherous” emphasizes that some dwarves are...

- A. physically dangerous
- B. clumsy and careless
- C. likely to betray trust

7 “Above him the sleeping dragon lay, a dire menace even in his sleep.”

Which detail best supports the idea that the sleeping dragon was still a menace?

- A. he had not flown in many years
- B. he stirred when Bilbo took a cup
- C. he kept his hoard neatly sorted

8 “... they all began discussing dragon-slayings historical, dubious, and mythical ...”

It can reasonably be inferred that calling some dragon-slayings “dubious” marks them as...

- A. famous and well-loved
- B. recent and well-recorded
- C. of doubtful truth

9 “... Bilbo became more and more unhappy and his foreboding grew.”

The passage most strongly suggests that Bilbo’s growing “foreboding” was a sense that...

- A. trouble was coming
- B. the quest had failed
- C. the dragon had died

10 “This was the outburst of his wrath when he could find nobody and see nothing ...”

Which statement about Smaug is best supported by the section?

- A. his fury broke out, finding no one
- B. he calmly gave up the search
- C. he forgave the theft of the cup

ANSWER KEY

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#	KEY	NOTE
1	B	
2	B	
3	A	
4	A	
5	C	
6	C	Here 'treacherous' means disloyal and likely to betray, not the 'dangerous to cross' sense students often know first.
7	B	Event comprehension.
8	C	Here 'dubious' falls between 'historical' and 'mythical,' marking tales of questionable truth.
9	A	
10	A	Event comprehension.

Teacher Context: Chapters 9–12

The dwarves are imprisoned by the Wood-elves and escape downriver hidden in barrels to Lake-town, then journey on to the Lonely Mountain and find the secret door. Bilbo creeps down the tunnel and matches wits with the dragon Smaug. Ends before 'Not at Home' so the aftermath of that confrontation opens the next section.