

The Omnivore's Dilemma

by Michael Pollan

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, bacteria, bushel, calorie, carnivorous, convention, dilemma, domesticated, evolve, ferment, forage, herbivorous, hybrid, molecule, obese, species, synthetic, vary, wean, yield



More Vocabulary Printables

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ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary Preview

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

Vocabulary Preview
The Omnivore's Dilemma
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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. She survived a severe infection of MRSA **bacteria**.
 - A. lice
 - B. germs
 - C. mosquitoes
3. We had **bushels** of fun.
 - A. measured in hours
 - B. shared by everyone
 - C. a large amount
4. I switched from sodas and candy to water and low-calorie snacks.
 - A. a kind of vitamin
 - B. a type of food allergy
 - C. a unit of food energy
5. Most bear species are omnivorous, but individuals' diets can range from almost exclusively herbivorous to almost exclusively **carnivorous** depending on what food sources are available locally and seasonally.
 - A. meat-eating
 - B. plant-eating
 - C. both meat-eating and plant-eating
6. In most countries, the **convention** is to shake the head to indicate "no", but in Bulgaria that indicates "yes".
 - A. movement
 - B. agreement
 - C. normal behavior
7. Maya faced a **dilemma**: tell the truth and hurt her friend, or stay silent.
 - A. hard choice
 - B. simple task
 - C. lucky break
8. Dogs were **domesticated** from wolves thousands of years ago.
 - A. made fit to live with humans
 - B. raised on a working farm
 - C. trained to hunt wild prey
9. Different mutations had occurred in the isolated populations that **evolved** in different cave systems.
 - A. migrated to live
 - B. changed through evolution
 - C. lived for many years
10. The brewers **ferment** the barley for several weeks to produce beer.
 - A. carefully freeze solid
 - B. chemically break down
 - C. completely dry out
11. Sherman's troop **foraged** through the countryside to gather food.
 - A. crossed
 - B. marched
 - C. searched and gathered

12. Most bear species are omnivorous, but individuals' diets can range from almost exclusively herbivorous to almost exclusively carnivorous depending on what food sources are available locally and seasonally.
- A. feeding primarily on plants
 - B. feeding primarily on meat
 - C. feeding on both meat and plants
13. The new **hybrid** combines features from sedans and SUVs in one vehicle.
- A. exact copy of one source
 - B. mix of different types
 - C. single pure version
14. A water **molecule** is made of two hydrogen atoms and one oxygen atom.
- A. tiny chemical unit
 - B. large living cell
 - C. kind of heavy metal
15. The doctor explained that being **obese** can lead to health problems like heart disease and diabetes.
- A. significantly underweight
 - B. so muscular it limits movement
 - C. significantly overweight
16. It is thought that there are over 20,000 species of ants.
- A. different categories
 - B. different nest types
 - C. different diets
17. They are trying to make a good **synthetic** fabric that breathes better than cotton.
- A. durable
 - B. man-made
 - C. insulating
18. McDonald's menu options **vary** by location.
- A. are consistent
 - B. are different
 - C. are known
19. She **weaned** her baby when he was three months old and started him on cow's milk.
- A. adapted to the removal of breastmilk
 - B. to make fit for service to humans or home life -- by breeding or taming
 - C. broke the law by telling lies after formally promising to tell the truth
20. The experiment **yielded** data that raised a new set of questions.
- A. produced
 - B. destroyed
 - C. slowed down

Vocabulary in Context

The Omnivore's Dilemma

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Name _____ Date _____ Period _____ Score _____ / 20

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

- 1 The omnivore's **dilemma** has been around a long time.
 - A. a situation in which a difficult choice must be made between imperfect alternatives
 - B. connected by blood or marriage; or a plant or animal related by origin or grouping
 - C. relating to the south Asian Muslim republic that is the fifth most populous country
- 2 All the **molecules** that make up our cells — carbohydrates, proteins, and fats — contain the element carbon.
 - A. chemical substance comprised of the smallest amount of a chemical substance that can exist by itself
 - B. soccer players who play in the middle third of the field and who assist with both defense and offense
 - C. aka natural rights -- rights that are naturally due because of human nature and the natural condition
- 3 Corn spread because it could **adapt** to the needs of human beings.
 - A. to spread one-sided information to influence opinions
 - B. alter the regular state of an otherwise stable system
 - C. change to fit a different situation; or make suitable
- 4 A **hybrid** is a plant or animal whose parents have different traits.
 - A. something that stands out
 - B. something of mixed origin
 - C. something made from parts
- 5 The only way to make sure your plants produce the same amount of corn — that they have the same **yield** as the original hybrid — is to buy new seed every year from a seed company.
 - A. produce or give
 - B. stop (something from happening)
 - C. think deeply or carefully about
- 6 No one can own the **species** called "corn."
 - A. a similar group of animals or plants
 - B. the quality of exactness or accuracy
 - C. the gain of advantage from something
- 7 Grasses have **evolved** so that they can survive being eaten very well.
 - A. controlled (how something turned out)
 - B. gradually changed through evolution
 - C. not encouraged or emotionally aroused
- 8 COW CHOW In October, two weeks before I made his acquaintance, steer number 534 was **weaned** from his mother.
 - A. adapted
 - B. changed
 - C. forgave
- 9 They can develop into new types of **bacteria** that the drugs don't affect.
 - A. the smallest part of any material that cannot be broken up by chemical means
 - B. microorganisms (living creatures so small it takes a microscope to see them)
 - C. psychoanalysis: that part of the unconscious mind that acts as a conscience
- 10 Looking at it one way, each American eats only about a **bushel** of corn per year.
 - A. one who believes that knowledge is acquired primarily by reason rather than by experience
 - B. a hollow muscular organ in the pelvic cavity of females which can hold a developing fetus
 - C. a unit of measure used for dry goods (filling an 8 gallon container)
- 11 Some is **fermented** to become ethanol.
 - A. interacted again or interested again
 - B. chemically changed by a living agent
 - C. made different; or showed difference
- 12 Well, let's seeThree of every five Americans are overweight; one of every five is **obese**.
 - A. the characteristic of being excessively unhappy and unsociable
 - B. the state or degree of being improper, awkward, or unfavorable
 - C. significantly overweight (due to the accumulation of body fat)

- 13 *We can bite like a carnivore, or chew like an herbivore, depending on the dish.*
A. plant-eating animal
B. a basic building block for proteins
C. someone who believe in a single God
- 14 *Zoologists think the koala once ate a more varied diet than it does now.*
A. took on as one's own
B. differed; or changed
C. began fighting again
- 15 *Every step up the food chain, or "trophic pyramid," approximately 90% of energy is lost, which is why there are fewer carnivores than there are herbivores.*
A. meat-eating animals
B. opposed to "globalization"
C. requires (to do something)
- 16 *Several of the ingredients were synthetic additives that are permitted under federal organic rules.*
A. title for the head of a government body in some countries
B. artificial (man-made rather than natural)
C. an unborn child (or other unborn or unhatched vertebrate)
- 17 *Compared to conventional chickens, I was told, these organic birds have it pretty good.*
A. complete or total
B. able to challenge
C. typical
- 18 *Zoologists will tell you that certain animals more or less "chose" domestication.*
A. being made fit for service to humans
B. the condition of being made by humans rather than being found in nature
C. people of churches whose traditions trace back to the Church of England
- 19 *I don't want to have to forage every meal.*
A. leave a place, job or position previously occupied
B. something of small importance; or a small quantity
C. to search for and gather
- 20 *Just because they offer a supersized 64-ounce Big Gulp and 1,250-calorie, 5-cup restaurant plate of spaghetti and meatballs doesn't mean that's the amount you should eat.*
A. gradual destruction (of something previously established) -- such as a government, rule, or belief
B. a system of government with a ruler who has absolute power -- especially one who abuses that power
C. a unit of energy most commonly known as a measure of the potential weight gain the body gets from food

ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary in Context

The Omnivore's Dilemma

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#	KEY	WORD	NOTE
1	A	dilemma	High-utility academic word; used 40 times in this book.
2	A	molecule	Used 7 times in this book.
3	C	adapt (<i>as in: adapted to the new rules</i>)	High-utility academic word; used 7 times in this book.
4	B	hybrid	Used 20 times in this book.
5	A	yield (<i>as in: will yield valuable data</i>)	High-utility academic word; used 14 times in this book.
6	A	species	Used 9 times in this book.
7	B	evolve (<i>as in: evolved through natural selection</i>)	Used 5 times in this book; 2 meanings in this book.
8	A	wean	Used 3 times in this book.
9	B	bacteria	Used 25 times in this book.
10	C	bushel	Used 18 times in this book.
11	B	ferment (<i>as in: ferment grapes</i>)	Used 7 times in this book.
12	C	obese	Used 6 times in this book.
13	A	herbivorous	Used 10 times in this book.
14	B	vary	High-utility academic word; used 3 times in this book.
15	A	carnivorous	Used 2 times in this book.
16	B	synthetic	Used 9 times in this book.
17	C	convention (<i>as in: conventional behavior</i>)	High-utility academic word; used 6 times in this book.
18	A	domesticated	Used 6 times in this book.
19	C	forage	Used 18 times in this book.
20	C	calorie	Used 40 times in this book.