

The Unbearable Lightness of Being

by Milan Kundera

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

Answer Key — Preview	2	teacher use / self-check only
Vocabulary Preview	3	

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: amnesty, anteroom, banal, communism, condone, interpret (2), irony (2), metaphor, metaphysical, naive, persecution, positive (2), recur, resignation (2), trifle, trifle with



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ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary Preview

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

Vocabulary Preview
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Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

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

1. She supported the idea of **amnesty** for undocumented workers who had lived peacefully in the country for years.
 - A. benefits
 - B. citizenship
 - C. pardons
2. She kept me waiting an hour in the **anteroom** for my long-scheduled ten-minute appointment.
 - A. the residence of a religious community
 - B. a room leading to a larger or more important room
 - C. a house or shelter in which someone lives
3. The story was **banal**, but it had beautiful cinematography.
 - A. brutal
 - B. uninteresting
 - C. complicated
4. Marx's writings on **communism** inspired revolutions across many countries in the 1900s.
 - A. free market trade
 - B. collective ownership
 - C. religious reform
5. We cannot **condone** such behavior.
 - A. insure
 - B. understand
 - C. approve of
6. She will stand to his left and **interpret** his speech into sign language.
 - A. refute (prove false)
 - B. elaborate upon
 - C. translate
7. How will a court **interpret** the word *careless* if there is a lawsuit?
 - A. understand
 - B. insist on
 - C. ignore
8. **Ironically**, her strongest supporters undermined her popularity through their extremism.
 - A. when what happens is exactly what usually happens
 - B. when what happens is very different than what might be expected
 - C. when what happens is very fitting for the situation
9. Her voice was dripping with irony as she said, "You look beautiful."
 - A. sincerity
 - B. sarcasm
 - C. kindness
10. Jefferson used a *wall* as a **metaphor** to describe the separation of church and state.
 - A. clever strategy
 - B. exaggeration
 - C. figure of speech
11. The story raises **metaphysical** questions about whether the soul can exist apart from the body.
 - A. about daily expenses
 - B. about reality's nature
 - C. about legal procedure

12. Being naive, she is too quick to believe what people say.
- A. honest
 - B. a pleaser
 - C. too trusting
13. In that country people who are gay are persecuted by law.
- A. forced to leave
 - B. ignored
 - C. treated badly
14. I'm positive our team will win on Friday.
- A. happy
 - B. pretty sure
 - C. certain
15. Volunteering had a positive impact on the whole neighborhood.
- A. good or beneficial
 - B. harmful or damaging
 - C. minor and unnoticed
16. It is a recurring nightmare.
- A. happening repeatedly
 - B. when least expected
 - C. frightening
17. She said that if I don't resign, I will be fired.
- A. do better
 - B. quit
 - C. renew an agreement
18. She was resigned to being embarrassed by her younger brother.
- A. putting a stop
 - B. resistant
 - C. with acceptance
19. Don't waste my time with trifling matters.
- A. other's
 - B. future
 - C. unimportant
20. The European Parliament refuses to be trifled with.
- A. treated without respect
 - B. argued with
 - C. negotiated with

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 Tomas did not realize at the time that **metaphors** are dangerous.
 - A. people of the ancient collection of city states at eastern end of the Mediterranean known for their maritime trading culture between 1550 BC to 300 BC
 - B. people knowledgeable in the collection and interpretation of numerical data -- especially someone who uses statistics to calculate insurance premiums
 - C. figures of speech in which a similarity between two things is highlighted by using a word to refer to something that it does not *literally* mean
- 2 *Metaphors are not to be* **trifled with**.
 - A. treated thoughtlessly or without respect
 - B. injury to muscles or tendons of the knee
 - C. limit light vibrations to a single plane
- 3 *We would have been shocked, on the other hand, if Beethoven had transformed the seriousness of his quartet into the* **trifling** *joke of a four-voice canon about Dembscher's purse.*
 - A. moving out of an interacting position; or stopping
 - B. canceling or annulling a formal ruling or contract
 - C. something of small importance; or a small quantity
- 4 *Her dreams* **recurred** *like themes and variations or television series.*
 - A. happened again
 - B. began fighting
 - C. not translated
- 5 *That's proof* **positive** *I'm not dead!*
 - A. outside
 - B. various
 - C. certain
- 6 *Unlike Parmenides, Beethoven apparently viewed weight as something* **positive**.
 - A. good or beneficial
 - B. not representative
 - C. impossible to find
- 7 *Beethoven's hero is a lifter of* **metaphysical** *weights.*
 - A. having the characteristics of a *monk* (often inclined toward self-denial)
 - B. about things beyond the physical world, such as existence, reality, or the soul
 - C. the quality of holding something back or holding others down through oppression
- 8 *she had failed to understand his apprehensive attempts to save their love from* **banality**
 - A. a psychologist concerned with the treatment of abnormal thinking and behavior
 - B. being uninteresting due to a lack of anything original or unusual
 - C. a stone shaped like a disk that spins and is used to grind, sharpen or polish
- 9 *...he* **resigned** *himself with a sigh to a sea of words with no weight and no resemblance to life.*
 - A. to be or to become used to (adapted to and with an expectation of)
 - B. showed something -- such as demonstrated, expressed, or represented
 - C. gave up (accepting something undesired as unavoidable or the lesser of evils)
- 10 *The very next day he* **resigned** *from the clinic,*
 - A. drew
 - B. quit (a job)
 - C. paid
- 11 *The words prison, persecution, banned books, occupation, tanks were ugly, without the slightest trace of romance.*
 - A. aka analyst -- psychiatrist
 - B. something taken on or adopted
 - C. very bad and unfair treatment

- 12 *Alain was so **naive** and sincere as to try to give the gallery owner's daughter an honest answer.*
- A. the quality of being characterized by fantastic imagery, or combinations of things and events that don't go together
 - B. the degree of being influenced by personal belief, feelings, or preferences (rather than being based purely upon fact)
 - C. lacking experience or sophistication, and the understanding that comes from them -- often too trusting or optimistic
- 13 *She neither resisted nor assisted him, her soul thereby announcing that it did not **condone** what was happening but had decided to remain neutral.*
- A. not answer questions; or block progress
 - B. move from more general to more specific
 - C. accept without criticism; or approve of
- 14 *She stood up from the toilet, flushed it, and went into the **anteroom**.*
- A. island (that is made of a coral reef)
 - B. a room leading to a larger or more important room
 - C. dense, rainy forest with many species
- 15 *The only thing such a petition would accomplish was to keep political prisoners from being **amnestied** if there happened to be a plan afoot to do so!*
- A. not separated to prevent passage of something such as heat, cold, noise, or electricity
 - B. changed one's mind back and forth between conflicting ideas OR swayed back and forth
 - C. official forgiveness or a pardon; or the time period during which the pardon is offered
- 16 *Tomas was not sure whether to **interpret** it as a sincere, friendly warning (Watch out, we're being filmed; if you talk to us, you may be hauled in for another interrogation) or as irony (If you weren't brave enough to sign the petition, be consistent and don't try the old-pals act on us).*
- A. to understand or explain something in a particular way
 - B. excessively examine in an attempt to better understand
 - C. become less drunk (or get completely past drunkenness)
- 17 *Just then the **interpreter**, at the head of the parade, raised a large megaphone to her lips and called out in Khmer to the other side: These people are doctors; they request permission to enter the territory of Cambodia and offer medical assistance; they have no political designs whatsoever and are guided solely by a concern for human life.*
- A. people who criticize or condemn
 - B. someone who extensively damages
 - C. someone who translates language
- 18 *To clear the air Tomas came out with as sprightly a "Fine, just fine!" as he could muster, but he immediately felt that no matter how hard he tried (in fact, because he tried so hard), his "fine" sounded bitterly **ironic**.*
- A. nervousness or discomfort felt by someone due to concern about what others will think of them
 - B. saying one thing while meaning the opposite
 - C. able to be persuaded to want something (often sex or love) by tempting with something desired
- 19 *In a flash of insight Franz saw how laughable they all were, but instead of cutting him off from them or flooding him with **irony**, the thought made him feel the kind of infinite love we feel for the condemned.*
- A. lymph node -- one of many bean-sized organs that filter bacteria and other toxins from circulating white-blood-cell filled lymph fluid
 - B. when what happens is very different than what might be expected
 - C. someone who believe behavior should be guided by high ideals or standards -- often with the implication that the person is unrealistic
- 20 *All faith in **Communism** and love for Russia was dead.*
- A. a will (written instructions expressing how somebody wants their property distributed after they die)
 - B. an economic system that abolishes private ownership of property in a classless society
 - C. infectious disease characterized by inflammation of the tissues that surround the brain or spinal cord

ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary in Context

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#	KEY	WORD	NOTE
1	C	metaphor	Used 10 times in this book.
2	A	trifle with (<i>as in: trifle with her affections</i>)	2 meanings in this book.
3	C	trifle (<i>as in: a trifling matter</i>)	2 meanings in this book.
4	A	recur	Used 10 times in this book.
5	C	positive (<i>as in: I'm absolutely positive!</i>)	Used 8 times in this book; 3 meanings in this book.
6	A	positive (<i>as in: had a positive effect</i>)	High-utility academic word; 3 meanings in this book.
7	B	metaphysical	Used 7 times in this book.
8	B	banal	Used 3 times in this book.
9	C	resignation (<i>as in: accepted it with resignation</i>)	Used 5 times in this book; 2 meanings in this book.
10	B	resignation (<i>as in: submitted her resignation</i>)	2 meanings in this book.
11	C	persecution	Used 13 times in this book.
12	C	naive	Used 9 times in this book.
13	C	condone	Used 3 times in this book.
14	B	anteroom	Used 8 times in this book.
15	C	amnesty	Used 9 times in this book.
16	A	interpret (<i>as in: her interpretation of the data</i>)	High-utility academic word; 2 meanings in this book.
17	C	interpret (<i>as in: interpret Spanish to English</i>)	Used 9 times in this book; 2 meanings in this book.
18	B	irony (<i>as in: verbal irony</i>)	2 meanings in this book.
19	B	irony (<i>as in: situational irony</i>)	Used 7 times in this book; 2 meanings in this book.
20	B	communism	Used 63 times in this book.