

The Veldt

by Ray Bradbury

Pre-Reading Vocabulary Practice

Optional Post-Reading Quiz Included

Practice words: appalled, conjuring, contemplating, exquisite, padding, persecuted, pranced, relish, rut, subsided

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.



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Vocabulary Preview

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Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

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

1. She was **appalled** when she saw the mess left behind in the kitchen.

- A. shocked and dismayed
- B. confused and puzzled
- C. curious and intrigued

2. The magician amazed the crowd by **conjuring** a dove from his empty hat.

- A. hiding it quickly out of sight
- B. making something appear by magic
- C. tossing it high into the air

3. She sat by the window, **contemplating** what she should do next.

- A. complaining loudly about
- B. asking others about
- C. thinking deeply about

4. The jeweler showed us an **exquisite** diamond necklace.

- A. strikingly beautiful
- B. very large and heavy
- C. old and slightly worn

5. The cat came **padding** into the room while everyone slept.

- A. stretching out lazily
- B. sniffing at the corners
- C. walking softly and quietly

6. The new student felt **persecuted** and dreaded coming to school each day.

- A. treated cruelly and unfairly
- B. closely watched and judged
- C. left out and ignored

7. The excited puppy **pranced** around the yard when its owner came home.

- A. sprang about with lively steps
- B. sniffed at the ground
- C. wandered around slowly

8. The children ate their birthday cake with great **relish**.

- A. quiet patience
- B. great enjoyment
- C. good manners

9. He complained that his job had become one long **rut**.

- A. a run of bad luck
- B. an unchanging routine
- C. a tiring struggle

10. The pain in his ankle slowly **subsided** over the next few days.

- A. returned again and again
- B. shifted to another area
- C. died down and lessened

Reading Helpers

(Not quizzed — helpful for this text.)

veldt — open grassland of southern Africa

Rima — wild jungle-girl of the novel *Green Mansions*

Scrooge — cold-hearted miser of Dickens's *A Christmas Carol*

red feast — describing the lions' bloody meal without being too graphic

spoor — traces used to track an animal; here, used figuratively for tracing an emotion

ANSWER KEY

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#	KEY
1	A
2	B
3	C
4	A
5	C
6	A
7	A
8	B
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 "... the yellow of them was in your eyes like the yellow of an exquisite French tapestry, the yellows of lions and summer grass ..."

As used in the passage, the word 'exquisite' most nearly means...

- A. strikingly beautiful
- B. brightly colored
- C. very old and valuable

2 "Outside, in the hall, with the door slammed he was laughing and she was crying, and they both stood appalled at the other's reaction."

As it is used in the passage, 'appalled' most nearly suggests that each parent...

- A. found the other's response funny
- B. felt relieved to be safely outside
- C. was shocked by the other's response

3 "And then another roar from the lions, which subsided quickly."

According to the passage, the second roar from the lions...

- A. swelled until it shook the walls
- B. quieted soon after it began
- C. went on and on without stopping

4 "... because the children have thought about Africa and lions and killing so many days that the room's in a rut."

According to the passage, the children's constant thoughts of Africa have left the room...

- A. crowded with too many scenes
- B. worn out and broken down
- C. stuck repeating one scene

5 "Oh, so now you admit you have been conjuring up Africa, do you?"

As used in the passage, 'conjuring up' most nearly suggests that the children have been...

- A. making Africa appear as if by magic
- B. planning a family trip to Africa
- C. reading library books about Africa

6 "... the usual violences, a tendency toward a slight paranoia here or there, usual in children because they feel persecuted by parents constantly ..."

According to the passage, mild paranoia is usual in children because they feel...

- A. constantly mistreated by their parents
- B. ignored whenever they misbehave
- C. pushed to grow up too quickly

7 "With the children gone, the two men stood studying the lions clustered at a distance, eating with great relish whatever it was they had caught."

According to the passage, the lions ate whatever they had caught...

- A. in a wary, watchful way
- B. while fighting over every scrap
- C. with obvious enjoyment

8 "The two children were in hysterics. They screamed and pranced and threw things. They yelled and sobbed and swore and jumped at the furniture."

In the excerpt, the children are characterized as...

- A. frantic and out of control
- B. playful and full of teasing
- C. calm but firmly defiant

9 "We've been contemplating our mechanical, electronic navels for too long."

As used in the passage, the word 'contemplating' most nearly means...

- A. bragging about
- B. thinking deeply about
- C. polishing and repairing

10 "The lions on three sides of them, in the yellow veldt grass, padding through the dry straw, rumbling and roaring in their throats."

It can reasonably be inferred that the lions 'padding through the dry straw' are...

- A. keeping a fearful distance away
- B. closing in quietly to attack
- C. wandering off toward the water hole

ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary in Context

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#	KEY	NOTE
1	A	
2	C	George laughs from nerves, not amusement — the text says both parents stood appalled at each other's reaction.
3	B	
4	C	A rut is literally a groove worn by wheels; 'in a rut' means locked into one unchanging pattern.
5	A	
6	A	
7	C	
8	A	
9	B	George adapts the idiom of 'navel-gazing' — idle self-absorption; the family has been staring at its own machines instead of living.
10	B	