

The War of the Worlds

Book 2, Chapters 1–6

by H. G. Wells

Pre-Reading Vocabulary Practice

Optional Post-Reading Quiz Included

Practice words: abrupt, accomplished, anticipated, consumed, infer, likewise, resolution, security, vague, vivid

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 · Book 1, Chapters 1–8 · Strange lights on the planet Mars

Section 2 · Book 1, Chapters 9–13 · A Saturday of suspense at Woking

Section 3 · Book 1, Chapters 14–17 · The narrator's brother in London

Section 4 · Book 2, Chapters 1–6 · Book Two: the narrator and the curate

Section 5 · Book 2, Chapters 7–9 and the Epilogue · A night at the inn on Putney Hill

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 car came to an **abrupt** stop at the corner.
 - A. noisy and grinding
 - B. complete and final
 - C. sudden and sharp
2. By sunset the crew had **accomplished** every task on the list.
 - A. carried out completely
 - B. looked over carefully
 - C. passed on to others
3. She had not **anticipated** so much traffic on the way home.
 - A. paid attention to
 - B. expected beforehand
 - C. complained about
4. The hikers **consumed** their trail mix before noon.
 - A. ate up completely
 - B. packed away for later
 - C. divided up evenly
5. From the muddy prints we could **infer** that someone had passed.
 - A. conclude from evidence
 - B. prove beyond all doubt
 - C. point out to others
6. My sister took the early bus, and I **likewise** left at dawn.
 - A. in the same way
 - B. much later than usual
 - C. for a different reason
7. He faced the audition with quiet **resolution**.
 - A. calm good humor
 - B. firm determination
 - C. well-practiced skill
8. He kept his savings in the **security** of a locked drawer.
 - A. a tidy order
 - B. a place of safety
 - C. a narrow space
9. Through the fog I saw a **vague** shape near the gate.
 - A. crouched and low
 - B. silent and unmoving
 - C. indistinct and unclear
10. A **vivid** streak of lightning lit the whole yard.
 - A. narrow and jagged
 - B. brief and silent
 - C. strikingly bright

Reading Helpers

(Not quizzed — helpful for this text.)

curate — a junior clergyman who assists a parish priest

ejaculations — sudden blurted-out cries

would that I had — 'how I wish I had' — an archaic way of saying 'I wish'

stratum — the underlying base something rests on; here, feeling as the ground beneath thought

wine press of God — Revelation's image of God trampling the wicked like grapes in a winepress

ANSWER KEY

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#	KEY
1	C
2	A
3	B
4	A
5	A
6	A
7	B
8	B
9	C
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 can’t be midnight yet,’ I said, and then came a blinding glare of vivid green light. Everything in the kitchen leaped out, clearly visible in green and black, and vanished again.”

As used in the passage, the word ‘vivid’ most nearly means...

- A. intensely bright
- B. steadily flickering
- C. faintly glowing

2 “Then something—something struggling violently—was lifted high against the sky, a black, vague enigma against the starlight; and as this black object came down again, I saw by the green brightness that it was a man.”

It can reasonably be inferred that when the object was first lifted, the narrator could not...

- A. make out the starlight
- B. tell what it was
- C. see that it was moving

3 “‘Shut up!’ I said, rising to my feet, and in a terror lest the Martians should hear us. ‘For God’s sake—’ ‘Nay,’ shouted the curate, at the top of his voice, standing likewise and extending his arms.”

According to the passage, in standing and extending his arms, the curate...

- A. moved away from the narrator
- B. matched the narrator’s own movement
- C. copied the Martians’ motions

4 “In the triangle of bright outer sunlight I saw the Martian, in its Briareus of a handling-machine, scrutinizing the curate’s head. I thought at once that it would infer my presence from the mark of the blow I had given him.”

The author most likely includes ‘the mark of the blow’ in order to...

- A. supply a clue the Martian could use
- B. show the narrator’s regret
- C. prove the Martian was wounded

5 “I could have fancied it had been withdrawn. Presently, with an abrupt click, it gripped something—I thought it had me!”

The excerpt’s shift from silence to the ‘abrupt click’ primarily functions to...

- A. show the Martian growing careless
- B. explain how the tentacle worked
- C. break a lull with a shock

6 “It came into the scullery no more; but I lay all the tenth day in the close darkness, buried among coals and firewood, not daring even to crawl out for the drink for which I craved. It was the eleventh day before I ventured so far from my security.”

As it is used in the passage, the word ‘security’ most nearly suggests that...

- A. he had grown used to the dark
- B. he no longer feared discovery
- C. safety was now a place to hide

7 “Except in the corner, where a multitude of crows hopped and fought over the skeletons of the dead the Martians had consumed, there was not a living thing in the pit.”

It can reasonably be inferred that only skeletons remained because the Martians had...

- A. fed on the bodies entirely
- B. dragged the dead into the pit
- C. burned the bodies in the pit

8 “I hesitated for some time, and then, in a gust of desperate resolution, and with a heart that throbbed violently, I scrambled to the top of the mound in which I had been buried so long.”

In the passage, the narrator’s ‘gust of desperate resolution’ characterizes him as...

- A. calm and unhurried
- B. reckless and unafraid
- C. frightened but determined

9 “I had not realised what had been happening to the world, had not anticipated this startling vision of unfamiliar things. I had expected to see Sheen in ruins—I found about me the landscape, weird and lurid, of another planet.”

The passage most strongly suggests that the narrator’s long confinement had...

- A. left him unprepared for the change
- B. made him doubt his own senses
- C. dulled his sense of danger

10 “As I proceeded I became more and more convinced that the extermination of mankind was, save for such stragglers as myself, already accomplished in this part of the world.”

According to the passage, the narrator became convinced the destruction of mankind was...

- A. only just beginning
- B. already finished here
- C. still going on here

ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary in Context

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#	KEY	NOTE
1	A	
2	B	
3	B	The key depends on hearing 'likewise' as 'in the same way' — the curate stands because the narrator has just risen. Students often read it as a loose 'also' and miss the mirroring.
4	A	
5	C	
6	C	Here 'security' names a place — the coals and firewood he lay buried in — rather than a feeling. Worth pausing on: an abstract noun made concrete is unfamiliar to most target-grade students.
7	A	
8	C	
9	A	Students often hear 'anticipated' as 'looked forward to.' Here it carries only 'expected in advance' — the negation makes that plain, and the question turns on it.
10	B	

Teacher Context: Book 2, Chapters 1-6

The narrator and the curate are trapped in a ruined house beside a Martian pit, where they watch the Martians feed. The curate's deterioration ends badly, and the narrator finally emerges into a landscape overrun by the red weed. Break falls at the Book Two division.