

The War of the Worlds

Book 2, Chapters 7–9 and the Epilogue

by H. G. Wells

Pre-Reading Vocabulary Practice

Optional Post-Reading Quiz Included

Practice words: anticipate, aspect, desolate, distinguished, former, gulf, proportion, scrutiny, specimen, yielded

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.



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(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. Forecasters **anticipate** heavy snow by Friday night.

- A. openly argue about
- B. quietly hope for
- C. expect and prepare for

2. The old house had a gloomy **aspect** in the rain.

- A. a look or outward appearance
- B. a mood among its owners
- C. a view from its windows

3. Snow drifted across the **desolate** parking lot.

- A. dim and poorly lighted
- B. bleak and empty of life
- C. cracked and badly worn

4. Through the fog I **distinguished** a figure on the bridge.

- A. imagined rather than truly saw
- B. made out by looking closely
- C. pointed out to other people

5. She studied French and Latin; the **former** came easily.

- A. the last one mentioned
- B. the one from long ago
- C. the first one mentioned

6. There was a **gulf** between his promises and his actions.

- A. a struggle for control
- B. a long delay in time
- C. a wide gap between two things

7. Only a small **proportion** survived the drought.

- A. a share of the whole
- B. a handful of newcomers
- C. a group of the strongest

8. The new evidence did not hold up under **scrutiny**.

- A. close, careful examination
- B. harsh public criticism
- C. a long, tiring delay

9. The museum labeled each **specimen** in the glass case.

- A. a sample kept for study
- B. a gift from a donor
- C. a drawing made from life

10. The old orchard **yielded** more apples than we expected.

- A. wasted or lost
- B. produced or gave
- C. stored or held back

Reading Helpers

(Not quizzed — helpful for this text.)

plain — An older use: clearly, without illusion — he suddenly saw the man for exactly what he was.

mechanical Samson — Samson: the biblical strongman who, blinded, pulled down the temple and died in the ruins he had made.

natural selection — The process by which creatures better suited to survive live on and pass their traits to their offspring.

Sennacherib — The Assyrian king of the Bible whose besieging army was struck dead in a single night.

commonweal — The shared good of all people, as against each nation's separate interest.

ANSWER KEY

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#	KEY
1	C
2	A
3	B
4	B
5	C
6	C
7	A
8	A
9	A
10	B

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 “Three things struggled for possession of my mind: the killing of the curate, the whereabouts of the Martians, and the possible fate of my wife. The former gave me no sensation of horror or remorse to recall; I saw it simply as a thing done ...”

As used in the passage, the word “former” most nearly means...

- A. the first one mentioned
- B. a thing from long ago
- C. the last one mentioned

2 “Nearer, I distinguished the green slime of ditches mixing with the pale drab of dried clay and shiny, coal patches.”

The passage most strongly suggests that what the narrator distinguished had come from...

- A. a recent coal fire
- B. many kinds of ground
- C. a single muddy ditch

3 “... when I saw the work he had spent a week upon—it was a burrow scarcely ten yards long, which he designed to reach to the main drain on Putney Hill—I had my first inkling of the gulf between his dreams and his powers.”

The author most likely includes the burrow’s length in order to...

- A. show how little he had achieved
- B. show how careful his planning was
- C. show how long the drain ran

4 “Night, the mother of fear and mystery, was coming upon me. But while that voice sounded the solitude, the desolation, had been endurable; by virtue of it London had still seemed alive ...”

It can reasonably be inferred that the desolation the narrator describes...

- A. has begun to lift at last
- B. never truly frightened him
- C. has become harder to endure

5 “So many people were abroad everywhere, busied in a thousand activities, that it seemed incredible that any great proportion of the population could have been slain.”

The information in the excerpt primarily functions to...

- A. show how the Martians were defeated
- B. show how many buildings were ruined
- C. show how much of London survived

6 “I learned nothing fresh except that already in one week the examination of the Martian mechanisms had yielded astonishing results. Among other things, the article assured me ... that the ‘Secret of Flying,’ was discovered.”

According to the passage, the article reported that examining the Martian machines had...

- A. been given up as hopeless
- B. produced striking discoveries
- C. cost several lives already

7 “All down the line from there the aspect of the country was gaunt and unfamiliar; Wimbledon particularly had suffered.”

As used in the passage, the word “aspect” most nearly means...

- A. the look of the land
- B. the direction it faced
- C. one part of a larger issue

8 “But everyone is familiar with the magnificent and almost complete specimen in spirits at the Natural History Museum, and the countless drawings that have been made from it ...”

Which choice best describes the narrator’s attitude toward the museum specimen?

- A. anxious lingering dread
- B. detached scientific interest
- C. bitter personal resentment

9 “At present the planet Mars is in conjunction, but with every return to opposition I, for one, anticipate a renewal of their adventure.”

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

- A. he expects the Martians to return
- B. he believes Mars is now empty
- C. he only wishes it would happen

10 “Be that as it may, for many years yet there will certainly be no relaxation of the eager scrutiny of the Martian disk, and those fiery darts of the sky, the shooting stars, will bring with them as they fall an unavoidable apprehension to all the sons of men.”

Which statement is best supported by the passage?

- A. shooting stars will grow rarer
- B. the Martians will surely land again
- C. the sky will be watched with fear

ANSWER KEY
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#	KEY	NOTE
1	A	Wells lists three things and then uses 'the former' for the first of them. Students usually meet the word only in the two-item 'former/latter' pair, so this is a good place to show that it simply points back to whichever item was named first.
2	B	
3	A	'Gulf' is literally a large bay or inlet; Wells uses it figuratively for an unbridgeable distance — here between the artilleryman's plans and the ten yards he actually dug.
4	C	
5	C	
6	B	The wrong choice 'been given up as hopeless' targets the common misreading of 'yielded' as 'surrendered.' Here it carries the opposite sense: the examination gave up results, not ground.
7	A	
8	B	
9	A	
10	C	

Teacher Context: Book 2, Chapters 7–9 and the Epilogue

The narrator meets the artilleryman on Putney Hill and hears his grandiose plan for humanity's future, then walks on into a silent, red-choked London. The Martians' fate is revealed and the epilogue reflects on what the invasion means. Section runs to the end of the novel.