

The Westing Game

Chapters 1–10

by Ellen Raskin

Pre-Reading Vocabulary Practice

Optional Post-Reading Quiz Included

Practice words: appalled, disinterested, eccentric, facade, heir, implied, morbid, scrutiny, uncanny, windfall

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 · Chapters 1–10 · New tenants move into Sunset Towers

Section 2 · Chapters 11–20 · The heirs meet about the game

Section 3 · Chapters 21–30 · The Westing game nears its end

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 teacher was **appalled** by the rude note left on her desk.

- A. filled with dismay
- B. filled with curiosity
- C. filled with confusion

2. She gave a **disinterested** shrug and went back to her phone.

- A. showing no interest
- B. showing quiet sadness
- C. showing mild surprise

3. Our **eccentric** neighbor paints his fence a new color each week.

- A. cheerful and friendly
- B. odd and unconventional
- C. wealthy and generous

4. His **facade** of confidence cracked the moment he was alone.

- A. a quiet, thoughtful mood
- B. a false outward appearance
- C. a calm, steady manner

5. Her uncle named her the sole **heir** in his will.

- A. one who inherits property
- B. one who manages his money
- C. one who guards his children

6. His tone **implied** that he doubted my story.

- A. stated openly
- B. proved clearly
- C. suggested indirectly

7. He had a **morbid** curiosity about graveyards and old tombs.

- A. keen on old buildings
- B. eager for new knowledge
- C. drawn to death and gore

8. The painting was sold only after months of **scrutiny** by experts.

- A. careful repair
- B. close examination
- C. heated debate

9. The twins had an **uncanny** way of finishing each other's sentences.

- A. strange and eerie
- B. playful and silly
- C. slow and careful

10. Selling the old painting brought the family a **windfall**.

- A. a steady monthly income
- B. a generous yearly gift
- C. a sudden gain of money

Reading Helpers

(Not quizzed — helpful for this text.)

estate — all the money and property a person leaves behind at death

executor — the person appointed to carry out the instructions in a will

dastardly — wicked and cowardly

ANSWER KEY

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

Vocabulary in Context

The Westing Game

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Name _____ Date _____ Period _____ Score _____ / 10

Read each excerpt carefully. Then choose the best answer to each question.

1 "No one could have guessed that under that stern facade her stomach was doing flip-flops as Doctor Wexler cut out a corn."

As it is used in the passage, the word "facade" most nearly suggests that Crow's calm surface...

- A. hid her inner panic
- B. matched her true mood
- C. showed she felt ill

2 "... slipped out from behind the wheel, handed the car keys to the doorman, and cast a disinterested glance at the house on the hill."

It can reasonably be inferred that Judge Ford's "disinterested" glance at the Westing house...

- A. hid her real concern
- B. meant she had never met him
- C. showed she truly did not care

3 "Some stared at the afflicted child with morbid fascination, but most turned away."

Which statement about the staring heirs is best supported by the passage?

- A. The heirs were used to such fits
- B. Some were drawn to watch Chris suffer
- C. The heirs hurried to help Chris

4 "... fumbling with his papers, his hands shaking under the strict scrutiny of the judge."

According to the passage, the lawyer's hands shook as the judge...

- A. ignored him out of boredom
- B. watched him closely and sharply
- C. spoke gently to calm him

5 "Although the will you are about to hear may seem eccentric, I pledge my good name and reputation on its legality."

It can reasonably be inferred that the lawyer expected the heirs to find the will...

- A. illegal and invalid
- B. dull and ordinary
- C. strange and unusual

6 "... I am just as appalled by our purported relationship."

In context, the word "appalled" emphasizes how strongly Judge Ford...

- A. dislikes being called a relative
- B. welcomes the surprise kinship
- C. doubts the lawyer's reading

7 "Who among you is worthy to be the Westing heir? Help me. My soul shall roam restlessly until that one is found."

According to the will, the Westing "heir" will be the person who...

- A. worked longest for Westing
- B. is unmasked as the murderer
- C. is found worthy to inherit

8 "The heir who wins the windfall will be the one who finds the ..."

Which statement about the "windfall" is best supported by the passage?

- A. It is a steady yearly salary
- B. It is a share of the company
- C. It is a sudden, unexpected fortune

9 "It was uncanny. Several heads turned toward the coffin, but Westing's eyes were shut forever."

The passage most strongly suggests that the will's words made the heirs feel...

- A. a warm, cheerful relief
- B. an eerie, uneasy chill
- C. a calm, bored patience

10 "In his will Sam Westing implied (he did not state, he implied) that (1) he was murdered, (2) the murderer was one of the heirs, (3) he alone knew the name of the murderer, and (4) the name of the murderer was the answer to the game."

As it is used in the passage, the word "implied" most nearly suggests that Westing...

- A. hinted without saying it outright
- B. backed each fact with proof
- C. stated each fact plainly

ANSWER KEY

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#	KEY	NOTE
1	A	
2	A	Character comprehension. The section reveals Judge Ford's hidden tie to Westing, so her indifferent glance is a front; here 'disinterested' means uninterested, not 'unbiased.'
3	B	Character comprehension. The heirs are near-strangers seeing Chris for the first time, so their reaction is fresh fascination, not familiarity.
4	B	
5	C	
6	A	
7	C	
8	C	
9	B	
10	A	

Teacher Context: Chapters 1–10

Sixteen people are drawn into renting apartments in Sunset Towers; the millionaire Sam Westing is found dead, and his will turns his would-be heirs into players of a game, pairing them off and giving each pair a set of word clues and ten thousand dollars to find his 'murderer.' This section introduces all the characters and the rules of the game. The break groups the first third of the novel's thirty chapters, ending after the game is set in motion and the pairs receive their clues.