

# The Witch of Blackbird Pond

## Chapters 14–17

by Elizabeth George Speare

### Pre-Reading Vocabulary Practice

Optional Post-Reading Quiz Included

**Practice words:** annexed, clamor, consort, defiant, elated, heedless, magnificence, ordeal, somber, stricken

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#### 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

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#### 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 1–4 · Kit's voyage from Barbados

Section 2 · Chapters 5–9 · Kit's first Sabbath in Wethersfield

Section 3 · Chapters 10–13 · Kit's secret visits to Blackbird Pond

**Section 4 · Chapters 14–17 · Autumn comes to Wethersfield**

Section 5 · Chapters 18–21 · Kit and her uncle grow closer

**Bold = this section.** Other sections are available at [verbalworkout.com](http://verbalworkout.com).



[verbalworkout.com](http://verbalworkout.com)

(all resources free)

**Vocabulary Preview**  
**The Witch of Blackbird Pond**  
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Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Period \_\_\_\_\_

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

1. The empire **annexed** the small island after the war.

- A. took control of and joined
- B. attacked and burned down
- C. blockaded and cut off

2. The **clamor** of the crowd filled the stadium.

- A. a low, steady murmur
- B. a cheerful, ringing chant
- C. a loud, confused noise

3. His parents warned him not to **consort** with troublemakers.

- A. to quarrel or argue
- B. to compete or contend
- C. to keep company with

4. The **defiant** student refused to apologize to the principal.

- A. boldly resisting authority
- B. proud and full of vanity
- C. stubborn and easily angered

5. She felt **elated** when she won first prize.

- A. very happy and excited
- B. proud but slightly nervous
- C. calm and deeply relieved

6. The **heedless** driver sped through the busy crossing.

- A. bold and highly skilled
- B. careless of danger
- C. hurried and impatient

7. The **magnificence** of the palace left every visitor speechless.

- A. impressive grandeur and beauty
- B. great age and long history
- C. strange and puzzling design

8. Crossing the desert on foot was a terrible **ordeal**.

- A. a bold, risky gamble
- B. a painful, difficult trial
- C. a long, dull journey

9. The room fell into a **somber** mood after the news.

- A. angry and restless
- B. gloomy and serious
- C. tense and fearful

10. The whole village was **stricken** by the sudden plague.

- A. left poor and ruined
- B. frightened and confused
- C. seriously harmed or afflicted

**Reading Helpers**

*(Not quizzed — helpful for this text.)*

**cavalier** — a courtly gentleman, especially a mounted soldier or knight

**poultice** — a soft, heated mass applied to the body to ease pain or swelling

**ANSWER KEY**  
**Vocabulary Preview**  
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| #  | KEY |
|----|-----|
| 1  | A   |
| 2  | C   |
| 3  | C   |
| 4  | A   |
| 5  | A   |
| 6  | B   |
| 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** “When she had hated and feared her uncle for so long, why did it suddenly hurt to think of that lonely defiant figure in the garden?”

As it is used in the passage, the word “defiant” most nearly suggests that Kit’s uncle is...

- A. stubbornly resisting defeat
- B. lonely and wanting company
- C. calm and free of worry

**2** “For the most part it was a somber group that straggled back to their neglected chores.”

It can reasonably be inferred that the group returning to their chores felt...

- A. gloomy and downcast
- B. tired but satisfied
- C. angry and rebellious

**3** “The Colony of Connecticut is annexed to Massachusetts.”

According to the passage, in the new arrangement the Colony of Connecticut is...

- A. separated from Massachusetts
- B. joined into Massachusetts
- C. made fully independent

**4** “She felt curiously elated.”

The passage most strongly suggests that, despite the late-night unease, Kit felt...

- A. anxious and regretful
- B. weary and resentful
- C. joyful and lifted in spirit

**5** “There was a sort of magnificence about him, even without the fine uniform that made Governor Andros so splendid.”

Which statement is best supported by the passage?

- A. Kit finds her uncle shabby.
- B. Kit sees grandeur in her uncle.
- C. Kit admires only Andros.

**6** “No matter how she shrank from the ordeal before her, she knew she could not stay away.”

It can reasonably be inferred that the ordeal Kit faces is...

- A. a happy event to enjoy
- B. a painful trial to endure
- C. a brief, minor nuisance

**7** “Sixteen children and young people were stricken with the mysterious fever ...”

According to the passage, the sixteen children and young people...

- A. were gravely sickened
- B. were the only ones to fall ill
- C. were spared the sickness

**8** “Time and again she’s been seen consorting with the devil down in that meadow!”

As it is used in the passage, the word “consorting” most nearly suggests that Hannah has been...

- A. keeping company with evil
- B. hiding alone in the meadow
- C. arguing against the devil

**9** “In the hoarse shouting and the heedless screaming of the women there was a mounting violence ...”

The passage most strongly suggests that the women’s screaming was...

- A. a calm, controlled protest
- B. a careful warning of danger
- C. reckless and unaware of danger

**10** “As they stepped into the darkness the clamor of voices struck against them.”

Which statement about the moment they step into the darkness is best supported?

- A. All was silent and still.
- B. A single voice called out.
- C. Many voices roared at once.

**ANSWER KEY**  
**Vocabulary in Context**  
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| #  | KEY | NOTE                                                                                                 |
|----|-----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1  | A   |                                                                                                      |
| 2  | A   |                                                                                                      |
| 3  | B   |                                                                                                      |
| 4  | C   |                                                                                                      |
| 5  | B   | Character comprehension. Here 'him' refers to Kit's uncle Matthew, not Governor Andros.              |
| 6  | B   |                                                                                                      |
| 7  | A   | Event comprehension. Others in the town fall ill as well, so these sixteen are not the only victims. |
| 8  | A   | 'Consorting' carries a disapproving tone — associating with someone one ought not to.                |
| 9  | C   |                                                                                                      |
| 10 | C   |                                                                                                      |

**Teacher Context: Chapters 14–17**

New England autumn brings a trading ship and a fragile new warmth, even between Kit and her gruff uncle Matthew, before a deadly fever sweeps Wethersfield. As the sickness spreads, suspicion turns toward Hannah, and fear finally erupts into a night of mob violence at Blackbird Pond. The section ends after that night, keeping its consequences to open the final section.