

The Witch of Blackbird Pond

Chapters 18–21

by Elizabeth George Speare

Pre-Reading Vocabulary Practice

Optional Post-Reading Quiz Included

Practice words: champion, contempt, eluded, flouting, meager, pandemonium, remorse, slander, tantalizing, venomous

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 1–4 · 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.



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.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>1. She vowed to champion the rights of stray animals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. to take charge ofB. to defend or supportC. to look into <p>2. He looked at the cheater with open contempt.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. pity and sympathyB. scorn and disdainC. shock and surprise <p>3. The clever fox eluded the hunters once again.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. escaped or evadedB. chased afterC. startled and scared <p>4. He enjoyed flouting every rule his coach set.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. openly defyingB. loudly bragging aboutC. quietly questioning <p>5. The campers shared a meager supper of crackers and water.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. simple and quietB. small and scantyC. plain and tasteless | <p>6. When the lights went out, the crowded gym erupted into pandemonium.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. heated argumentB. cheerful celebrationC. noisy, wild disorder <p>7. She felt deep remorse after lying to her best friend.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. guilty regretB. bitter resentmentC. sharp embarrassment <p>8. The article was pure slander, and the actor decided to sue.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. wild exaggerationB. harsh open criticismC. damaging false speech <p>9. The bakery's smell was tantalizing as we hurried past.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. sharp and overpoweringB. faint and barely thereC. temptingly out of reach <p>10. She shot him a venomous glare across the room.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. full of spiteB. full of jealousyC. full of pride |
|--|--|

Reading Helpers

(Not quizzed — helpful for this text.)

trencher — a wooden plate or board for serving food
magistrate — a local official who administers the law

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

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 “... Goodwife Cruff’s eyes glittered toward Kit with contempt and something else she could not interpret.”

As it is used in the passage, the word “contempt” most nearly suggests that Goodwife Cruff feels...

- A. scorn toward Kit
- B. open fear of Kit
- C. confusion about Kit

2 “... coming to champion her, confident, unruffled, those wide dependable shoulders like a fortress ...”

It can reasonably be inferred that Kit pictures William coming to champion her because she believes he can...

- A. break her out of the shed
- B. pay her passage home
- C. sway the town in her favor

3 “She saw now that she had undermined his authority in all eyes by flouting his orders.”

According to the passage, Kit believes she undermined her uncle’s authority by flouting his orders — that is, by...

- A. openly disobeying his commands
- B. lying to him about Hannah
- C. neglecting her daily chores

4 “If I wanted to neglect my own work, Kit groaned in remorse, I might at least have been out in the Cruffs’ field helping the poor child!”

The passage most strongly suggests that Kit groans in remorse because she believes she has...

- A. been unfairly blamed by others
- B. lost her one chance to escape
- C. harmed the child she meant to help

5 “In the midst of the pandemonium Gershom Bulkeley quietly reached for the copybook, studied it carefully, and turned a shrewd, deliberative eye upon Kit.”

Which statement about the scene is best supported by the passage?

- A. The room waits in tense silence.
- B. The crowd is in a wild uproar.
- C. The crowd calmly awaits a verdict.

6 “... Goodwife Cruff drew in her breath through her teeth in a venomous hiss.”

In context, the word “venomous” emphasizes the depth of Goodwife Cruff’s...

- A. bitter spite
- B. cold sorrow
- C. sudden panic

7 “I remind you that the penalty for slander is heavy.”

According to the passage, the magistrate warns Goodwife Cruff that she could be punished for slander, meaning...

- A. disrupting the court’s order
- B. spreading harmful false claims
- C. openly defying the magistrate

8 “... the dread ascent to the upstairs chamber with only the meager comfort of a warming pan.”

The passage most strongly suggests that the meager comfort of the warming pan gives Kit...

- A. barely any warmth at all
- B. steady warmth all night
- C. more heat than she needs

9 “This time it was a subtle promise, a tantalizing hint of beauty still withheld, a beckoning to her spirit to follow she knew not where.”

It can reasonably be inferred that the tantalizing hint of spring leaves Kit feeling...

- A. fearful of the long winter
- B. calm and fully satisfied
- C. drawn to a beauty not yet here

10 “The haunting joy eluded her; the dream shores were dim and unreal.”

Which statement about Kit’s remembered joy is best supported by the passage?

- A. The joy deeply frightened her.
- B. The joy slipped out of her reach.
- C. The joy filled her with delight.

ANSWER KEY

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#	KEY	NOTE
1	A	
2	C	Character comprehension. 'Champion' here is the verb meaning to defend or support, not the noun for a winner.
3	A	Students often confuse 'flouting' (openly defying) with 'flaunting' (showing off).
4	C	Event comprehension. Remorse is regret for one's own wrongdoing; Kit blames herself for endangering Prudence.
5	B	
6	A	'Venomous' literally refers to snake poison; here it describes spiteful words.
7	B	Slander is a spoken false statement that harms a reputation; in writing it is called libel.
8	A	
9	C	
10	B	

Teacher Context: Chapters 18–21

In the calm after the hunt, Kit and Matthew reach a new understanding, but the colony's fear soon falls on Kit herself and she must answer for her friendship with Hannah. The crisis brings hidden loyalties into the open and resolves the romances along with Kit's place in the New World. Section runs to the end of the novel.