

# There Will Come Soft Rains

by Ray Bradbury

## Pre-Reading Vocabulary Practice

Optional Post-Reading Quiz Included

**Practice words:** cavorting, charred, delicacies, frenzy, oblivious, paranoia, perished, silhouette, sublime, tremulous

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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.



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# Vocabulary Preview

## There Will Come Soft Rains

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Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Period \_\_\_\_\_

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

- Mom is always nervous when the boys are **cavorting** in the pool.
  - arguing loudly with one another
  - swimming underwater for long periods
  - playing in a lively, unrestrained manner
- The **charred** remains of the building told the story of the devastating fire.
  - burned and blackened
  - recently renovated
  - crumbled and collapsed
- They serve bird nest soup and other Chinese **delicacies**.
  - folk medicines
  - traditional dishes
  - prized foods
- The announcement of the surprise holiday sent the students into a **frenzy** of excitement.
  - a state of uncontrolled commotion
  - a calm and orderly celebration
  - a brief moment of stunned silence
- She's a happy girl—**oblivious** to most of the unhappiness around her.
  - unaware of
  - adding to
  - concerned with
- His constant worry that his coworkers were plotting against him was a sign of deep **paranoia**.
  - extreme dedication to one's work
  - intense dislike of social events
  - irrational suspicion or distrust of others
- Thousands of animals **perished** in the wildfire that swept through the region.
  - suffered greatly
  - fled in panic
  - died; were destroyed
- Against the bright sunset, we could see the **silhouette** of a lone tree on the hilltop.
  - a dark shape against a lighter background
  - a faint reflection in the distance
  - a detailed painting of a landscape
- I love good movies, from the silly to the **sublime**.
  - impressively wonderful
  - unbearably violent
  - hilariously absurd
- She tried to sound confident, but her voice was **tremulous**.
  - quivering (shaky)
  - frail (weak or soft)
  - grating (rough)

### Reading Helpers

(Not quizzed — helpful for this text.)

**incinerator** — a device for burning waste

**Picassos and Matises** — paintings by famous artists

**warrens** — networks of interconnected tunnels or passages

**Baal** — an ancient deity; in the Bible, a symbol of evil

**okapi** — a rare African animal related to the giraffe

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

# Vocabulary in Context

## There Will Come Soft Rains

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Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Period \_\_\_\_\_ Score \_\_\_\_\_ / 10

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

**1** “The water pelted windowpanes, running down the charred west side where the house had been burned evenly free of its white paint.”

As it is used in the excerpt, the word “charred” most nearly suggests that the west side of the house is...

- A. burned black and stripped of its paint by fire
- B. stained dark by years of water runoff
- C. coated with soot from a nearby chimney

**2** “Here the silhouette in paint of a man mowing a lawn.”

It can reasonably be inferred that the “silhouette in paint” is...

- A. a mural the homeowner painted on the wall
- B. a shadow cast by someone standing nearby
- C. an outline left where a body blocked the burning

**3** “...getting no answer from the lonely foxes and whining cats, it had shut up its windows and drawn shades in an old-maidenly preoccupation with self-protection which bordered on a mechanical paranoia.”

In the passage, the house is characterized as...

- A. obsessively worried about threats to itself
- B. carefully maintained and efficiently organized
- C. lonely and desperate for human company

**4** “It ran wildly in circles, biting at its tail, spun in a frenzy, and died.”

The author most likely includes the detail that the dog “spun in a frenzy” in order to...

- A. show the dog has been stirred by the smell of food
- B. suggest the dog is playfully exploring the house
- C. convey that the dog’s agitation is uncontrollable

**5** “Animals took shape: yellow giraffes, blue lions, pink antelopes, lilac panthers cavorting in crystal substance.”

The author most likely uses the word “cavorting” to describe the animals in order to...

- A. suggest the projected images are distorted
- B. show the house’s systems are running out of power
- C. convey the playful atmosphere the nursery creates

**6** “And frogs in the pools singing at night, And wild plum trees in tremulous white;”

In context, the word “tremulous” emphasizes...

- A. the dazzling brightness of the white flowers
- B. the fear that the trees may not survive
- C. the soft, quivering delicacy of the blossoms

**7** “Not one would mind, neither bird nor tree, If mankind perished utterly;”

The passage most strongly suggests that the speaker views mankind’s disappearance as...

- A. a devastating loss that all living things would mourn
- B. a temporary decline that nature would help reverse
- C. complete and permanent, yet meaningless to nature

**8** “It fed upon Picassos and Matisse’s in the upper halls, like delicacies, baking off the oily flesh, tenderly crisping the canvases into black shavings.”

The author most likely compares the paintings to “delicacies” in order to...

- A. portray the fire as savoring what it consumes
- B. emphasize the high monetary value of the artwork
- C. suggest the paintings were poorly protected

**9** “In the last instant under the fire avalanche, other choruses, oblivious, could be heard announcing the time, playing music...”

Which choice best describes how the excerpt functions in the text as a whole?

- A. It shows parts of the house remained untouched.
- B. It shows the house’s last effort against the fire.
- C. It shows some machines unaware of the disaster.

**10** “And one voice, with sublime disregard for the situation, read poetry aloud all in the fiery study, ...until all the wires withered and the circuits cracked.”

Which choice best describes the narrator’s attitude toward the voice reading poetry?

- A. awe at its grand indifference to the destruction
- B. criticism of its failure to respond to danger
- C. amusement at its foolish persistence

**ANSWER KEY**  
**Vocabulary in Context**  
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#	KEY	TEACHER NOTE
1	A	
2	C	The silhouettes are formed where bodies blocked the nuclear flash, leaving paint intact while exposed areas burned away.
3	A	
4	C	
5	C	
6	C	
7	C	
8	A	
9	C	
10	A	

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