

Ulysses

Episodes 4–6 (Calypso, Lotus Eaters, Hades)

by James Joyce

Pre-Reading Vocabulary Practice

Optional Post-Reading Quiz Included

Practice words: brimstone, circumstantial, convivial, devious, furtive, lethargy, metempsychosis, pristine, qualm, trenchant

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 · Episodes 1–3 (Telemachus, Nestor, Proteus) · Stephen Dedalus on a Dublin morning

Section 2 · Episodes 4–6 (Calypso, Lotus Eaters, Hades) · Leopold Bloom begins his day

Section 3 · Episodes 7–9 (Aeolus, Lestrygonians, Scylla and Charybdis) · The newspaper office at midday

Section 4 · Episodes 10–12 (Wandering Rocks, Sirens, Cyclops) · Across Dublin in the afternoon

Section 5 · Episodes 13–15 (Nausicaa, Oxen of the Sun, Circe) · Evening on the Dublin shore

Section 6 · Episodes 16–18 (Eumaeus, Ithaca, Penelope) · Bloom and Stephen, late at night

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 preacher warned of fire and **brimstone** awaiting the wicked.

- A. molten rock
- B. choking black smoke
- C. burning sulfur

2. The prosecutor built the case on **circumstantial** evidence alone.

- A. proven beyond all doubt
- B. based on eyewitness accounts
- C. indirect, not direct, proof

3. The **convivial** host kept everyone laughing all night.

- A. sociable and festive
- B. witty and clever
- C. generous and wealthy

4. We reached the cabin by a **devious** mountain trail.

- A. winding and roundabout
- B. long and overgrown
- C. steep and rocky

5. He cast a **furtive** glance over his shoulder before slipping out.

- A. quick and nervous
- B. secret and stealthy
- C. slow and weary

6. A heavy **lethargy** kept him on the couch all afternoon.

- A. sluggish lack of energy
- B. restless boredom
- C. quiet contentment

7. Her grandmother held a quiet faith in **metempsychosis** and feared dying as anything lowly.

- A. rebirth of a soul in a new body
- B. a state of eternal paradise
- C. communion with ancestral spirits

8. The newly fallen snow lay **pristine** across the empty field.

- A. cold and slippery
- B. pure and unspoiled
- C. soft and deep

9. She felt a **qualm** as she signed the contract.

- A. a rush of pride
- B. a wave of relief
- C. a feeling of unease

10. Her **trenchant** reply silenced the whole committee.

- A. clever and witty
- B. sharp and forceful
- C. loud and angry

Reading Helpers

(Not quizzed — helpful for this text.)

dolce far niente — Italian, 'sweet doing-nothing' -- pleasant, carefree idleness

ANSWER KEY

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#	KEY
1	C
2	C
3	A
4	A
5	B
6	A
7	A
8	B
9	C
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 “Vulcanic lake, the dead sea: no fish, weedless, sunk deep in the earth. No wind could lift those waves, grey metal, poisonous foggy waters. Brimstone they called it raining down: the cities of the plain: Sodom, Gomorrah, Edom.”

As it is used in the passage, the word “brimstone” most nearly refers to...

- A. barren, salt-soaked land
- B. a poisonous, foggy sea
- C. burning sulfur from above

2 “Metempsychosis, he said, is what the ancient Greeks called it. They used to believe you could be changed into an animal or a tree ...”

According to the passage, metempsychosis is the belief that after death a soul can...

- A. be judged by the gods
- B. live on as a memory
- C. pass into a new body

3 “A soft qualm, regret, flowed down his backbone, increasing.”

It can reasonably be inferred that the qualm flowing down Bloom’s backbone arises from his...

- A. grief for his dead son
- B. foreboding about his wife
- C. guilt about his own flirting

4 “Influence of the climate. Lethargy. Flowers of idleness.”

The information in the excerpt primarily functions to...

- A. evoke drowsy idleness
- B. mock the natives’ laziness
- C. warn of a tropical disease

5 “He stood a moment unseeing by the cold black marble bowl while before him and behind two worshippers dipped furtive hands in the low tide of holy water.”

In the passage, the two worshippers are characterized as...

- A. devout and reverent
- B. stealthy and secretive
- C. clumsy and hurried

6 “His singing of that simple ballad, Martin, is the most trenchant rendering I ever heard in the whole course of my experience.”

In context, the word “trenchant” emphasizes the singing’s...

- A. plain, clumsy delivery
- B. gentle, soothing tone
- C. forceful, cutting power

7 “A tall blackbearded figure, bent on a stick, stumping round the corner of Elvery’s Elephant house, showed them a curved hand open on his spine. —In all his pristine beauty, Mr Power said.”

Mr Power’s ironic use of “pristine” to describe the stumping figure conveys an attitude that is...

- A. mocking and amused
- B. fearful and wary
- C. pitying and gentle

8 “Only circumstantial, Martin Cunningham added. That’s the maxim of the law. Better for ninety-nine guilty to escape than for one innocent person to be wrongfully condemned.”

Which statement about the evidence against Childs is best supported by the passage?

- A. It suggests guilt, not proof
- B. It cleared the accused
- C. It was faked by the crown

9 “The mourners moved away slowly without aim, by devious paths, staying at whiles to read a name on a tomb.”

The passage most strongly suggests that the mourners walking “by devious paths” move...

- A. in a sneaky, sly manner
- B. by winding, roundabout ways
- C. quickly toward the gate

10 “Mat Dillon’s long ago. Jolly Mat. Convivial evenings. Cold fowl, cigars, the Tantalus glasses. Heart of gold really.”

The author most likely includes Bloom’s memory of “convivial evenings” at Mat Dillon’s in order to...

- A. set warm life against death
- B. explain his dislike of Menton
- C. show his envy of the rich

ANSWER KEY

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#	KEY	NOTE
1	C	
2	C	
3	B	Character comprehension. The qualm is Bloom's dread of Molly's affair with Boylan, foreshadowed earlier in the section.
4	A	
5	B	
6	C	
7	A	The mockery turns on 'pristine' literally meaning unspoiled, applied to a bent, decrepit man.
8	A	
9	B	Here 'devious' means winding or roundabout, not the moral 'sneaky' students expect.
10	A	Event comprehension. The warm memory plays against the graveyard setting of the funeral.

Teacher Context: Episodes 4–6 (Calypso, Lotus Eaters, Hades)

Episodes 4–6 introduce Leopold Bloom and follow his morning: breakfast at home, errands and a bath, and the funeral of Paddy Dignam. These open the long middle part of the novel, 'the Odyssey.' Grouped as the morning hours of Bloom's day; the section breaks at midday before the newspaper-office episode.