

Ulysses

Episodes 10–12 (Wandering Rocks, Sirens, Cyclops)

by James Joyce

Pre-Reading Vocabulary Practice

Optional Post-Reading Quiz Included

Practice words: abnegation, alacrity, heterogeneous, incandescent, incipient, listless, obsequious, perfidious, portentous, supercilious

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 hermit's **abnegation** kept him from every luxury the city offered.

- A. deep humility
- B. self-denial
- C. quiet generosity

2. She accepted the invitation with **alacrity**.

- A. eager readiness
- B. polite caution
- C. calm patience

3. The city's **heterogeneous** neighborhoods each had their own languages and customs.

- A. old and historic
- B. crowded and noisy
- C. diverse and varied

4. The blacksmith pulled the **incandescent** iron from the roaring fire.

- A. freshly forged
- B. heavy and solid
- C. glowing white-hot

5. The inspector noticed an **incipient** crack near the base of the statue.

- A. dark and stained
- B. long and jagged
- C. just beginning

6. All afternoon the **listless** students stared blankly out the window.

- A. lacking energy or spirit
- B. bored and inattentive
- C. puzzled and confused

7. The **obsequious** waiter bowed and refilled my glass.

- A. brisk and efficient
- B. fawning and servile
- C. shy and timid

8. His **perfidious** scheme cost the company its most loyal clients.

- A. deceitful and treacherous
- B. greedy and grasping
- C. reckless and careless

9. A **portentous** silence fell over the room before the verdict was read.

- A. polite and formal
- B. weighty and ominous
- C. long and tiresome

10. She gave the new intern a **supercilious** glance and then turned away.

- A. haughtily disdainful
- B. openly curious
- C. mildly amused

Reading Helpers

(Not quizzed — helpful for this text.)

steelyringing — Joyce's coined word for the sharp metallic ringing of horseshoes striking the street

Bloom's definition of a nation — an improvised, inclusive idea of a people connected by shared identity, whether living together or dispersed

love as an answer to force and hatred — Bloom sets human sympathy and fellow-feeling against violence, hostility, and the conflicts inherited from history

ANSWER KEY

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

Vocabulary in Context

Ulysses

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Name _____ Date _____ Period _____ Score _____ / 10

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

1 “A listless lady, no more young, walked alone the shore of lough Ennel, Mary, first countess of Belvedere, listlessly walking in the evening, not startled when an otter plunged.”

As used in the passage, ‘listless’ most nearly suggests that the lady is

- A. drained of energy and spirit
- B. calm and quietly content
- C. lost in pleasant daydreams

2 “The viceregal cavalcade passed, greeted by obsequious policemen, out of Parkgate.”

In the passage, the policemen are characterized as

- A. proudly self-important
- B. casually indifferent
- C. fawning and servile

3 “With the greatest alacrity, miss Douce agreed.”

The passage most strongly suggests that miss Douce

- A. was confused by the request
- B. was cool and unhurried
- C. was eager and quick to serve

4 “She smilesmirked supercilious (wept! aren’t men?), but, lightward gliding, mild she smiled on Boylan.”

Which choice best describes Miss Douce’s manner before she turns to smile on Boylan?

- A. shy and flustered
- B. haughty and disdainful
- C. warm and welcoming

5 “A low incipient note sweet banshee murmured: all.”

Which statement is best supported by the passage?

- A. A faint sound is only beginning.
- B. The song swells to full volume.
- C. The singing has already ended.

6 “From his girdle hung a row of seastones which jangled at every movement of his portentous frame ...”

The author most likely describes the figure’s ‘portentous frame’ in order to

- A. swell him into a mock-epic giant
- B. stress his frailty and old age
- C. honor a truly awe-inspiring hero

7 “... delegates without exception expressed themselves in the strongest possible heterogeneous terms concerning the nameless barbarity which they had been called upon to witness.”

It can reasonably be inferred that the delegates

- A. voiced their outrage in varied ways
- B. protested in identical words
- C. were unmoved by the event

8 “... with an abnegation rare in these our times, rose nobly to the occasion ...”

In context, the word ‘abnegation’ emphasizes the condemned man’s

- A. pride in the attention
- B. denial of his own comfort
- C. terror at facing death

9 “Aren’t they trying to make an Entente cordiale now at Tay Pay’s dinnerparty with perfidious Albion?”

The speaker brands England ‘perfidious Albion’ chiefly in order to cast it as

- A. a distant, unfamiliar land
- B. a powerful military rival
- C. treacherous and not to be trusted

10 “... an incandescent object of enormous proportions hurtling through the atmosphere at a terrifying velocity ...”

Which statement is best supported by the passage?

- A. A cold mist settled over the bay.
- B. A white-hot object streaked the sky.
- C. A dark shape drifted slowly down.

ANSWER KEY

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#	KEY	NOTE
1	A	
2	C	
3	C	
4	B	
5	A	
6	A	Character comprehension. The catalogue mock-glorifies the blustering 'citizen'; the key turns on hearing the inflation as parody, not praise.
7	A	
8	B	In the fuller passage he gives away his last meal; 'abnegation' names that self-sacrifice.
9	C	
10	B	

Teacher Context: Episodes 10–12 (Wandering Rocks, Sirens, Cyclops)

Episodes 10–12 move through the afternoon: dozens of Dubliners crisscrossing the city, the music of the Ormond hotel bar, and a hostile encounter at Barney Kiernan's pub. Grouped as the afternoon hours of the middle part; the section breaks before the evening episodes.