

Ulysses

Episodes 13–15 (Nausicaa, Oxen of the Sun, Circe)

by James Joyce

Pre-Reading Vocabulary Practice

Optional Post-Reading Quiz Included

Practice words: bucolic, circumspection, hauteur, livid, lugubrious, raptures, supplication, truculent, vapid, vicissitudes

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. They spent the summer in a **bucolic** village far from any city.

- A. ancient and ruined
- B. wealthy and fashionable
- C. rural and rustic

2. She handled the delicate negotiations with great **circumspection**.

- A. warm and easy charm
- B. wary caution and care
- C. tireless drive and energy

3. She carried herself with an unmistakable **hauteur**.

- A. haughty, aloof pride
- B. cheerful, easy warmth
- C. nervous, shy unease

4. The dead man's face had turned a **livid** gray in the moonlight.

- A. deathly and discolored
- B. faintly shimmering
- C. smooth and waxen

5. The old hound let out a long, **lugubrious** howl at the moon.

- A. mournful and gloomy
- B. faint and trembling
- C. harsh and grating

6. The fans were in **raptures** when the band took the stage.

- A. wild, frantic confusion
- B. tense, fearful suspense
- C. intense joy and delight

7. The prisoner fell to his knees in **supplication** before the judge.

- A. formal, public apology
- B. humble, earnest pleading
- C. silent, calm meditation

8. The **truculent** customer slammed the counter and demanded a refund.

- A. fierce and aggressive
- B. weary and impatient
- C. anxious and confused

9. The host filled the air with **vapid** small talk all evening.

- A. tense and hostile
- B. loud and boastful
- C. dull and lifeless

10. He faced many **vicissitudes** during his long career.

- A. stretches of dull routine
- B. ups and downs of fortune
- C. moments of great triumph

Reading Helpers

(Not quizzed — helpful for this text.)

decoction — decoction — a liquid made by boiling ingredients; here, a contemptuous term for alcohol

contretemps — an awkward or embarrassing incident; a minor disagreement or mishap

ANSWER KEY

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

Vocabulary in Context

Ulysses

Episodes 13–15 (Nausicaa, Oxen of the Sun, Circe)

by James Joyce

Name _____ Date _____ Period _____ Score _____ / 10

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

1 “There was an innate refinement, a languid queenly hauteur about Gerty which was unmistakably evidenced in her delicate hands and higharched instep.”

As it is used in the passage, the word “hauteur” most nearly suggests that Gerty carries herself with...

- A. an air of haughty, queenly pride
- B. nervous, fidgety shyness
- C. warm, easygoing friendliness

2 “And still the voices sang in supplication to the Virgin most powerful, Virgin most merciful.”

The passage most strongly suggests that the singing voices are...

- A. humbly pleading with the Virgin
- B. joyfully celebrating a victory
- C. solemnly issuing a command

3 “And she saw a long Roman candle going up over the trees, up, up, and, in the tense hush, they were all breathless with excitement as it went higher and higher ... And then a rocket sprang and bang shot blind blank and O! then the Roman candle burst and it was like a sigh of O! and everyone cried O! O! in raptures and it gushed out of it a stream of rain gold hair threads and they shed and ah! they were all greeny dewy stars falling with golden, O so lovely, O, soft, sweet, soft!”

Which choice best describes the crowd’s response as the rocket bursts?

- A. overwhelmed with ecstatic delight
- B. tense with growing dread
- C. bored and unimpressed

4 “... that he had passed through the thousand vicissitudes of existence ...”

It can reasonably be inferred that the man described has lived a life...

- A. of steady, growing wealth
- B. full of dramatic ups and downs
- C. of calm, unbroken routine

5 “... a scathing retort couched in terms as straightforward as they were bucolic.”

The author most likely calls the retort “bucolic” in order to stress that it was...

- A. polished and scholarly in tone
- B. plain and rustic in its bluntness
- C. gentle and carefully polite

6 “The news was imparted with a circumspection recalling the ceremonial usage of the Sublime Porte ...”

According to the passage, the news was delivered...

- A. with loud, careless haste
- B. as trivial, idle gossip
- C. with careful, guarded discretion

7 “He lifts his mutilated ashen face moonwards and bays lugubriously.”

In the passage, the howling figure is characterized as...

- A. angry and vengeful
- B. cheerful and playful
- C. exaggeratedly mournful and gloomy

8 “Virag truculent, his jowl set, stares at the lamp.”

In context, the word “truculent” emphasizes Virag’s...

- A. fierce, defiant aggression
- B. weary, drowsy calm
- C. anxious, timid unease

9 “Your eyes are as vapid as the glasseyes of your stuffed fox.”

The eyes are compared to “the glasseyes of your stuffed fox” in order to stress that they are...

- A. sharp, alert, and watchful
- B. dull, flat, and lifeless
- C. warm, bright, and lively

10 “Nothung!
(He lifts his ashplant high with both hands and smashes the chandelier. Time’s livid final flame leaps and, in the following darkness, ruin of all space, shattered glass and toppling masonry.)”

It can reasonably be inferred that “Time’s livid final flame” is described as having a...

- A. furious, angry tone
- B. warm, golden glow
- C. deathly, lurid coloring

ANSWER KEY

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#	KEY	NOTE
1	A	
2	A	
3	A	
4	B	
5	B	
6	C	Event comprehension. The news is the long-awaited birth of Mrs Purefoy's child, treated as a momentous matter.
7	C	Character comprehension. The figure is the ghost of the dead Paddy Dignam, mournful and pitiable rather than menacing.
8	A	
9	B	
10	C	Here 'livid' carries its deathly, lurid color sense, not the more familiar 'furiously angry' sense.

Teacher Context: Episodes 13–15 (Nausicaa, Oxen of the Sun, Circe)

Episodes 13–15 run from evening into night: the beach at Sandymount, the maternity hospital, and the long hallucinatory nighttown episode that closes the middle part. Grouped as the evening and night that complete 'the Odyssey'; the section ends where Joyce's middle part ends. This is the longest section because Episode 15 (Circe) is by far the longest episode and cannot be split.