

Unbroken

Preface and Chapters 1–5

by Laura Hillenbrand

Pre-Reading Vocabulary Practice

Optional Post-Reading Quiz Included

Practice words: audacious, credulous, cull, disdain, incipient, innocuous, insurgency, intrepid, subjugate, surreptitious

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 · Preface and Chapters 1–5 · Louie's wild boyhood in California

Section 2 · Chapters 6–11 · Louie joins the Army Air Forces

Section 3 · Chapters 12–17 · Lost at sea on a raft

Section 4 · Chapters 18–25 · Captured and held as a prisoner

Section 5 · Chapters 26–33 · Still a captive under the Bird

Section 6 · Chapters 34–39 and Epilogue · Coming home after the war

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. Her **audacious** plan to sail around the world stunned everyone.

- A. long and expensive
- B. boldly daring
- C. carefully detailed

6. A spoonful of the **innocuous** powder turned out to be sugar.

- A. rare and costly
- B. bitter and strong
- C. harmless and safe

2. Con artists love a **credulous** customer.

- A. free with money
- B. quick to be fooled
- C. new to town

7. The **insurgency** spread quickly through the mountain provinces.

- A. a sweeping reform movement
- B. a wave of mass migration
- C. a revolt or uprising

3. The farmer had to **cull** the weakest plants from the field.

- A. single out and remove
- B. gather and replant
- C. count and label

8. The **intrepid** explorer crossed the frozen tundra alone.

- A. patient and careful
- B. fearless and daring
- C. lonely and homesick

4. She looked at the cheap gift with **disdain**.

- A. scorn or contempt
- B. mild suspicion
- C. quiet disappointment

9. The emperor sought to **subjugate** every neighboring kingdom.

- A. conquer and control
- B. trade freely with
- C. form alliances with

5. Doctors caught the **incipient** illness before it spread.

- A. just beginning to develop
- B. severe and lasting
- C. rare and mysterious

10. He took a **surreptitious** glance at his neighbor's test answers.

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

ANSWER KEY

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

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 *“In Torrance, a one-boy insurgency was born.”*

As it is used in the passage, the word ‘insurgency’ most nearly suggests that Louie waged

- A. a campaign of open rebellion
- B. a campaign of clever pranks
- C. a campaign of secret thievery

2 *“The more credulous townsfolk called it a sign from God.”*

It can reasonably be inferred that the more credulous townsfolk

- A. were alarmed by the noise at night
- B. were grateful for a real miracle
- C. were fooled by Louie’s staged prank

3 *“One might have expected such an intrepid child to be ecstatic, but the speed and altitude frightened him.”*

In the passage, Louie is characterized as

- A. reckless but secretly anxious
- B. clever and quick to scheme
- C. habitually bold and fearless

4 *“In Torrance in the early 1920s, Italians were held in such disdain that when the Zamperinis arrived, the neighbors petitioned the city council to keep them out.”*

Which statement is best supported by the passage about the neighbors’ view of the family?

- A. They pitied them as newcomers
- B. They scorned them as unwelcome
- C. They feared them as outsiders

5 *“Knowing that punishing Louie would only provoke his defiance, Louise took a surreptitious route toward reforming him.”*

The author calls Louise’s approach ‘surreptitious’ most likely to prepare readers for her

- A. secret recruiting of an informant
- B. stricter punishments at home
- C. public scolding of Louie’s friends

6 *“America was infatuated with the pseudoscience of eugenics and its promise of strengthening the human race by culling the ‘unfit’ from the genetic pool.”*

The passage most strongly suggests that eugenicists hoped to strengthen the race by

- A. removing those judged inferior
- B. outnumbering those judged inferior
- C. educating those judged inferior

7 *“Looking at Louie, whose getaway speed was his saving grace, Pete thought he saw the same incipient talent.”*

According to the passage, what did Pete recognize about Louie’s running talent?

- A. It was already fully developed
- B. It was only beginning to emerge
- C. It was fading after long use

8 *“Now he latched onto a wildly audacious goal: the 1936 Olympics, in Berlin.”*

Which choice best describes how the narrator portrays Louie’s Olympic goal?

- A. as a boldly daring ambition
- B. as a reckless, doomed fantasy
- C. as a calm, realistic target

9 *“They were going to subjugate all of the Far East.”*

The information in this excerpt primarily functions to

- A. explain Japan’s defensive strategy
- B. state Japan’s aim to dominate Asia
- C. describe Japan’s trade proposals

10 *“... a California man, believed to be working for an innocuous local Japanese organization, had in fact been an employee of the Japanese navy.”*

The ironic use of the word ‘innocuous’ suggests that the organization was

- A. openly tied to the navy
- B. too small to matter at all
- C. actually a front for spying

ANSWER KEY

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#	KEY	NOTE
1	A	
2	C	Event comprehension. The 'sign from God' was Louie's rigged church bell, so the credulous were those gullible enough to believe it.
3	C	
4	B	
5	A	Event comprehension. The stealthy method was Louise planting a schoolmate, Hugh, as a secret informant on Louie.
6	A	
7	B	
8	A	
9	B	
10	C	

Teacher Context: Preface and Chapters 1–5

A brief Preface previews the Pacific raft ordeal to come. Part One then covers Louie Zamperini's rebellious, troublemaking childhood in Torrance, California, and his transformation into a record-setting distance runner who reaches the 1936 Berlin Olympics. The break falls at the end of Part One.