Where the Crawdads Sing

Chapters 12–21

by Delia Owens

Pre-Reading Vocabulary Practice

Optional Post-Reading Quiz Included

Practice words: aura, bedraggled, chasm, dormant, grit, inkling, listless, renegades, shrouded, supple

---

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 · Prologue and Chapters 1–11 · Kya's childhood in the marsh

Section 2 · Chapters 12–21 · Kya alone, watching for the fishing boy

Section 3 · Chapters 22–31 · Kya at nineteen on the beach

Section 4 · Chapters 32–45 · The investigation into Chase's death

Section 5 · Chapters 46–57 · Kya's life as a published author

Bold = this section. *Other sections are available at verbalworkout.com.*

verbalworkout.com

(all resources free)

© 2026 verbalworkout.com™ | Free for classroom use and sharing | Not for resale | v2026-06-15 | T-1

Vocabulary Preview

Where the Crawdads Sing

Chapters 12–21

by Delia Owens

Name _____ **Date** _____ **Period** _____

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

1. A peaceful **aura** surrounded the old monk.

A. an atmosphere or mood
B. a soft glow of light
C. a faint, pleasant smell

2. The **bedraggled** dog crept in from the storm.

A. dirty and messy
B. huge and powerful
C. thin and bony

3. A **chasm** opened between the two cliffs.

A. a deep gap
B. a steep path
C. a flowing river

4. The old volcano had stayed **dormant** for centuries.

A. hidden from sight
B. at rest, able to wake
C. famous and feared

5. It took real **grit** to finish the race injured.

A. luck and timing
B. speed and skill
C. courage and resolve

6. She had an **inkling** that something was wrong.

A. a clear memory
B. a strong fear
C. a faint hint

7. After the long flu, she felt **listless** all day.

A. achy and feverish
B. drained and weary
C. tense and anxious

8. A band of **renegades** robbed the frontier town.

A. rebels and outlaws
B. wandering traders
C. skilled hunters

9. Thick fog **shrouded** the harbor at dawn.

A. slowly chilled
B. hid from view
C. drifted across

10. The dancer's **supple** body bent with ease.

A. strong and muscular
B. tired and weak
C. soft and flexible

Reading Helpers

(Not quizzed — helpful for this text.)

where the crawdads sing — far out in the wild, untamed backcountry where creatures still behave wildly

musselmonger — a coined term for one who gathers and peddles mussels; Kya's self-image

© 2026 verbalworkout.com™ | Free for classroom use and sharing | Not for resale | v2026-06-15 | T-2

ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary Preview

Where the Crawdads Sing

Chapters 12–21

by Delia Owens

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

© 2026 verbalworkout.com™ | Free for classroom use and sharing | Not for resale | v2026-06-15 | T-3

Vocabulary in Context

Where the Crawdads Sing

Chapters 12–21

by Delia Owens

Name _____ **Date** _____ **Period** _____ **Score** _____ / 10

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

1 *"Their joy created an aura almost visible against the deepening sky."*

As it is used in the passage, the word "aura" most nearly suggests that the girls' joy…

A. hid them from Kya's view
B. seemed to glow around them
C. was beginning to fade

2 *"In spite of hoeing her garden, cooking half of every day, and scrubbing and mending for whites, Mabel's hand was supple."*

It can reasonably be inferred that, despite her hard daily labor, Mabel's hands had stayed…

A. soft and flexible
B. rough and calloused
C. stiff and swollen

3 *"Dust stirred from their feet and shrouded the woods, drifting up through branches,"*

The author most likely writes that the dust "shrouded the woods" in order to…

A. convey that it veiled them in haze
B. signal the turkeys had fled
C. show the woods grew brighter

4 *"A large female clawed at the bedraggled hen …"*

In the passage, the attacked turkey hen is characterized as…

A. plump and well-groomed
B. filthy and beaten-down
C. fierce and threatening

5 *"her face and body showed early inklings and foothills of womanhood,"*

The passage most strongly suggests that, in Tate's eyes, Kya was…

A. just starting to mature
B. still a small child
C. already fully grown

6 *"Blending in with the fighting, drinking, cussing renegades of the marsh was the easiest thing Jake ever did."*

It can reasonably be inferred that, by blending in with the renegades, Jake had…

A. given up his old ambitions
B. risen to lead the marshmen
C. found honest, steady work

7 *"Some of the seeds lie dormant in the desiccated earth for decades, waiting,"*

According to the passage, the seeds lying dormant in the dried-up earth…

A. sprout again every spring
B. die off within a few seasons
C. stay inactive, then revive later

8 *"A chasm she knew to its greatest depths."*

The passage most strongly suggests that, looking into Tate's eyes at the good-bye, Kya felt…

A. a flash of sudden anger
B. a deep, familiar gulf of loss
C. a slight, passing sadness

9 *"Listless, she wondered what she had done to send everyone away."*

In the passage, Kya as she lies in bed for days is characterized as…

A. restless and impatient
B. calm and at peace
C. drained and without spirit

10 *"But where had all that grit brought her?"*

Which choice best describes Kya's attitude toward her own grit as she lies defeated?

A. pride in her own strength
B. blame on simple bad luck
C. doubt that her resolve paid off

© 2026 verbalworkout.com™ | Free for classroom use and sharing | Not for resale | v2026-06-15 | T-4

ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary in Context

Where the Crawdads Sing

Chapters 12–21

by Delia Owens

#	KEY	NOTE
1	B	
2	A	
3	A	
4	B	
5	A	
6	A	Character comprehension. Jake once dreamed of law school and wealth; joining the renegades marks his surrender.
7	C	
8	B	Event comprehension. ‘Chasm’ is figurative here—the gulf of grief opened by Tate’s departure.
9	C	
10	C	Character comprehension. ‘Grit’ is figurative—courage and resolve, not literal sand—capping Kya’s long fight to survive.

Teacher Context: Chapters 12–21

Now alone after her father's departure, Kya grows into adolescence in the marsh. Tate teaches her to read and write and nurtures her gift for natural science, and the two fall in love before he leaves for college, promising to return. This section runs to the end of Part One.

© 2026 verbalworkout.com™ | Free for classroom use and sharing | Not for resale | v2026-06-15 | T-5