Where the Crawdads Sing

Chapters 32-45

by Delia Owens

Pre-Reading Vocabulary Practice

Optional Post-Reading Quiz Included

Practice words: abated, consorting, elusive, jilted, leering, menagerie, obligatory, primal, refracted, statesman

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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

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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.*

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Vocabulary Preview

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

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

1. By midnight the storm had **abated**.

A. gradually died down
B. passed directly overhead
C. shifted out to sea

2. He was scolded for **consorting** with troublemakers.

A. keeping company
B. secretly competing
C. openly arguing

3. The **elusive** promotion finally went to someone else.

A. vague and unclear
B. highly demanding
C. hard to attain

4. He was **jilted** by his girlfriend and took it hard.

A. publicly embarrassed
B. cast off by a lover
C. ignored for weeks

5. The stranger kept **leering** at her across the room.

A. staring slyly and rudely
B. studying her carefully
C. watching with suspicion

6. Her shelf held a **menagerie** of travel souvenirs.

A. a prized handful
B. a varied collection
C. a jumbled pile

7. He gave an **obligatory** nod and kept walking.

A. firm and approving
B. slow and thoughtful
C. done from duty, not interest

8. A **primal** fear gripped him when the lights went out.

A. deep and instinctive
B. sudden and brief
C. strange and unfamiliar

9. The thick lens **refracted** the beam of light.

A. reflected the light
B. bent the light
C. scattered the light

10. He was admired throughout the county as a **statesman**.

A. a wealthy landowner
B. a shrewd businessman
C. a dignified leader

Reading Helpers

(Not quizzed — helpful for this text.)

duff — decaying leaves and other matter on a forest floor
eventide — (archaic/poetic) evening; the time of dusk
bailiff — a court officer who keeps order and attends to the judge and jury

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ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary Preview

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

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Vocabulary in Context

Where the Crawdads Sing

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

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

1 *"The storm abated into a whine and drizzle; still, instead of walking to the diner, the two lawmen sent a runner for a takeout …"*

As it is used in the passage, the word 'abated' most nearly suggests that the storm…

A. had eased to a light drizzle
B. had stopped altogether
C. had moved out to sea

2 *"Inside, they stared at the shelves of her menagerie."*

It can reasonably be inferred from 'the shelves of her menagerie' that Kya kept…

A. only a few rare items
B. a large, varied collection
C. live animals in cages

3 *"She had never needed a compass because the directions seemed obvious to her. But on cloudy days, when the sun was elusive, the compass would guide her."*

The passage most strongly suggests that, on cloudy days, the sun was…

A. blocked only at sunset
B. hard to locate for direction
C. too bright to look toward

4 *"Sunsets are never simple.*
Twilight is refracted and reflected
But never true."

The poet most likely calls twilight 'refracted and reflected' in order to…

A. show its colors are bent, not true
B. describe an unusual weather event
C. praise the beauty of sunlight

5 *"A better motive might help," Joe said. "Being jilted doesn't seem like enough."*

According to the passage, the motive Joe finds too weak is that Miss Clark had been…

A. cheated out of money
B. publicly insulted
C. cast aside by a lover

6 *"…he wore his thick white hair and frumpy linen suits with the accidental if cliched grace of a country statesman."*

In the passage, Tom Milton is characterized as…

A. stern and forbidding
B. anxious and unkempt
C. dignified and distinguished

7 *"I know ya want me," he said, leering."*

Which choice best describes Chase's manner as he speaks here?

A. confident and flirtatious
B. sly and predatory
C. teasing and good-humored

8 *"Finding strength from somewhere primal, she pushed against the ground with her knees and arms and reared up, at the same time swinging her elbow back across his jaw."*

The author most likely calls Kya's strength 'primal' in order to…

A. show she had trained to fight
B. stress her careful planning
C. tie her strength to raw instinct

9 *"She'd brought this on herself. Consorting unchaperoned. A natural wanting had led her unmarried to a cheap motel, but still unsatisfied."*

The passage most strongly suggests that Kya, in her shame, blames her present trouble on…

A. keeping company with a man
B. traveling far from home
C. fighting back too fiercely

10 *"…looked back at her, blinked in obligatory boredom, and squeezed easily between the bars."*

In context, the word 'obligatory' emphasizes that the cat's bored blink was…

A. a mere formality, not real feeling
B. a warning to stay away
C. a sign of true exhaustion

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ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary in Context

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#	KEY	NOTE
1	A	
2	B	
3	B	
4	A	
5	C	Event comprehension. 'Jilted' names the prosecution's proposed motive - Chase had rejected Kya for another woman.
6	C	The Word is figurative here; Milton's 'frumpy' suits do not undercut the dignified bearing of a 'statesman'.
7	B	
8	C	Ties to the section's larger reflection on inherited survival instinct (the vixen and 'ancient genes' passage).
9	A	Character comprehension. Kya blames herself for the relationship though she was the one attacked; the self-blame is misplaced.
10	A	

Teacher Context: Chapters 32-45

The 1969 investigation intensifies as the sheriff gathers evidence and an alibi account pointing toward Kya as a suspect, while the earlier timeline shows Tate's return, Chase's betrayal of Kya, and her growing success as a published nature writer. The two timelines converge and Kya is arrested and jailed. The break sets up the trial as the opening of the final section.

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