# Reading Vocabulary

**DIRECTIONS**  
Choose the word that means the same, or about the same, as the underlined word. Circle the letter for the answer you have chosen.

**SAMPLE A**  
**A curriculum is**  
A a plan of lessons to be taught  
B a circular object  
C a collection of reference books  
D a private school

1. **To collapse is to**  
   A celebrate  
   B cave in  
   C cry out  
   D collect

2. **A synonym for steady is**  
   F honest  
   G silly  
   H firm  
   J undependable

3. **Potential is**  
   A a fear of trying new things  
   B the ability to do everything easily  
   C a habit of getting into trouble  
   D the ability to become something or someone

4. **A corporation is**  
   F a government  
   G a public school  
   H a business  
   J a social club

5. **A competitive person**  
   A tries to outdo others  
   B cooperates with others  
   C keeps to himself or herself  
   D seeks the help of others

6. **To resent is to**  
   F dislike  
   G reproduce  
   H represent  
   J repeat

7. **Donate means the same as**  
   A criticize  
   B give  
   C sell  
   D deny

8. **A place that is vacant is**  
   F gutted  
   G occupied  
   H unusual  
   J empty

9. **A synonym for fragile is**  
   A determined  
   B delicate  
   C serious  
   D sturdy

10. **Benefits are**  
    F complications  
    G disadvantages  
    H advantages  
    J responsibilities
DIRECTIONS
Read the sentence in the box, then choose the answer in which the underlined word is used in the same way. Circle the letter for the answer you have chosen.

SAMPLE B
Tai and Miss Saunders head for the office.

In which sentence does the word head mean the same thing as in the sentence above?
A Vinnie agreed to head the fundraising committee,
B A human head has 29 bones.
C When the sun began to set, the hikers knew it was time to head home.
D The head of the drum is a stretched animal skin.

11.
I never know when a collar's gonna fall off, or a pushpin gonna stick me and make me holler out in class.

In which sentence does the word stick mean the same thing as in the sentence above?
A When a hunting dog finds a bird, it will stand still, and its tail will stick straight out.
B When I try to sew, I often stick my finger with the needle.
C The three friends promised to stick by one another no matter what happened.
D In all the clutter of her room, Carrie could not find her hockey stick.

12.
“When you were little, you loved to play pretend. To be G.I. Joe or Barbie. This is the same thing. Playing pretend, she says.”

In which sentence does the word play mean the same thing as in the sentence above?
F To play a musical instrument well requires many hours of practice.
G The senior class chose The Tempest as its spring play.
H In one play, the quarterback gained 30 yards.
J My grandfather loves to play checkers and chess.

13.
But today I've got on my new clothes and I'm feeling mighty fine.

In which sentence does the word fine mean the same thing as in the sentence above?
A Alice says she will be fine after a few days of rest.
B Mrs. Parker had to pay a $50 fine for parking in a no parking zone.
C The sand on Hawaiian beaches is white and very fine.
D The two girls stared at the fine young man who stepped out of the taxi.

14.
We need a new alarm clock. Ours rings whenever it wants. Two in the morning. Ten at night. It don't matter. But you can be sure of one thing, it ain't never gonna ring when it's supposed to.

In which sentence does the word ring mean the same thing as in the sentence above?
F When we heard a cell phone ring, everyone in the room jumped nervously.
G In a three ring circus, three acts go on at the same time.
H Mona always wears a ring on every finger of both hands.
J Although John's story has a ring of truth about it, I still can't believe him.

15.
The first thing Miss Saunders does is ask me how work is coming in the office. Then she says, “I guess you're headed there now. You are working there today, right?”

In which sentence does the word right mean the same thing as in the sentence above?
F When you come to Oak Street, turn right.
G A right triangle has one angle of 90 degrees.
H Am I right in saying that I have done my share of the work?
J Every American has the right of free speech.
DIRECTIONS
As you read each sentence, use the other words in the sentence to help you figure out what the underlined word means. Circle the letter for the answer you have chosen.

SAMPLE C
“Romeo and Juliet didn’t play by the rules. People had expectations for them. Wanted them to act and be a certain way. But they refused.” Expectations means--
A expensive gifts
B ideas on how something should be
C very little hope
D fear of the future

16. Anyhow, Miss Saunders asks the class to pretend we’re teenagers living in the seventeenth century. We have to write a diary “chronicling” our experiences. Chronicling means --
F ignoring
G forgetting
H recording
J changing

17. When we walk into the office, Miss Carol and Maxine act like they haven’t even noticed Charlese or the twins. But they sure have noticed me. And I swear I can see the corner of Maxine’s mouth go up, like she’s holding back a smirk. Smirk means --
A song
B sneer
C sneeze
D snuffle

18. Miss Saunders bends over to get a good look at Tai. “They are so enthused in class. Full of great ideas.”
“That’s great,” Tai says, standing and stretching from side to side.
“Their insights are fantastic,” Miss Saunders says. “Right on target. But their test-taking skills are just terrible.” Insights means --
F ability to see without glasses
G understanding of the way things are
H willingness to complete assignments
J ability to do well on tests

19. Caleb looks at me for the longest time. “Things can change,” he says. “Like things between me and you, things at school.”
“Don’t go there, Caleb,” I say. “I said I was sorry, remember? Said it ten thousand times. Give a brother a break, why don’t you?”
“This ain’t McDonald’s, Caleb. No breaks today,” I say, moving to another seat…. Caleb can be persistent. He moves down two seats. Persistent means --
A shy
B nervous
C hungry
D determined

20. Miss Saunders gives me a hard look and goes on about how important it is for a teacher to not have her personal business out among students. How it can “undermind her credibility.” whatever that means. Credibility means --
F authority
G imagination
H experience
J energy
**Reading Comprehension**

**DIRECTIONS**
Read each passage, then read each question about the passage. Decide which is the best answer to the question. Circle the letter for the answer you have chosen.

**SAMPLE**

**Chapter 2**

Tai teaches math. She is weird too. She stands at the blackboard with one leg leaning on the other like a flamingo. She does yoga and **hums like a heater on the blink**. Tai is a strange chick, I’m telling you.

“I see you made it,” she says to Miss Saunders, grabbing both her arms and squeezing them tight in a friendly girl-to-girl squeeze.

Tai looks funny standing next to Miss Saunders, who must be close to six feet tall. Tai is short with long hair and two sets of silver hoop earrings in her ears, and a small hole in her nose where she puts her nose ring when she ain’t at work.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. From this passage, you can infer that Tai and Miss Saunders</th>
<th>2. What figure of speech is “hums like a heater on the blink”?</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. are complete strangers.</td>
<td>F. a metaphor</td>
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<td>B. are already good friends.</td>
<td>G. an alliteration</td>
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<td>C. have just been introduced.</td>
<td>H. a personification</td>
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<td>D. are sisters.</td>
<td>J. a simile</td>
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Chapter 3

I didn’t always hang with Char. Last year I hung all by myself. I went to class. Got mostly A’s. Nobody even noticed me till Caleb Jamaal Assam came along. Caleb’s the smartest boy in school. Cute. Friendly. A poet. I should have known being with him was gonna cause me trouble.

He stared at me half the year. I thought he saw what everybody else saw. Skinny, poor, black Maleeka. But Caleb saw something different. He said I was pretty. Said he liked my eyes and sweet cocoa brown skin. He wrote me poems and letters. He put spearmint gum inside. Walked me to class. Gave me a ring. I ain’t told Momma.

After a while, everybody knew. Charlese and them laughed when Caleb and I walked by. They’d stuck out their legs and tried to trip me. They wrote Caleb notes saying not even the Goodwill would want my clothes. Somebody said I had hair so nappy I needed a rake to comb it.

It was that trip to Washington, D.C., where things really fell apart. Caleb sat next to me. They teased us all the way there. Barks came from the back of the bus. Spit bombs flew my way. Then John-John started singing his song. “Maleeka, Maleeka, we sure want to keep her but she so black, we just can’t see her.” The whole bus started in. Teachers tried to make them stop. By then, it was too late.

I looked at Caleb. He gave me the goofiest smile and said, “Sorry Maleeka…,” and moved to the front of the bus with his boys. They slapped him five. Everybody laughed and clapped. I sat there with a frozen smile on my face like that stupid Mona Lisa. Till this day, I don’t know nothing about Washington, D.C., just that I don’t ever want to go there no more.

1. The speaker in this passage is
   A Caleb.
   B Charlese.
   D Maleeka.

2. Caleb’s intentions in his behavior toward Maleeka and what really happened provide an example of
   F suspense.
   G fiction.
   H irony.
   J point of view.

3. Why does Maleeka say that she never wants to go to Washington D.C. again?
   A She thinks that Washington D.C. is a boring place to visit.
   B She didn’t learn anything from the trip.
   C All she can remember about the trip is the cruel incident on the bus.
   D She thinks that Caleb is the only person in school who likes her.

4. Which of the following is not a sign that Caleb likes Maleeka?
   F He wrote poems and letters to her.
   G He sat by Maleeka on the bus.
   H He gave Maleeka a ring.
   J He joined in John-John’s song about Maleeka.

5. The term “hang” in bold type the first paragraph of the passage means
   A mock.
   B spend time.
   C ignore.
   D cause trouble.

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Chapter 7

No television, telephone, or hanging out with friends for three weeks, all because of that fight. And that ain’t even the worse part. The principal, Miss Saunders, and Momma got their heads together and came up with a way to punish me good. They say it ain’t punishment, but it sure feels that way. They found me a job. A job that don’t pay no money and ain’t no fun at all. I don’t even want it. But Momma’s got her mind set, so that’s that.

I will be working in the school office, filing papers, stapling letters, that kind of stuff. This is Miss Saunders’ bright idea. She talked it over with Momma last night on the telephone. I could hear some of the conversation coming through the receiver. Miss Saunders was saying something about me wasting my potential, that the school needed a better way to keep up with me so I don’t fall through the cracks. And Momma believes all that crap, when the truth is that Miss Saunders is just a big mouth, bossy broad who likes to throw her weight around and treat everybody like they are some broken pot she’s got to patch up.

I could smell the peppermint tea Momma was sipping, while she spoke to Miss Saunders. “Maleeka’s got more potential than she’s letting on. Keeping her under the principal’s nose may be just the way to get her back in line.”

Momma and Miss Saunders talk a long time. When they’re done, I try to tell Momma that Miss Saunders doesn’t know what she’s doing. That she ain’t even a real teacher. Momma says she doesn’t care. She likes her.

“That Miss Saunders is the first teacher who ever called here to talk about what was going on with you. I like that. It shows she’s concerned, that this job ain’t just about the money.”

I tell Momma that Miss Saunders don’t need the money. She got plenty. “Don’t it make you wonder, Momma, why somebody with all that money and a good job would give it up to come to McClenton?”

Momma sits there for a while, thinking. “I wouldn’t think on it too much, Maleeka,” she says. “She’s here, that’s the important thing.”

6. Which of the following is a fact?
   F  The office job is way to punish Maleeka.
   G  Miss Saunders phones Momma to talk about Maleeka.
   H  Maleeka has more potential than she is letting on.
   J  Keeping Maleeka under the principal’s nose may keep her in line.

7. The first phrase in bold type in the second paragraph, “don’t fall through the cracks,” means
   A  don’t get hurt.
   B  don’t trip on school property.
   C  don’t go unnoticed.
   D  don’t get lost on the way to school.

8. The second phrase in bold type in the second paragraph, “treat everyone like they are some broken pot,” is
   F  a simile.
   G  a characterization.
   H  an alliteration
   J  a metaphor.
9. Which of the following titles best fits in the space marked #1 in the T-chart below?
   A  Maleeka’s Opinion of Miss Saunders  
   B  The Worst Punishment  
   C  The Truth about Miss Saunders  
   D  The Phone Call  

10. Which of the following fits in the space marked #2 in the T-chart below?
   F  Expects the office job will be fun  
   G  Says the important thing is that Miss Saunders is here  
   H  Thinks Miss Saunders doesn’t need money  
   J  Believes Miss Saunders wants to help her  

11. Which of the following fits in the space marked #3 in the T-chart below?
   A  Likes Miss Saunders’s idea to punish Maleeka  
   B  Wonders why Miss Saunders left her good job to teach at McClenton.  
   C  Believes teachers should mind their own business.  
   D  Likes Miss Saunders.  

12. From this selection, you can predict that
   F  Maleeka will enjoy her job in the office.  
   G  Maleeka will stay home and watch television for the next three weeks.  
   H  Miss Saunders will pay attention to how Maleeka is doing in her job in the office.  
   J  Momma and Miss Saunders will become good friends.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#1</th>
<th>#2</th>
<th>#3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thinks Miss Saunders is a big bossy broad.</td>
<td>Thinks Miss Saunders likes to throw her weight around.</td>
<td>Thinks Miss Saunders is concerned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thinks Miss Saunders is concerned.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Thinks Miss Saunders is not in the job for the money.</td>
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</tbody>
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Chapter 31
Charlese looks scared, like she’s gonna cry. I never seen that before. I figure maybe she didn’t have no tears. All the while Char’s eyes are saying I better take the blame, or else. I am so tired of being scared, of doing what other folks want me to do.
Char throws mean words at me, words as hard as bricks. “You better not punk out on me,” she says.
Tears start to roll from my eyes.
“Maleeka. You know what JuJu will do to me if I get kicked out of school.”
JuJu will kick Char’s butt good. That’s another reason why I can’t tell. I’m rocking and thinking and crying. Miss Saunders is very quiet. She’s listening and watching. She puts a gentle hand on my shoulder.
“If I get in trouble for you, you gonna have to move to another neighborhood,” Char is saying.
I keep rocking and crying.
I’m thinking about the boys who tried to kiss me and the ones I whipped when I helped John-John. I start thinking about Akeelma too.
Now Miss Saunders has her arm around me, and it sure feels good to have her here. She’s letting Char speak her mind.
“All I done for you,” Char says. “You gonna leave me out to dry like this. Wait till later, you ugly, stupid black thing.”
Call me by my name! I hear Akeelma say, and I scream it out too. “Call me by my name! I am not ugly. I am not stupid. I am Maleeka Madison, and, yeah, I’m black, real black, and if you don’t like me, too bad ‘cause black is the skin I’m in!” I yell. “No matter what you think, Charlese Jones, you’re ten times worse. I would never force someone to burn down a classroom, or pick on kids weaker than me, or say words so mean they make people bleed inside.” I’m rocking and crying and rocking.
“You the one who pushed me to mess up Miss Saunders’ room, and you were in on it, too – you and the twins,” I say, feeling relieved.
Charlese gives me a hard look.
She pushes past Miss Saunders and me and makes her way to the door. “Look at you two – two ugly-faced losers,” she says. Miss Saunders don’t even stop Char. She lets her go. Then Miss Saunders hugs me to her, and I feel safe inside.

13. Which of the following people give Maleeka the courage to tell the truth?
A Char and the twins
B John-John and the boys who tried to beat him
C Char and JuJu
D Miss Saunders and Akeelma

14. In this passage Maleeka’s feelings change from
F angry to scared.
G tired to guilty.
H scared to safe.
J relieved to tired.

15. From this passage you can predict that
A Char will become a real friend to Maleeka.
B Maleeka will feel better about herself.
C Miss Saunders will return to her old job.
D Char will still control Maleeka.