

Vocabulary Test

This is a pre-test (so don't stress out if you don't know all of these words yet).

You will encounter the following words in Ray Bradbury's *Dandelion Wine*.

Match the numbers of the following words (1 through 15) with their definitions (A through O).
Place your answers in the spaces below.

1. Seized
2. Suspended
3. Loam
4. Barometer
5. Alien
6. Limber
7. Revelation
8. Meter
9. Thermometer
10. Believe
11. Grief
12. Leisure
13. Quizzical
14. Protein
15. Speedometer

- A. _____ A nutrient from food
- B. _____ Something (or someone) foreign
- C. _____ Poor soil
- D. _____ A gauge or an indicator
- E. _____ A gauge that measures speed
- F. _____ A gauge that measures temperature
- G. _____ A device that measures air pressure
- H. _____ Inquiring
- I. _____ To loosen up (a muscle or a joint)
- J. _____ Free time
- K. _____ Sorrow or unhappiness
- L. _____ Apprehended or detained
- M. _____ A disclosure or an exposure
- N. _____ Something that is considered true
- O. _____ Stopped for a time

An Explanation

The “Vocabulary Test” assessed my students’ vocabulary.

Dandelion Wine can be very difficult to read—especially if you don’t know the uncommon words.

I wanted to *prepare* my students to experience life in Ray Bradbury’s Green Town, Illinois (which takes place during the summer season of 1928). I wanted them to know these fifteen words *before* they opened the book.

I chose the fifteen most commonly-used words from the text for this assessment tool. These fifteen words appear in chapters 1, 2, and 3 of *Dandelion Wine*. I told my students: “The words on this ‘Vocabulary Test’ appear in the first few chapters of *Dandelion Wine*. So, you’ll need to know *what* these words mean and you’ll need to know *how* to use them.”

After administering the assessment, the class spent some time defining the words, discovering creative examples, and using the words in sentences.

Strengths:

- The words on the “Vocabulary Test” are common and perhaps more relevant
- These words show the variety in Bradbury’s text
- The assessment tool can be administered in 5 minutes, allowing plenty of time to *define* and *use* the words

Weaknesses:

- This assessment tool is a “matching” test; students can simply guess correctly, without really knowing the definitions of the words
- This assessment tool is quite limited (again, it includes fifteen words from three chapters)

The “Vocabulary Test” was only worth 15 points (so it didn’t “make or break” anybody’s grade).