

Name: _____ Date: _____

Vocabulary:

The Tell-Tale Heart

1. **agape (uh-GAYP)** *adjective*; If your mouth is agape, it is open wide in surprise, wonder, or shock. You might find your mouth agape at the sight of a dolphin jumping out of the water or at the news that you've just won a million dollars.
2. **blather (BLATH-er)** *verb*; To blather is to talk on and on in a foolish way.
3. **dissemble (dih-SEM-buhl)** *verb*; To dissemble is to conceal your true motives or thoughts—to hide what you really mean or what you really intend to do.
4. **keen (keen)** *adjective*; *Keen* means “sharp, intense, and focused.” When a sense such as sight or smell is keen, it is strong and very sensitive. If you have a keen interest in robotics, you are extremely interested in robotics. *Keen* can also mean “interested and enthusiastic,” as in, “Julie is keen on going for a walk after dinner, but Aaron would rather sit on the couch and relax.”
5. **mortal (MAWR-tl)** *adjective or noun*; As an adjective, *mortal* can mean “certain to die” or “causing death.” A human being is mortal because all human beings eventually die. (A vampire, on the other hand, is *immortal*—that is, not mortal.) *Mortal* can also describe something that is intense or severe; for example, you might have a mortal fear of spiders.

As a noun, *mortal* means “a human being.”
6. **skulk (skuhl-k)** *verb*; To skulk is to prowl or sneak around. *Skulk* is usually used to describe someone who is sneaking around because he or she is up to no good. Thieves might skulk around a house they are planning to rob.
7. **stifle (STY-fuhl)** *verb*; *Stifle* can mean “kill by depriving of oxygen.” To stifle something can also be to stop it, cut it off, or hold it back. You might stifle a giggle while someone is telling a serious story to avoid being rude. You might stifle a friend who's about to give away a secret.
8. **vex (veks)** *verb*; If something vexes you, it irritates, annoys, worries, or puzzles you. You may be vexed by a difficult question on a test, a jar that you can't open, or a friend's refusal to attend your birthday party.

Directions: In the space below, list any other words from the play whose definitions you are not sure about. For each word, use context clues to try to figure out the meaning. Then look up the word in a few different dictionaries. Discuss the meaning of the word with your teacher or another adult. Then write a definition for the word and one example sentence.

Vocabulary Practice

The Tell-Tale Heart

Directions: Fill in the circle next to the best answer to each question.

1. Who is more likely to have his mouth **agape**?
Ⓐ Sam, who just learned that he won an award he wasn't expecting
Ⓑ Joseph, who is washing the dishes
2. When would Jasmine be more likely to **stifle** a yawn?
Ⓐ while she is getting ready for bed
Ⓑ while she is competing in a public debate
3. Which is an example of **skulking**?
Ⓐ tiptoeing across the room because a baby is sleeping nearby
Ⓑ creeping into a room to sneak up on someone
4. Which person would more likely be described as having **keen** senses?
Ⓐ Sean, who is riding his bike and hears loud honking from cars
Ⓑ Evelyn, who is sitting on her porch and smells the roses blooming next door

Directions: Choose the word or phrase that is most similar in meaning to each word in bold.

5. **vex**

- Ⓐ agree
- Ⓑ discipline
- Ⓒ upset
- Ⓓ ignore

7. **mortal**

- Ⓐ loud
- Ⓑ slow
- Ⓒ old
- Ⓓ deadly

6. **dissemble**

- Ⓐ pretend
- Ⓑ wrap
- Ⓒ build
- Ⓓ request

8. **blather**

- Ⓐ protest
- Ⓑ chatter
- Ⓒ laugh
- Ⓓ guess