

Silas Marner

Vocabulary (Part I: Chapters 1-4)

Read this list and be familiar with these words before you read chapters 1-4. They will help you to understand the story the way the author meant to tell it, allowing you to enjoy the book and read it more smoothly and quickly. These words will appear on vocabulary quizzes and tests, so do not skip this step.

Word	Example and definition	Chapter
dexterity	.... the process by which rapidity and <u>dexterity</u> of any kind were acquired was so wholly hidden, that they partook of the nature of conjuring. dexterity = adroitness (skill) — with the hands or mind	1.1
protuberance	For how was it possible to believe that those large brown <u>protuberant</u> eyes in Silas Marner's pale face really saw nothing very distinctly that was not close to them ...? protuberant = something that sticks out from its surroundings	1.1
rickets	.... their dreadful stare could dart cramp, or <u>rickets</u> , or a wry mouth at any boy who happened to be in the rear? rickets = childhood disease most commonly caused by a vitamin D deficiency and characterized by soft bones which can lead to fractures and deformity	1.1
advent	Then bethinking herself of Silas's <u>advent</u> from an unknown country, she said, "Could it ha' been as they'd no church where you was born?" advent = an arrival (especially of an important event or invention)	1.1
indebted	It was partly to this vague fear that Marner was <u>indebted</u> for protecting him from the persecution that his singularities might have drawn upon him.... indebted = to be grateful for a favor; or to owe money; or to be in the position of owing a debt of gratitude	1.1
provident	.... his handicraft made him a highly welcome settler to the richer housewives of the district, and even to the more <u>provident</u> cottagers, who had their little stock of yarn at the year's end. provident = providing carefully for the future — often by saving money	1.1
repugnant	Their sense of his usefulness would have counteracted any <u>repugnance</u> or suspicion which was not confirmed by a deficiency in the quality or the tale of the cloth he wove for them. repugnance = strong disgust	1.1
meta-morphosis	Marner's inward life had been a history and a <u>metamorphosis</u> , as that of every fervid nature must be when it has fled, or been condemned, to solitude. metamorphosis = a complete change	1.1
fervid	Marner's inward life had been a history and a metamorphosis, as that of every <u>fervid</u> nature must be when it has fled, or been condemned, to solitude. fervid = intensely passionate, or with great effort	1.1
accession	....it was believed by himself and others that its effect was seen in an <u>accession</u> of light and fervor. accession = becoming ruler or taking other high office	1.1

resurgent	A less truthful man than he might have been tempted into the subsequent creation of a vision in the form of <u>resurgent</u> memory.... resurgent = rising again — as with new strength or popularity	1.1
bequest	.... a little store of wisdom which she had imparted to him as a solemn <u>bequest</u> ... bequest = a gift specified in a will (upon death)	1.1
efficacy	This total failure of the coal-hole discipline shook Silas's belief in the <u>efficacy</u> of punishment. efficacy = effectiveness	1.1
colloquy	Such <u>colloquies</u> have occupied many a pair of pale-faced weavers, whose unnurtured souls have been like young winged things, fluttering forsaken in the twilight. colloquies = a conversation (formal in modern usage); or written dialogue	1.1
hinder	"...let him go and stan' by himself—there's nobody 'ull <u>hinder</u> him; and then he can let the parish'ners know if they're wrong." hinder = slowed down or caused problems for	1.1
impetuous	"I can't feel as I've got any father but one," said Eppie, <u>impetuously</u> , while the tears gathered. impetuously = impulsively (without much thought)	1.1
culpable	If there is an angel who records the sorrows of men as well as their sins, he knows how many and deep are the sorrows that spring from false ideas for which no man is <u>culpable</u> . culpable = guilty of something or deserving blame	1.1
dispensation	There was nothing here, when he rose in the deep morning quiet and looked out on the dewy brambles and rank tufted grass, that seemed to have any relation with that life centring in Lantern Yard, which had once been to him the altar-place of high <u>dispensations</u> . dispensations = an exemption from some rule or obligation, something distributed	1.2
occult	When Doctor Kimble gave physic, it was natural that it should have an effect; but when a weaver, who came from nobody knew where, worked wonders with a bottle of brown waters, the <u>occult</u> character of the process was evident. occult = relating to magic	1.2
couplet	...the very pauses between the <u>couplets</u> of the hymn, as it was given out, and the recurrent swell of voices in song... couplets = successive pairs of lines of poetry; usually rhymed	1.2
propitious	And poor Silas was vaguely conscious of something not unlike the feeling of primitive men, when they fled thus, in fear or in sullenness, from the face of an <u>unpropitious</u> deity. unpropitious = unfavorable	1.2
unremitting	His first movement after the shock had been to work in his loom; and he went on with this <u>unremittingly</u> , never asking himself why, now he was come to Raveloe.... unremittingly = continuing without a break	1.2
subsist	The sense of security more frequently springs from habit than from conviction, and for this reason it often <u>subsists</u> after such a change in the conditions as might have been expected to suggest alarm. subsists = survives	1.2
loam	But now, when all purpose was gone, that habit of looking towards the money and grasping it with a sense of fulfilled effort made a <u>loam</u> that was deep enough for the seeds of desire.... loam = rich soil	1.2
precursor	One day, taking a pair of shoes to be mended, he saw the cobbler's wife seated by the fire, suffering from the terrible symptoms of heart-disease and dropsy, which he had witnessed as the <u>precursors</u> of his mother's death. precursors = an indication of (or contributing factor to) something to come	1.2

transient	Thus it came to pass that his movement of pity towards Sally Oates, which had given him a <u>transient</u> sense of brotherhood, heightened the repulsion between him and his neighbours, and made his isolation more complete. transient = lasting a short time	1.2
incipient	Do we not wile away moments of inanity or fatigued waiting by repeating some trivial movement or sound, until the repetition has bred a want, which is <u>incipient</u> habit? incipient = beginning to come into existence	1.2
erudite	The same sort of process has perhaps been undergone by wiser men, when they have been cut off from faith and love—only, instead of a loom and a heap of guineas, they have had some <u>erudite</u> research, some ingenious project, or some well-knit theory. erudite = deep scholarly	1.2
revelry	But at night came his <u>revelry</u> ... revelry = a party — especially a noisy one	1.2
beget	In his truthful simple soul, not even the growing greed and worship of gold could <u>beget</u> any vice directly injurious to others. beget = to cause or produce something (past tense: begotten)	1.2
unctuous	Betty Jay scented the boiling of Squire Cass's hams, but her longing was arrested by the <u>unctuous</u> liquor in which they were boiled unctuous = unpleasantly and insincerely charming or ingratiating; fawning	1.3
censure	Raveloe was not a place where moral <u>censure</u> was severe, but it was thought a weakness in the Squire that he had kept all his sons at home in idleness; censure = criticism	1.3
gratuitous	The door opened, and a thick-set, heavy-looking young man entered, with the flushed face and the <u>gratuitously</u> elated bearing which mark the first stage of intoxication. gratuitously = unnecessary and unwarranted, or done insincerely	1.3
coxswain	He said, just now, before he went out, he should send word to <u>Cox</u> to distrain, if Fowler didn't come and pay up his arrears this week. cox = the person in charge of a boat (small ship) — such as a boat used in rowing competition	1.3
pacify	You drain me of money till I have got nothing to <u>pacify</u> her with, and she'll do as she threatens some day. pacify = calm or satisfy	1.3
irresolute	... his own habitual <u>irresolution</u> deprived him of all sympathy. irresolution = uncertain how to act or proceed	1.3
vacillate	From the near vision of that certainty he fell back on suspense and <u>vacillation</u> with a sense of repose. vacillation = indecision (change one's mind back and forth between conflicting ideas)	1.3
disinclined	The disinherited son of a small squire, equally <u>disinclined</u> to dig and to beg.... disinclined = feeling reluctant to do something, not inclined	1.3
prosaic	The lives of those rural forefathers, whom we are apt to think very <u>prosaic</u> figures—men whose only work was to ride round their land, getting heavier and heavier in their saddles... prosaic = lacking anything unusual, interesting, or challenging	1.3
pathos	The lives of those rural forefathers...had a certain <u>pathos</u> in them nevertheless. pathos = a quality that arouses pity or sorrow	1.3

compunction	A movement of <u>compunction</u> , helped by those small indefinable influences which every personal relation exerts on a pliant nature, had urged him into a secret marriage, which was a blight on his life. compunction = guilt for a misdeed; or a feeling that it would be wrong to do something	1.3
pliant	A movement of compunction, helped by those small indefinable influences which every personal relation exerts on a <u>pliant</u> nature, had urged him into a secret marriage, which was a blight on his life. pliant = susceptible to being led or directed	1.3
cupidity	He had long known that the delusion was partly due to a trap laid for him by Dunstan, who saw in his brother's degrading marriage the means of gratifying at once his jealous hate and his <u>cupidity</u> . cupidity = extreme greed for material wealth	1.3
tacit	For four years he had thought of Nancy Lammeter, and wooed her with <u>tacit</u> patient worship... tacit = implied	1.3
annul	... it would be easy, when she was always near, to shake off those foolish habits that were no pleasures, but only a feverish way of <u>annulling</u> vacancy. annulling = declaring invalid; or ending or canceling	1.3
impel	Towards this gratification he was <u>impelled</u> , fitfully, every now and then, after having passed weeks in which he had avoided her as the far-off bright-winged prize that only made him spring forward and find his chain all the more galling. impelled = to make someone feel they must do something	1.3
odious	That other reason was the fact that the morning's meet was near Batherley, the market-town where the unhappy woman lived, whose image became more <u>odious</u> to him every day; and to his thought the whole vicinage was haunted by her. odious = extremely unpleasant, disgusting, dislikable, or worthy of hate	1.3
garnish	Cass was fast becoming a bitter man, visited by cruel wishes, that seemed to enter, and depart, and enter again, like demons who had found in him a ready- <u>garnished</u> home. garnished = decorated or adorned	1.3
miserly	How was it that he, Dunstan Cass, who had often heard talk of Marners' <u>miserliness</u> , had never thought of suggesting to Godfrey that he should frighten or persuade the old fellow into lending the money ... miserliness = excessively disinclined to part with money	1.4
forthwith	His first intention was to hire a horse there and ride home <u>forthwith</u> ... forthwith = immediately	1.4
felicity	...his impatience to be back at Raveloe and carry out his <u>felicitous</u> plan... felicitous = happiness or luck; or an instance or source of such	1.4
felon	And Dunstan's mind was as dull as the mind of a possible <u>felon</u> usually is. felon = someone who has committed (or been legally convicted of) a serious crime (a felony)	1.4
stimulus	He rushed out in the rain, under the <u>stimulus</u> of this hope, forgetting to cover his head, not caring to fasten his door; for he felt as if he had nothing left to lose. stimulus = something that creates growth or excitement, or something that causes an action	