

Magic Squares Vocabulary Activity for *Ella Enchanted* by Gail Carson Levine



Purpose of the Strategy: According to Vacca and Vacca, the magic squares activity is a “way of reviving even the most mundane matching exercise” (*Content Area Reading* 287). The magic square is an arrangement of numbers that, when added down, across, and diagonally, always equal the same sum, or the magic number. The square configuration presented below is one of many combinations. More examples for larger and smaller squares are offered in the Vacca text on page 289. This strategy helps students engage in a matching activity that is interesting and self-checking.

Directions:

Teachers can construct vocabulary exercises by having students match a lettered column of words to a numbered column of definitions. Letters on each square of the grid match the lettered words. Students try to find the magic number by matching the correct word and definition and entering the number in the appropriate square on the grid.

A	B	C	D
E	F	G	H
I	J	K	L
M	N	O	P

A 16	B 2	C 3	D 13
E 5	F 11	G 10	H 8
I 9	J 7	K 6	L 12
M 4	N 14	O 15	P 1

- STEP 1: Make a list of 16 words in one column.
- STEP 2: Make the list of corresponding definitions in another column.
- STEP 3: Choose a Magic Square design (see above).
- STEP 4: Label the words A-P. Arrange the definitions in the right column so that when students place the number for A in the A box, it will corresponds to the Magic Square key. Students can check their answers by adding the rows and columns. They should get the Magic Number (34 in this case).

Magic Squares Vocabulary

Directions: The following vocabulary words appear in the novel we have been reading. Select the best answer from the column on the right for each term in the column on the left. Put the number of the definition in the proper space in the magic square box. If the numbers added across, down, or diagonally equal the same sum, you have correctly matched the terms with their definitions and found the magic number!

A	B	C	D
E	F	G	H
I	J	K	L
M	N	O	P

Terms

- A. Docile
- B. Swarthy
- C. Voluminous
- D. Vast
- E. Impertinence
- F. Succumb
- G. Vigil
- H. Cotillion
- I. Luxuriant
- J. Vouchsafe
- K. Tresses
- L. Askew
- M. Trice
- N. Wary
- O. Dismissive
- P. Plaintive

Definitions

- 1. adj.—mournful
- 2. adj.—dark in complexion
- 3. adj.—large in bulk
- 4. n.—an instant; moment
- 5. n.—unmannerly conduct; forwardness
- 6. n.—hair
- 7. v.—grant or bestow condescendingly
- 8. n.—a ball
- 9. adj.—superabundant; overly plentiful
- 10. n.—watchful attention
- 11. v.—to give way under pressure
- 12. adj.—out of order; awry
- 13. adj.—great in extent or quantity
- 14. adj.—cautious of danger
- 15. adj.—lacking concern for something
- 16. adj.—amenable; easily managed or persuaded

Magic Squares Vocabulary Answer Key

A 16	B 2	C 3	D 13
E 5	F 11	G 10	H 8
I 9	J 7	K 6	L 12
M 4	N 14	O 15	P 1

Magic Number= 34

Terms and Definitions

- A. Docile—16: adj.—amenable; easily managed or persuaded
- B. Swarthy—2: adj.—dark in complexion
- C. Voluminous—3: adj.—large in bulk
- D. Vast—13: adj.—great in extent or quantity
- E. Impertinence—5: n.—unmannerly conduct; forwardness
- F. Succumb—11: v.—to give way under pressure
- G. Vigil—10: n.—watchful attention
- H. Cotillion—8: n.—a ball
- I. Luxuriant—9: adj.—superabundant; overly plentiful
- J. Vouchsafe—7: v.—grant or bestow condescendingly
- K. Tresses—6: n.—hair
- L. Askew—12: adj.—out of order; awry
- M. Trice—4: n.—an instant; moment
- N. Wary—14: adj.—cautious of danger
- O. Dismissive—15: adj.—lacking concern for something
- P. Plaintive—1:adj.—mournful