Vocabulary:
“The Bear Attacks That Changed America”

1. **fearsome** (FEER-suhm) *adjective*; Something that is fearsome causes fear. The *T. rex* was one of the most fearsome dinosaurs, with a bite force three times that of a great white shark.

2. **formidable** (FAWR-mih-duh-buhl) *adjective*; Someone or something that is formidable inspires fear or respect because of its size, strength, or difficulty to handle. A formidable tennis player is hard to beat. Climbing Mt. Everest, the highest mountain in the world, is a formidable challenge. If your room is really messy, cleaning it might seem like a formidable task.

3. **mettle** (MET-l) *noun*; Mettle means “courage” or “strength of spirit.” In other words, it’s the ability to continue despite difficulties. Anyone who wants to be hired as a firefighter will have to show his or her mettle.

4. **prohibit** (pro-HIB-it) *adjective*; Prohibit means “to forbid something by authority.” Some schools prohibit students from bringing phones into the classroom. Many parks prohibit visitors after dark.

5. **rustic** (RUHS-tik) *adjective*; Rustic means “having to do with the countryside or rural areas,” as in “The artist is known for his paintings of farms and other rustic scenes.” Objects that are rustic are simple and rough in appearance. A handmade bench made from two tree stumps and a piece of wood is rustic; a polka-dotted beanbag chair from Target is not rustic.

6. **salvage** (SAL-vij) *verb or noun*; To salvage something is to save it from further damage, destruction, or complete loss. Divers might salvage old coins from a shipwreck, rescuing them from being lost at the bottom of the sea forever. If a house floods, the owners will probably salvage whatever they can, meaning they will save whatever is still usable. A losing team might salvage a game by suddenly scoring a lot of points.

As a noun, *salvage* can refer to the act of saving something that is in danger of being completely destroyed, as in “Rachel was part of the salvage crew.” Or it can refer to objects that have been saved, as in “The salvage from the shipwreck was worth millions of dollars.”
7. **stark (STAHRK)** adjective; *Stark* has a variety of meanings, all of which relate to something being severe:

   a. very plain, bare, or grim in appearance: *A single tree stood alone in the stark desert landscape.*
   
   b. harsh or unpleasant to accept or experience: *Weather forecasters have issued a stark warning about the hurricane. They said the storm was going to cause major damage.*
   
   c. very obvious; plainly and easily seen: *The difference between the brothers’ musical tastes is stark. Jeremy loves hip-hop; Mark loves country.*
   
   d. extreme or complete: *Sawyer ran out of the haunted house in stark terror.*

8. **transformation (trans-fer-MEY-shuhn)** noun; The verb *transform* (trans-FAWRM) means “to change completely.”

   *Transformation* means “a complete or major change in someone or something.” A caterpillar that has turned into a butterfly has undergone a transformation. If you decide to dye your brown hair bright green, your appearance will undergo a transformation. (When a transformation occurs, we often use the phrase “undergo a transformation.”)

**Directions:** In the space below or on the back of this page, list any other words from the article 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 primary meaning of the word with your teacher or another adult. Then write a definition for the word and one example sentence using the word.
Vocabulary Practice
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Directions: Fill in the circle next to the best answer choice.

1. Why might a soccer team be seen as formidable?
   - A They’ve never lost a game.
   - B They’ve never won a game.

2. Which home is rustic?
   - A a fancy apartment in a big city
   - B a simple cabin deep in the woods

3. Which is an example of a stark room?
   - A a room with white walls and no furniture or curtains
   - B a room with comfy, plush chairs, a colorful rug, pictures on the walls, and a lot of games lying around

4. Which might test your mettle?
   - A competing in your first triathlon
   - B walking to the bus stop

Directions: In each pair of boldfaced words, underline the word that best completes the sentence.

5. I burned the chocolate chip cookies but was able to salvage/prohibit a few of them.

6. The mettle/transformation of the gym into a winter wonderland for the school dance surprised many students.

7. The ash and fire rising out of the volcano were a fearsome/rustic sight.

8. The museum prohibits/salvages flash photography, but taking pictures with your flash off is allowed.