Vocabulary in Context

Name: _____ Date: _____

Instructions: Read each passage carefully. Use context clues to work out the meaning of the underlined word or phrase. Write your answer on the line provided.

> **1.** The old lighthouse stood sentinel on the rocky cliff, its beam sweeping across the dark ocean every night, warning ships of the dangerous coastline.
>
> What does *sentinel* mean? _____

> **2.** After months of preparation, the debate team felt confident. However, their opponents proved to be formidable, presenting arguments that were difficult to counter.
>
> What does *formidable* mean? _____

> **3.** The scientist's theory was met with scepticism by her colleagues, who questioned whether her findings could be replicated in other experiments.
>
> What does *scepticism* mean? _____

> **4.** Unlike her brother, who was always energetic and outgoing, Maria was rather reticent, preferring to listen quietly during family gatherings.
>
> What does *reticent* mean? _____

> **5.** The abandoned house had a melancholy atmosphere, with its faded curtains, overgrown garden, and the sound of wind whistling through broken windows.
>
> What does *melancholy* mean? _____

> **6.** The politician's speech was full of rhetoric—impressive-sounding words and phrases designed to persuade the audience, though some felt it lacked real substance.
>
> What does *rhetoric* mean? _____

> **7.** The detective examined the crime scene with a meticulous eye, carefully photographing every detail and measuring distances down to the millimetre.
>
> What does *meticulous* mean? _____

> **8.** Despite the team's valiant efforts in the final quarter, fighting hard until the very last second, they couldn't overcome the twenty-point deficit.
>
> What does *valiant* mean? _____