

MSCE ENGLISH LITERATURE

COMPREHENSIVE EXAM STUDY NOTES

THE PEARL



HARRY MATIMBA CHIDAONDA (+265888676718/+265995363100)

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND SOCIAL CULTURE

At the time the story takes place, the Indians of Mexico had already been under the domination of people of Spanish descent for 300 years. The governing class was primarily made up of those of Spanish descent and the Roman Catholic Church who, together, kept the Mexican Indians at the bottom of the social hierarchy or social ladder. In most cases, the Indians were not allowed to attend school or own land. (Keeping people uneducated and dependent keeps them oppressed). Although Spanish culture and Catholic rituals were forced upon the Indians, they fiercely held onto many of their spiritual beliefs, cultures, and customs of their various tribes.

THE PEARL: AN OVERVIEW

The Pearl is a novella by American author John Steinbeck, first published in 1947. It is the story of a pearl diver, Kino, and explores man's nature as well as greed, defiance of societal norms, and evil. The reader is told in the preface, "In the town they tell the story of the great pearl—how it was found and how it was lost again...If this story is a parable, perhaps everyone takes his own meaning from it and reads his own life into it." Thus begins Steinbeck's novel of good and evil, *The Pearl*. It is the timeless tale of the Mexican-Indian fisherman Kino, his wife Juana, and their infant son, Coyotito. It tells of how Kino finds the Pearl of the World and dreams of breaking out of the trap of poverty and ignorance that oppresses him and his family. The violence that follows shatters his dreams, but brings him a greater understanding of himself and the realities of the world in which he lives.

SETTING

The events of *The Pearl* take place sometime around the 1900 on an estuary (mouth of the river) somewhere on the coast of Mexico in the town of La Paz. On a map the long peninsula which descends from California is called BAJACALIFORNIA. It is part of

Mexico and is separated from the rest of Mexico by the Gulf of California, also known as the Sea of Cortez.



SUMMARY

The Pearl, which takes place in La Paz, Mexico, begins with a description of the seemingly idyllic family life of Kino, his wife Juana and their infant son, Coyotito. Kino watches as Coyotito sleeps, but sees a scorpion crawl down the rope that holds the hanging box where Coyotito lies. Kino attempts to catch the scorpion, but Coyotito bumps the rope and the scorpion falls on him. Although Kino kills the scorpion, it still stings Coyotito. Juana and Kino, accompanied by their neighbors, go to see the local doctor, who refuses to treat Coyotito because Kino cannot pay.

Kino and Juana leave the doctors and take Coyotito down near the sea, where Juana uses a seaweed poultice on Coyotito's shoulder, which is now swollen. Kino dives for oysters from his canoe, attempting to find pearls. He finds a very large oyster which, when Kino opens it, yields an immense pearl, which Kino therefore dubs 'The Pearl of the World'. Kino puts back his head and howls, causing the other pearl divers to look up and race toward Kino's canoe.

The news that Kino has found an immense pearl travels fast through La Paz. The

doctor who refused to treat Coyotito decides to visit Kino. Kino's neighbors begin to feel bitter toward him for his good fortune, but neither Kino nor Juana realizes this feeling they have engendered. Juan Tomas, the brother of Kino, asks him what he will do with his money, and he envisions getting married to Juana in a church and dressing Coyotito in a yachting cap and sailor suit. He claims that he will send Coyotito to school and buy a rifle for himself. The local priest visits and tells Kino to remember to give thanks and to pray for guidance. The doctor also visits, and although Coyotito seems to be healing, the doctor insists that Coyotito still faces danger and treats him. Kino tells the doctor that he will pay him once he sells his pearl, and the doctor attempts to discern where the pearl is located (Kino has buried it in the corner of his hut). That night, a thief attempts to break into Kino's hut, but Kino drives him away. Juana tells Kino that the pearl will destroy them, but Kino insists that the pearl is their one chance and that tomorrow they will sell it.

Kino's neighbors wonder what they would do if they had found the pearl, and suggest giving it as a present to the Pope, buying Masses for the souls of his family, and distributing it among the poor of La Paz. Kino goes to sell his pearl, accompanied by his neighbors, but the pearl dealer only offers a thousand pesos when Kino believes that he deserves fifty thousand. Although other dealers inspect the pearl and give similar prices, Kino refuses their offer and decides to go to the capital to sell it there. That night, Kino is attacked by more thieves, and Juana once again reminds Kino that the pearl is evil. However, Kino vows that he will not be cheated, for he is a man.

Later that night, Juana attempts to take the pearl and throw it into the ocean, but Kino finds her and beats her for doing so. While outside, a group of men accost Kino and knock the pearl from his hand. Juana watches from a distance, and sees Kino approach her, limping with another man whose throat Kino has slit. Juana finds the pearl, and they decide that they must go away even if the murder was in self-defense. Kino finds that his canoe has been damaged and their house was torn up and the outside set afire. Kino and Juana stay with Juan Tomas and his wife, Apolonia, where they hide for the next day before setting out for the capital that night.

Kino and Juana travel that night, and rest during the day. When Kino believes that he is being followed, the two hide and Kino sees several bighorn sheep trackers who pass by him. Kino and Juana escape into the mountains, where Juana and Coyotito hide in the cave while Kino, taking his clothes off so that no one will see his white clothing. The trackers think that they hear something when they hear Coyotito crying, but decide that it is merely a coyote pup. After a tracker shoots in the direction of the cries, Kino attacks the three trackers, killing all three of them. Kino can hear nothing but the cry of death, for he soon realizes that Coyotito is dead from that first shot. Juana and Kino return to La Paz. Kino carries a rifle stolen from the one of the trackers he killed, while Juana carries the dead Coyotito. The two approach the gulf, and Kino, who now sees the image of Coyotito with his head blown off in the pearl, throws it into the ocean

THE PEARL CHARACTER LIST

KINO

- A prototypical Mexican-Indian who works as a pearl diver, he begins the story as a devoted father and husband to Coyotito and Juana, respectively. Kino is the central character of the story, an 'everyman' who finds himself becoming increasingly violent, paranoid and defiant as he faces opposition from others after he finds the pearl, and resorts to assaulting Juana and murdering those who threaten him.
- Kino, The Pearl's protagonist, is an extremely simple character, motivated by basic drives: his love for his family, loyalty to the traditions of his village and his people, and frustration at the hands of their European colonizers. Kino also possesses a quick mind and a strong work ethic, and he feels a close, pure kinship with the natural world, the source of his livelihood.
- At the beginning of the novella, Kino is essentially content with his life. However, two seemingly chance occurrences-Coyotito's scorpion sting and Kino's discovery of the pearl-open Kino's eyes to a larger world. As Kino begins to covet material wealth and education for his son.

- After he finds a great pearl, he becomes increasingly ambitious and desperate in his mission to break free of the oppression of his colonial society.
- Kino's material ambition drives him to a state of animalistic violence, and his life is reduced to a basic fight for survival.
- Kino represents the dangers of ambition and greed.
- He ignores his wife's wise counsel that the pearl is evil and will destroy them all. His obsession with the pearl and the visions he sees in it leads him to become a killer, dispossessed of him home and community, and Kino ends up a fugitive. By the time he finally is ready to let go of the pearl, he has killed four men and endured the murder of his infant son.
- Kino's ruin or downfall, caused by his lust for the pearl, illustrates the extent to which ambition and greed poison and jeopardize every aspect of a human's familiar, cultural and personal well-being.

JUANA

- The mother of Coyotito and the wife of Kino, Juana is, as her name suggests, the representation of woman for Steinbeck in the story. She dutifully supports her husband, despite his worsening treatment of her, but warns him against the dangers that the pearl can bring to the family. Twice Juana begs Kino to throw the pearl away, and her words are like prophecy when she says it will destroy them all. She tries to go behind Kino's back and throw the pearl away herself, but remains devoted to him even when he stops her violently.
- Juana symbolizes the family's domestic happiness; the scene in which Kino beats her for trying to cast off the pearl thus represents Kino's tragic break from the family he longs to support.
- Juana remains strong and clear until Coyotito's death, which comes to him from crying in the cave. She refuses to obey Kino when he suggests that they take separate paths to avoid the trackers. She returns to La Paz bearing the child's body in her shawl. She is a broken woman, but still devoted to her husband. She declines his final offer to let her cast the pearl into the sea.

COYOTITO

The infant son of Kino and Juana, after he is stung by a scorpion, the doctor refuses to treat him because his parents have no money. Although Juana seemingly cures him with a seaweed poultice, he receives treatment from the doctor only after Kino finds the pearl. When Kino and Juana are hunted by trackers after escaping La Paz, one of the trackers shoots Coyotito in the head as they hide in a cave.

THE DOCTOR

- The doctor is an important character in The Pearl because he represents the colonial attitudes that oppress Kino's people. The doctor symbolizes and embodies the colonist's arrogance, greed, condescension toward the natives, whom the colonists do not even try to understand. He represents arrogance, condescension, and greed at the heart of colonial society. He is obsessed with European cultural values grip his mind so deeply that he doesn't realize how ignorant he is of Kino and Kino's people.
- Like other colonists, the doctor has no interest in Kino's people. He has come only to make money, and his greed distorts his human values. As a physician, the doctor is duty-bound to act to save human life but when confronted with someone whom he considers beneath him, the doctor feels no such duty.
- A fat, complacent man who is not from the same race as Kino and Juana, he refuses to treat Coyotito for a scorpion sting when Kino and Juana cannot pay enough.
- His refusal to treat Coyotito for the scorpion sting because Kino lacks the money to pay him thus demonstrates the human cost of political conquest rooted in the desire for financial profit.
- However, once he learns that Kino has found the Pearl of the World, he treats the healed Coyotito after leading Kino and Juana to believe that Coyotito may suffer unseen consequences from the bite. Seemingly interested in stealing the pearl, the doctor is not of the same race as Kino and Juana, and longs for his days in Paris.

JUAN TOMAS

The brother of Kino and the husband of Apolonia, he warns Kino against the disastrous consequences that he faces from finding the pearl. In other words, he is deeply loyal

to his family. He supports Kino in all of his endeavours but warns him of the dangers involved in possessing such a valuable pearl. Juan Tomas is sympathetic to Kino and Juana and hides them in his house after Kino murders a man in self-defense. He tells no one of their whereabouts..

Apolonia

The fat wife of Juan Tomas, Apolonia allows Kino and Juana to hide in her house after Kino murders a man in self-defense. In other words, she is sympathetic to Kino and Juana's plight and she agrees to give them shelter in their time of need. She is the mother of four children.

THE PRIEST

The local village priest ostensibly represents moral virtue and goodness but he is just as interested in exploiting Kino's wealth as everyone else, hoping that he can find a way to persuade Kino to give some of the money he will make from the pearl.

THE DEALERS

The extremely well organized and corrupt pearl dealers in La Paz systematically cheat and exploit the Indian pearl divers who sell them their goods. They desperately long to cheat Kino out of his pearl. The pearl dealers are greedy and want to trick Kino selling his pearl for less than it is worth.

THE TRACKERS

The group of violent men that follows Kino and Juana when they leave the village, hoping to waylay Kino and steal his pearl. Kino is so assured that they are dangerous that he murders them before they have a chance to strike.

THEMES EXPLORED IN PEARL

SUPERSTITION

- When Coyotito is in danger of being stung by the scorpion, Juana mutters an ancient magic incantation and then some Hail Marys to protect her son. The ancient superstitious religion of the peasantry has been mixed with the Catholicism of the Western upper class. Juana appeals to native gods and the Western God, uncertain of which holds the true power.
- Juana prays that Kino will find a pearl so that they can have Coyotito's scorpion

sting treated by the doctor. She prays in an attempt to force from the gods the luck she and Kino need to take care of Coyotito. Finding a pearl of value is strictly luck. Pearls themselves are accidental, and finding a pearl is considered a gift from the gods or God.

- When Kino finds the large shell, he is reluctant to open it first because he doesn't want to show the gods or God that he wants the pearl so much. He believes that if he wants it too much, it won't happen, and so he waits to open the shell.
- Kino worries that the gods will get revenge against him if he finds success. He knows that the gods hate when men plan for success, and now that Kino is making plans, he fears that something will come and rob him of this opportunity.
- Juana believes that the pearl is cursed because it has brought an intruder into their home. She warns Kino that it will destroy them all; including their son, if they don't throw it back into the sea, but Kino won't listen. His desire to use the pearl to educate his son and make a better life for his family is too strong. He ignores Juana's warning and keeps the pearl.
- Juana decides that if Kino won't get rid of the cursed pearl, she will. She takes the pearl and tries to throw it back into the sea to protect her family from any more danger, but Kino stops her. Her fear of the pearl is well-founded; Kino beats her for trying to get of the pearl, further proving that the pearl is cursed and evil. It has made Kino attack and harm the one person he loves most.
- Juana warns Kino that the pearl is cursed that he must get rid of it to pass the evil on to someone else. He hopes that Kino can sell it soon so that the evil of the pearl will not destroy his family before Kino can rid himself of it.
- When Kino looks into the pearl and sees only the tragedies that have befallen his family, he begins to believe that the pearl is cursed, but he still cannot part with it.
- Kino and Juana throw the pearl back into the sea after Coyotito is killed by the trackers. The cursed pearl has brought about the death of their child and forced Kino to kill to survive and protect his family. The great pearl has brought nothing but misery to Kino and his family, and together they throw the cursed object back into the sea. As it sinks, the music of the pearl turns to a whisper and then

disappears.

GREED AND CORRUPTION

- As the words spreads that Kino has found a huge pearl, the news of his discovery "stirred up something infinitely black and evil in the town"; greed is a "black distillate" comparable to the poison of a scorpion it infects rich and poor alike. The beggars in the street, the merchants, the pearl buyers, the doctor, and the local priest- all think of the in terms of how they might profit from Kino from Kino's possessing it.
- Greed drives some people in the town to commit acts of violence against Kino attempting to steal the pearl. Blood is shed. Corruption fueled by greed is evident in individual lives and in society at large.
- The doctor is corrupted by his love of money and fine possessions; in a silk robe, he sits in his beautiful house, sipping chocolate from a china cup, while he refuses to aid Coyotito, who has been stung by a scorpion. The baby is only an Indian, after all, and the doctor, he insists, is not a "veterinary"; moreover, Coyotito's father, Kino, has nothing of value to give to the doctor in return for his treating the sick child. Later, the doctor uses his knowledge of medicine to make a recovering Coyotito ill in order to "save" him again access to Kino's pearl. In this way, the doctor shows his moral corruption as a physician and as a human being. The doctor's attitude toward the native Indian population is rooted in centuries of colonial conquest and subjugation. He is "of a race, and frightened it too..." The consequence of this history is a corrupt society determined to keep Kino's people imprisoned by poverty and ignorance.
- From the pearl buyers in La Paz (secret representatives of a single buyer) who conspire to pay the Indians a little as possible for their pearls to the priest whose sermons admonish the Indians to accept their station in life, the institutions in society work in concert to deny freedom and justice to every member of Kino's race. In doing so, those in power enrich themselves at the expense of the poor and the powerless.

PRIDE

- Kino's subjugation by society has not destroyed his pride of self-respect. Only for fear of Coyotito's dying does he ask, hat in hand, for the doctor's assistance. When he is turned away with an obvious lie by the doctor's servant, Kino feels so deeply humiliated he is overcome by rage. He stands at the gate to the doctor's house for a long time, put his suppliant hat on his head and then strikes the gate with a crushing blow. He will not consent to being marginalised; his pride will not allow him to endure passively the doctor's insult.
- Kino's pride is manifested again in his confrontation with the pearl buyers in La Paz. Knowing that he is being cheated, Kino refuses to sell his pearl to them; in declaring that he will sell the pearl in the capital, Kino asserts his independence and refuses to be humiliated again. Later, when Kino's house is burned and his canoe destroyed, the loss is more than material. To Juan Tomas, Kino says, an insult has been put on me that is deeper than my life. Kino's pride, as much as his desire to secure money for Coyotito's future, demands that he challenge the system that holds him down. He has no choice, for as he tells Juana 'I am a man'.

NATURE OF POWER

- Power vs. Powerlessness is a theme that runs throughout the Pearl. Kino's race has been subjugated for centuries by European colonialism. The oyster bed where Kino finds the great pearl is the same bed 'that had raised the King of Spain to be great power in Europe in past years, had helped to pay for his wars, and had decorated the churches for his soul's sake. Kino conquered people have remained powerless for four hundred years, 'since first strangers came with arguments and authority and gunpowder to back up both'. Once established, the subjugation of the Indians has been perpetuated by society's ensuring that they remain poor and ignorant. Any desire they might have for a better life is suppressed by the church; the priest in La Paz teaches that each person must 'remain faithful' to his station in life, assigned by God, in order to protect the universe from "the assaults of Hell". Kino is well aware of how powerless he is in life. After finding the pearl, his dreams of the future include buying the pearl; his dreams of the future include buying the pearl a rifle, a weapon that gives a man power. More significantly, however, he

dreams of an education for his son. If Coyotito could read, 'the boy would know what things were in the books and what tings were not.'

- Kino understands that real power lies in knowledge, "My son will read and open the books, and my son will write and know writing. And my son will make numbers and these things will make us free because he will know. (The pearl means more than wealth to Kino; it offers an end to being trapped by ignorance. "This is our once chance," he tells Juana. "Our son must go to school. He must break out of the pot that holds us in." In defying the pearl buyers and challenging the system they represent, Kino initiates a power struggle that ultimately ends in Coyotito's death.

EVIL

- Evil is introduced in the form of the scorpion that stings Coyotito. Until that moment, Kino's home is peaceful, filled with the Song of family. But when he spots the scorpion dangling above Coyotito's bed, Kino recognizes the strains of the Song of Evil that recur throughout the story. The Song of evil comes when anything threatens the family, and Kino does all that he can to destroy the evil and hush the sinister melody of the Song of Evil of Family can return.
- Kino hears the song of Evil again when he and Juana stand at the gates of the doctor's house. Kino knows that the doctor is of the race that has abused Kino's own people for four hundred years; despite the fact that they need the doctor's help, Kino knows that the doctor is still enemy. He will try to cheat them or abuse them as his people have always done to Kino's own race.
- The buyers are out to take advantage of Kino and his pearl. Their goal is to cheat him and ruin plans of happiness and peace for his family.
- The doctor comes to take advantage of Kino's ignorance by making Coyotito sick and pretending that his illness is the result of the scorpion sting. Because Kino and Juana are uneducated, they are afraid to doubt the doctor's word, and he uses it to profit from their newfound wealth. He pretends as if he doesn't know of Kino's pearl, yet the only reason he has condescended to treat an Indian baby was to try and seek out where Kino might be hiding it. The pearl brings evil in the form of

greed; many seek to take advantage of Kino's newfound wealth.

- The buyers work together to cheat Kino of his pearl and intend to give him very little money for it. They have planned to convince him that his pearl is worthless and pretend that they are doing him a favour by taking it off his hands. The buyers are aware of the pearl's tremendous value and intend to on the " uneducated native", he will trust them because they are the "experts"
- Kino believes that his friends will help protect him from the evils that might befall him because of the pearl, but instead of finding protection with his neighbours, he is attacked. His pearl has turned friends into enemies; they are jealous and envy the pearl of the world that Kino has found.
- Pearl turns Juana and Kino against one another. The evil power of the pearl is strong enough to inspire violence between. Juana and Kino are so close to another that conversation isn't even needed, and yet the pearl is able to divide them. It has brought injury and danger, and now it pulls Juana and Kino away from each other.
- Kino is forced to kill a man to defend himself and the pearl. Then Kino's hut is burned after someone searching for the pearl has rancked it. Those who covet the great pearl destroy everything that Kino and Juana have in their attempts to find it. The pearl is making everyone turn against them, and Kino and Juana know that they are no longer safe in their village and must escape.
- Kin looks into the pearl expecting to see visions of the dreams he had the night after he found the pearl, but the only things he sees are the horrible things that have happened to his family since he found the pearl. He begins to realize the evil the pearl contains but still refuses to give it up.
- In a dream, Kino has a premonition of danger. He wakes and discovers trackers are following his family. He knows that they will find them and kill them for the pearl. He feels trapped because there is no way for them to escape the trackers.
- In the struggle to protect his family and survive, Kino turns into a killing machine. He attacks, swiftly and brutally, killing all three men who were tracking his family in quest to steal his great pearl. Kino has been forced to do terrible things to survive

and to protect the pearl from being stolen .The pear's value has made it evil.

FAMILY

- Kino hears the Song of Family in each routine of his life. Although their life is simple, the rhythm of their habits and the sounds of each part of their lives make up a song that is important to Kino. It fills his ears and he is content with the safe and sturdy song. Kino will protect this song and the family it represents because it is all he has and he loves it.
- Kino inherited his canoe, his only thing of value from his father and grandfather and it makes him proud. It is his legacy and he takes great care of it because it is the tool he uses to provide for his family. The canoe is the only inheritance he has beyond the songs of his people and Kino loves his canoe.
- Kino cannot take a chance that the doctor is lying to him about Coyotito's health because he doesn't want his child to suffer. The doctor takes advantage of a parent's concern for his child to turn a profit. He knows that Kino will trust enough in the doctor's knowledge to allow him to treat Coyotito because Kino is unsure that the baby is healed.
- Kino can't give up the pearl even though it brought nothing but pain because he sees its value as a chance to provide for his son's education, allowing him to escape their simple life. Kino does not want those with a formal education to take advantage of Coyotito, like they do to other uneducated natives. He wants more for his son and his family than their simple life, and the pearl is the key to those aspirations.
- The pearl that Kino expected to protect his family is now tearing apart. Juana warns Kino that the pearl will destroy their family, but Kino refuses to believe because he thinks that the wealth the pearl offers is the best way to protect his family. He thinks that by keeping the pearl, he is doing what is best for his family, but the pearl is only pushing him and Juana apart.
- Juan Tomas helps his brother in every way that he can, by diverting the neighbours and gathering supplies for Kino's journey. Juan knows that the pearl has brought evil onto his brother's family, and he does all that he can to help

them escape from it but he cannot convince Kino to get rid of the pearl.

- As Kino, Juana and Coyotito are making their escape; Kino believes that his family will triumph because they seem to be getting away.
- Kino considers giving himself up to the trackers because there is no way that he and his family can get away from them. The thought momentarily defeats him until Juana reminds him that the trackers will kill her and Coyotito as well and that prods Kino into action.
- Juana was right from the beginning the pearl did destroy their son. The trackers who were following them kill Coyotito. Kino's insistence that the pearl would find peace and happiness for his family costs Coyotito his life and leaves a hole in their family that would not have been there had Kino never found the pearl.

PRICE OF WISDOM

- Juana understands far sooner than Kino the danger in possessing the pearl. "It will destroy us all," she cries out to him. "Even our son." After Kino and Juana's way of life has been obliterated-their house burned and Kino's canoe smashed-Juan Tomas attempts to save them from further destruction. "There is a devil in this pearl," he tells Kino. "You should have sold it and passed on the devil. Perhaps you can still sell it and buy peace for yourself" Kino refuses, clinging to the pearl although he perceives it differently. "I have it... And I will keep... now it is my misfortune and my life and I will keep it." When Kino is caught up in dreams of the future, he beats Juana for attempting to throw the pearl into the Gulf, at the conclusion of the story; it is Kino who returns the pearl to the sea. Juana stands beside him; the bloodied body of their son wrapped in her shawl- a terrible price to pay for Kino's acquiring wisdom.
- Before finding the pearl, Kino lives a peaceful and secure existence, in harmony with the natural world; he finds happiness and fulfillment in the simple routines of his life.
- When the pearl comes into his possession, Kino forfeits his old life for new dreams; he gains nothing and loses almost everything of real value. When he and Juana return to their village with Coyotito's body, they have been transformed by grief

and seem "removed from human experience."

GOOD VS. EVIL

- The plot of The Pearl is driven by a constant struggle between the morally and evil. Evil in The Pearl can appear in
 - a. both man (the doctor) and nature (the scorpion);
 - b. both man (the doctor) and good man (Kino)
 - c. Both ugly shape (the scorpion) and beautiful shape (the pearl).
- While the scorpion's evil takes the form of lethal poison, man's evil throughout the novel takes the form of overriding greed. The doctor for instance, evil because he acts upon greed over human care and professional responsibility.
- Similarly, the neighbours are evil when they act upon greed over neighbourly respect, and Kino is evil when he acts upon greed over love for his wife.
- When Kino tries to fight off the thieves and protect the pearl, for instance, he ends up committing acts of evil himself, on both the thieves and his wife. Kino does destroy the evil-bearers that act to harm his family- he squashes the scorpion, kills the trackers, throws the pearl into the ocean-but only succeeds in doing so after the evil has run its course and the poison has already seeped in.

RACE, TRADITION AND OPPRESSION

- Kino and Juana's racial heritage both provides them with the grounding force of ritual and tradition and deprives them of power under the reign of European colonizers. They continue to sing the songs they have inherited from their ancestors, but they also continue to be oppressed as their ancestors were, by white people like the doctor and by people with economic influence like the pearl-dealers. Their oppression is brought increasingly to light throughout the pearl, as Kino attempts to cooperate with the people who have the power (the money, the expertise) to help his son recover, but are the very same people that traditionally oppress people of Kino's race.
- In the end, dealing in the world of White wealth and medicine leaves Kino and Juana in a worse condition than they set out in. They end up without a son

DREAM AND AMBITION

- Ambition is a characteristic that is innate in human nature. However, in the novel ambition is a sin punishable by a higher power and is a reason behind Kino's downfall. Kino desires to rise into superiority by giving his child a good education and having new clothes for him and his wife, all of those are innocent dreams of a poor man in a rich man's world.
- Kino's dreams are simply dreams and could not come true because they would upset the social hierarchy. Moreover, one should not aim above or below their inherent position in society.

MONEY VERSUS HAPPINESS

- From the start of the novel it appears that Kino lives in a natural and peaceful environment with his wife and child. They have a roof over their heads and they have Kino's ancestral canoe and most of all they have each other. Kino has the false belief that the newfound material could grant them more happiness.
- In the end the pearl costs Kino his harmonious life, his house, his canoe and his family. The moral of the story is that money cannot buy happiness.

COURAGE

Portrayed by Kino who fought courageously against trackers and killed all of them in the fight.

UNITY/ SOLIDARITY

This theme is portrayed by Kino's relatives and neighbours. When Coyotito is stung by a scorpion, they join Kino and Juana on their way to the doctor's house so that the baby should have treatment. This shows unity in the village.

GREED

- This is shown by the doctor. He demands the money to be paid for Coyotito to have treatment for a scorpion's sting. This theme is shown by the priest and the doctor. The priest wants to have a share of the money obtained after selling the pearl. He said, "I hope thou wilt remember to give thanks, my son to him who has given thee this treasure and to pay for guidance in the future." The doctor makes Coyotito very sick and returns and gives the baby a different medicine that cures Coyote so that he gets paid more.

- The pearl dealers are greedy and want to trick Kino selling his pearl for less than its worth. The town's people are Kino's neighbours in daylight, but turn into Kino's attackers and enemies at night as they try to take the pearl away from him.
- Kino himself is greedy when he refuses to dispose of the pearl that brings him danger. It seems that the pearl and material wealth in general brings out the greed in the people who seek it.

GREED AS DESTRUCTIVE FORCE

- As Kino seeks to gain wealth and status through the pearl, he transforms from a happy, contented father to a salvage criminal, demonstrating the way ambition and greed destroy innocence. Kino's desire to acquire wealth perverts the pearl's natural beauty and good luck, transforming it from a symbol of hope to a symbol of human destruction.
- Furthermore, Kino's greed leads him to behave violently toward his wife. It also leads to his son's death and ultimately to Kino's detachment from his cultural tradition and his society.
- Kino's people seem poised for a similar destruction, as the materialism inherent in colonial capitalism implants a love of profit into the simple piety of the native people.

COLONIAL SOCIETY'S OPPRESSION OF NATIVE CULTURES

- The doctor who refuses to save Coyotito's life at the beginning of the novel because Kino lacks money to pay him represents colonial arrogance and oppression.
- The doctor displays an appallingly limited and self-centered mindset by his unshakable belief in his own cultural superiority over Kino, and by the power that he holds to save or destroy lives.
- Steinbeck implicitly accuses the doctor's entire colonial society of such destructive arrogance, greed, and ambition. The European colonizers that govern Kino and the native society's innocence, piety and purity.

POVERTY

This is shown in Kino's family. Kino and Juana do not have money to pay to the doctor

so that their son should have treatment for a scorpion's sting. Kino works as a pearl diver in trying to live better life.

CRUELTY

Portrayed by the doctor. He shows his cruelty by producing the following words: "Have I nothing better to do than cure insect bites for little Indians? I am a doctor, not a veterinary" (page 13). He refuses to assist Kino and Juana when they fail to pay the money to him so that their son should be healed. Hence, the doctor is cruel.

CURIOSITY

- Portrayed by discovery of a large pearl which appeared to be very strange. This attracted attention of a number of people such as other pearl divers and neighbours.
- Portrayed by the priest and the doctor who had interest in the pearl of Kino. For instance, the doctor even offered to keep the pearl for Kino, "Do you keep this pearl in a safe place? Perhaps you would like me to put it in my safe?".

HYPOCRISY

Portrayed by the priest and the doctor. The priest visited Kino's brush house pretending to thank him for finding the pearl yet he wanted to have a share in the money obtained after selling the pearl. The doctor also pretends that Coyotito is his patient and wants to cure the baby yet when the baby was taken to his home for treatment he produced the following words: "Have I nothing better to do than cure insect bites for little Indians? I am a doctor, not a veterinary", Has he any money?" I, I alone in the world am supposed to work for nothing and I am tired of it." This shows that both the priest and the doctor are hypocrites.

HOPE

This is shown by Kino who had hope and plans after selling the pearl. His immediate thought was to have Coyotito go to school. He also hoped that the pearl would give them better lives than they had.

SYMBOLS

1. THE PEARL

- The pearl is a symbol of wealth which is quite ambivalent in its nature throughout

the novel. When Kino first finds the pearl, it is a symbol of hope and salvation.

- The pearl and what it holds of wealth represents a great potential for the family and so their ambitions grow big.
- But like wealth, the pearl represents all the evil in the world. It seems all the greed and evil surfaces in the presence of wealth.

2. THE SCORPION

- The scorpion is a form of foreshadowing as well as a symbol of the evil that is yet to come into Kino's life.
- The scorpion sneaks into the family's home in attempts to take away their most valuable possession, their son. This is a foreshadowing of the many town's people who are filled with poisonous who are filled of the many town people who are filled with poisonous envy and evil as they sneak into Kino's home and to steal the pearl and poison his life.

CHAPTER 1 SUMMARY

Kino awakes and watches the hanging box where his infant son, Coyotito, sleeps. He then watches his wife, Juana, who has also awakened and rests peacefully. Kino thinks of the Song of the Family, a traditional song of his ancestors, as the dawn comes and Juana begins to prepare breakfast. Kino's ancestors had been great makers of songs, and everything they saw or thought had become a song. Juana sings softly to Coyotito part of the family song. Kino looks at them and thinks that "this is safety, this is warmth, this is the Whole."

Kino sees a movement near the hanging box where Coyotito sleeps. A scorpion moves slowly down the rope supporting the box. Kino thinks of the Song of Evil, the music of the enemy, as the Song of the Family cries plaintively. Kino stands still, ready to grasp the scorpion, but Coyotito shakes the rope and the scorpion falls on him.



Scorpion

Kino reaches to catch it, but it falls onto the baby's shoulder and strikes. Kino grabs

the scorpion and kills it as Coyotito screams in pain. Juana begins to suck the puncture to remove the poison.

Having heard the baby's screams, Kino's brother, Juan Tomas, and his fat wife Apolonia enter with their children. Juana orders them to find a doctor. The doctor never comes to their cluster of brush houses, so Juana decides to go to the doctor herself. The event becomes a neighborhood affair (crowd), for Juan Tomas and Apolonia accompany them and even the beggars in front of the church follow Juana as she marches toward the doctor. Kino feels weak as he approaches the doctor's home, for the doctor is not of his race and thus believes that Kino's people are simple animals.

Kino tells the doctor's servant that his child was poisoned by a scorpion. The doctor is a fat man who longs for civilized living. Although the doctor is at home, he refuses to treat Coyotito unless he knows that he has money. The servant asks if Kino has money, and when he can only offer small seed pearls, the servant tells Kino that the doctor has gone out. Kino strikes the gate with his fist, splitting his knuckles. The doctor is also prejudiced against Kino's race.

CHAPTER 1 ANALYSIS

The Pearl takes place among an impoverished Mexican-Indian community in La Paz. Although the story involves essentially only this couple, Steinbeck uses Kino and Juana as symbolic of the community in which they live. Steinbeck constructs Kino as an everyman with concerns typical of persons of all social stations. As shown by his encounter with the scorpion, Kino is a devoted father

who dotes on his infant son and adores his wife. Quite importantly, as the story begins Kino is perfectly content with his situation, despite his lack of material possessions and difficult existence. As Kino watches his family, he believes that this is the "whole," the entirety of everything he really needs. This is significant, for this early contentment contrasts with the later panic that Kino and Juana will feel once they receive hope for a better future. Juana, whose name even translates into "woman," symbolizes a feminine ideal that complements Kino's masculine prototype.

Nevertheless, despite the serene description with which Steinbeck begins The Pearl,

he also establishes that this existence is a precarious one; Coyotito's encounter with the scorpion illustrates this possibility of danger that the family faces at all times and brings into focus the magnitude of their poverty, showing that their poverty places a tangible price on their existence that Kino may not be able to pay. The scorpion is a symbol of the furtive dangers that threaten Kino and his family, able to strike furtively at any moment. It is therefore analogous to the other enemies that will threaten Kino and Juana: the scorpion secretly enters the house and strikes at them indirectly, instead of presenting a direct and open challenge to them.

The critical situation that Kino's family faces is significant to show the great importance of the fortune that Kino will receive, for it provides not only the possibility of material goods but may buy the life of his child. Kino's encounter with the doctor sharply illustrates this, as the doctor essentially allows Coyotito to die because Kino cannot pay for treatment.

Although Kino and Juana are representative of the larger community in which they live, this community itself becomes significant in terms of the development of the story. This village takes on a character of its own; this is shown in particular when Juana and Kino visit the doctor and their neighbors follow in a near procession. These nameless villagers serve as a form of chorus on the action of the story, commenting on the developments and judging the decisions and events that occur to Kino. The idea of community is also significant in terms of the various songs that Kino remembers. These songs are entirely symbolic, meant to place Kino in the larger, less personal context as a member of a community with a sense of heritage and to reinforce his status as an everyman. The two songs that Kino remembers during this chapter, the Song of the Family and the Song of Evil, also place the story in a context with diametric opposites; the story is largely a parable with defined parameters of good and evil.

Steinbeck uses the doctor who refuses to treat Coyotito as a symbol of the forces of oppression that Kino and Juana face. The doctor represents the societal system that places a monetary value on human life, as well as the obstacles that Kino and Juana face. The racial divide between the doctor and Kino plays a considerable role in his

refusal to treat Coyotito; although this aspect of the story is not omnipresent, this presents an additional element of adversity that Kino and Juana must endure.

In this chapter, Steinbeck foreshadows eventual changes in Kino's character when he smashes his fist on the doctor's gate. This event shows that Kino reverts to violence and anger when confronted with adversity, yet when he does so he hurts only himself.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. What, in general, happens in the first chapter?

- Kino and Juana wake up, and prepare for the day. The scorpion strikes Coyotito. They call for the doctor, but the doctor refuses to come. They go to the doctor, but he refuses to treat Coyotito because Kino does not have money to pay and to the doctor, Coyotito was an Indian "animal." The doctor is against the race of Kino.

2. Notice that the townspeople follow Kino. What does that tell you?

- It tells us two things: the people were curious and the people liked Kino and his family.

3. Why did the doctor refuse to treat Coyotito?

- To the doctor, Coyotito was an Indian "animal." Also, Kino could not pay the doctor well for his services.

4. What does that tell you about the doctor's personality?

- The doctor is not a caring individual. He is materialistic and cold-hearted. He is a doctor for the title, social position and money, not at heart.

5. What are the conflicts in the story so far?

- The conflicts are man vs. man, man vs. society, and man vs. nature.

6. What is the Song of the Family?

- The Song of the Family is a song of happiness, of being "whole." It is a song of peaceful existence, of being together in harmony with the family.

7. What is the Song of Evil? When does it first appear?

- The Song of Evil is a song of disruption, of evil, of the breaking of happiness. It first appears with the scorpion.

CHAPTER TWO SUMMARY

Kino and Juana walk slowly down the beach to Kino's canoe, the one thing of value that he owns. The canoe is old, bought by Kino's grandfather, and is the source of food for Kino. It is their most important possession, for "a man with a boat can guarantee a woman that she will eat something." Coyotito still suffers from the scorpion bite: the swelling on his shoulder continues up his neck and his face is puffed and feverish. Juana makes a poultice from brown seaweed. This poultice is "as good a remedy as any and probably better than the doctor could have done." Kino and Juana get into the canoe so that Kino can find pearl oysters that may pay for the treatment for Coyotito.



Kino dives for pearl oysters, where he thinks of the Song of the Pearl That Might Be and the Song of the Undersea. Kino works steadily under the water until he sees a large oyster lying by itself with its shell partly open, revealing what seems to be a massive pearl. Kino forces the oyster loose and holds it tightly against him.

When Kino comes up for air, Juana can sense his excitement. Kino opens the various oysters he had caught, leaving the largest one for last. He worries that the large pearl he saw was merely a reflection, for "in this Gulf of uncertain light there were more illusions than realities." Finally, Kino opens the oyster to see a rich, perfectly curved pearl. Juana lifts the poultice of seaweed from Coyotito to see that the swelling has begun to recede. Kino puts back his head and howls, causing the men in other canoes to look up and race toward Kino's canoe. In other words, Juana gazes at a large pearl and she then goes to check on Coyotito and discovers that Coyotito's

shoulder is no longer swollen. Kino is happy about both the pearl and Coyotito and shouts loudly enough that he attracts the attention of the other oyster divers who race towards his canoe.

CHAPTER 2 ANALYSIS

Steinbeck continues to detail the extreme poverty in which Kino and Juana live; not only can they not afford their own canoe so that Kino may perform his job as a pearl diver, they must use a canoe that is several generations old. This is important, for it gives greater weight to the discovery of the pearl, which could raise them from a meager existence into some sense of security.

The canoe is a symbol of Kino's heritage, a relic passed down from his grandfather, but it also represents Kino's role as a provider for his family. Steinbeck generalizes the statement that a man with a canoe can ensure that his wife will never go hungry to illustrate Kino's status as an everyman and to emphasize the distinct roles and duties of a husband and father.

The life that Kino and Juana lead is also an antiquated one; when the doctor refuses to treat Coyotito, Juana relies on primitive methods to cure her son. Steinbeck does not offer a sharp critique of these methods. Instead, he finds them more than adequate to the task and perhaps better than the treatment that the doctor might offer. In this novel, Steinbeck gives greater emphasis and value to traditional behaviors and even primitivism over modern conveniences and, in particular, those who have those luxuries.

Kino's occupation as a pearl diver demonstrates the small chance that he and his family have for success. Pearl diving is a largely fruitless task that relies on the small chance for finding suitable oysters undersea and generally offers only the bare sustenance that maintains Juana and Kino. In effect, pearl diving is an act of desperation that further bolsters descriptions of Kino's poverty. It is the only hope that Kino and Juana have.

Nevertheless, Kino immediately realizes that he has found an impressive pearl when he finds the oyster during his dive, leaving this large oyster as the final one to be opened. This creates a sense of tension and anticipation, as Kino realizes the

significance of the pearl he has found. Steinbeck even bolsters the idea of fortuitous chance by juxtaposing the discovery of the pearl with Juana's realization that Coyotito has been cured, thus linking these two events, both of which provide great hope for Kino and Juana. However, even upon the discovery of the pearl Steinbeck foreshadows the later difficulties that might occur. Kino reverts to animalistic behavior once he finds the pearl, literally howling in joy. The pearl causes Kino to revert to instinctual behavior, a change that will have dangerous and disastrous consequences.

CHAPTER 2 QUESTIONS

1. Why is Kino's canoe so special to him?

Kino's canoe is so special to him because it is the only thing of value he owned in the world. Also, it was a kind of a family heirloom – passed down from his grandfather. As long as Kino had a canoe, he could get food.

2. What did Juana pray for?

Juana prayed for a pearl large enough to provide them with money to hire the doctor to cure the baby.

3. What did the sea provide as medicine for the baby? Why didn't Juana have as much faith in it as she would in a doctor's remedy?

The sea provided a seaweed poultice. Juana didn't have as much faith in it as she would in a doctor's remedy because the seaweed lacked "authority".

4. What song did Kino always hear when he was diving for pearls?

Kino always hears the "Song of the Pearl that might be" when diving for pearls.

5. Describe the pearl that Kino found.

The pearl that Kino found was...

- The greatest pearl in the world
- As large as a seagull's egg
- Gave off an incandescent (bright, glowing) light
- Perfect as the moon.

6. What did Juan believe had caused the baby's arm to improve?

Juana believed that the pearl had caused Coyotito's arm to heal.

She thought the pearl had worked some kind of magic.

8. What is the author suggesting when Kino holds the pearl in the same hand that he smashed against the gate?

The author is suggesting the pearl will ultimately be used to prevent any further injustices than what was served by the doctor.

9. Why did Steinbeck include the first section about the life in the Gulf waters?

- This section shows the natural world of which Kino is a part. It shows the old way of survival of the fittest.

10. The canoe is mentioned quite often. Is it a symbol for something?

- Yes. It symbolizes the old way of life, tradition. It was Kino's grandfather's canoe. It shows the continuance of the primitive family.

11. What is the main event of this chapter?

- Kino and Juana find the pearl.

12. Do you think it is coincidence that everything goes well on the water, or is Steinbeck trying to show something?

- In the hands of Kino and Juana alone in nature, the pearl represents happiness and good. We will later see that when they bring it near civilization (the unnatural), it is very, very bad.

13. To what new Song are we introduced?

- We are introduced to the Song of the Pearl That Might Be.

CHAPTER THREE SUMMARY

The news of the pearl travels fast through Kino's small village. Before Kino and Juana return home, the news had already spread that Kino had found 'The Pearl of the World,' as it comes to be known. The local priest learns, as well as the doctor who refused to treat Coyotito. When the doctor learns, he tells the patient that he is treating that he must treat Coyotito for a scorpion sting. All manner of people grow interested in Kino, and the news stirs up something infinitely black and evil. The pearl buyers consider how they might deal with Kino and offer him the lowest possible price.

However, Kino and Juana do not know the anger and bitterness they have engendered. Juan Tomas asks Kino what he will do now that he has become rich, and Kino answers that he and Juana will be married in the church. Kino envisions how he will be dressed, and sees Coyotito in a yachting cap and sailor suit from the United States. Kino then imagines buying a rifle. Thinking of the rifle breaks down barriers for Kino, as he imagines the whole lot of things that he might have. He thinks that Coyotito will go to school and learn to read. He claims that "my son will make numbers, and these things will make us free because he will know he will know and through him we will know."

The priest visits Kino and Juana, and tells them that he hopes that they will remember to give thanks and to pray for guidance. The doctor also visits, and although Kino tells him that Coyotito is nearly well, the doctor claims that the scorpion sting has a curious effect that comes later and if he is not treated he may suffer blindness or a withered leg. Not sure whether or not the doctor is telling the truth, Kino nevertheless lets him see the baby. The doctor takes a bottle of white powder and a gelatin capsule, and gives Coyotito a pill. The doctor tells them that the medicine may save the baby from pain, but he will come back in an hour to check on him. After the doctor leaves, Kino wraps the pearl in a rag and digs a hole in the dirt floor where he conceals the pearl. When the doctor returns, he gives Coyotito water with ammonia and tells Kino that the baby will get well now. Kino tells the doctor that he will pay him once he has sold his pearl. The neighbors tell the doctor that Kino has found the Pearl of the World and will be a rich man. The doctor suggests that Kino keep the pearl in his safe, but Kino says that he has it secure. The doctor realizes that Kino will likely look to the place where it is stored, and sees his eyes move to the corner where he had buried it. After the doctor leaves again, Juana asks Kino whom he fears, and he answers Everyone'



That night, Kino thinks that he hears noises in his hut. He grabs his knife and strikes out in the dark. The person scurries out. Juana tells Kino that the pearl is evil and will destroy them. She tells him to throw it away or break it, for it will destroy them. Kino says that the pearl is their one chance, and that the next morning they will sell the pearl. In other words, Juana senses that the pearl is evil and begs Kino to throw the pearl back into the sea, but Kino refuses believing still that the pearl will give them better lives than they have.

CHAPTER 3 ANALYSIS

As the titular object of the novel, the pearl that Kino discovers can symbolize several different ideas or themes. In this chapter, Steinbeck equates the pearl with hope for the future, for it is the means by which Kino and Juana will be able to provide for Coyotito and give him a better life. The pearl also represents a sense of freedom by enabling Kino to educate Coyotito and give him the ability to choose his own profession and way of life apart from the deterministic poverty of his parents. Although the story takes place in Mexico, Steinbeck equates this with the American dream of fortune and prosperity; Kino imagines Coyotito dressed in clothes from the United States.

The discovery of the pearl causes a sharp change in the villagers' reactions to Kino

and Juana, for the once unimportant couple become renowned and notorious in La Paz. The pearl gives Kino great importance within La Paz, as demonstrated by the visit from the local priest and the doctor who had just recently refused treatment to Coyotito. However, with this newfound interest in Kino comes the impending feeling of hatred and hostility for him; the discovery causes an anonymous bitterness toward Kino for his great luck, a feeling that he and Juana cannot realize. The hostility directed toward Kino and Juana takes two forms; the first is a general jealousy from the community toward Kino for his luck, while the second is a more specific greed shown by those who wish the pearl for themselves. Steinbeck illustrates this avarice through both the priest and the doctor. In the former case, the priest gives attention to Kino merely as a means to gain some of the money to the church, shamelessly asking Kino to monetarily compensate God for the good fortune he has received. In the latter, the doctor's newfound interest in Kino stems from a manipulative and dangerous greed. His visit to Kino reveals that he not only wishes to secure part of Kino's new fortune through the salary the doctor might receive for treatment but, as shown by the doctor's attempt to locate the pearl in Kino's hut, that he intends to steal the pearl. Steinbeck makes clear that the doctor does not visit Kino to cure his son; in fact, he indicates that the doctor's treatment of Coyotito might even be superfluous. The suspicious designs of both the doctor and the priest indicate that the danger that Kino faces is not from jealous neighbors who might use the pearl to escape their own poverty, but rather from those whose economic situation is secure and who merely desire greater luxury. Steinbeck thus uses the community reaction to the pearl as social commentary that critiques the ruling class for avarice and exploitation.

The manipulative behavior of the doctor foreshadows greater calamities that Kino and Juana will suffer, which Steinbeck also shows through the anonymous thief who attempts to steal the pearl that night. However, Kino's and Juana's problems are not merely external forces, but are equally internal. Throughout the chapter, Kino and Juana evolve significantly. At first, neither can vocalize the changes that the pearl will make for them, but once they think of the tangible consequences for their newfound

fortune they begin to articulate previously impossible and unimaginable dreams. However, Kino and Juana diverge in their later reactions to the pearl. Juana disavows the consequences of the fortune they will receive, finding the scorn and danger that others present to be an insurmountable evil. Kino uses the animosity and danger as reason for suspicion and paranoia, as shown when Kino strikes randomly with his knife when he fears an intruder. He lapses into the instinctual animalism demonstrated in the previous chapter, a quality that will play a significant role in the tragedy to come. Steinbeck also foreshadows the trouble that Kino will find with the pearl buyers. In his description of the pearl buyers, Steinbeck claims that, although there are many of them, they are essentially one. This aligns with the idea of segments of the community as a collective that permeates *The Pearl*; as Steinbeck describes the town, it is like "a colonial animal" with its own emotion, essentially a person in itself. The neighbors who comment on the action are not individuals, but rather symbols of their class. Even Juana and Kino exist less as fully-formed individuals and as archetypal representations of man and woman. The pearl buyers, anonymous except for their identity as part of a class, symbolize the ruling elite of La Paz who can exploit Kino.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. To what does Steinbeck compare the town?

- He compares it to a living being.

2. The news of Kino's pearl spread quickly across town. What did each person think of when he heard it?

- Each person thinks of how he personally could benefit from the riches of the pearl.

3. What would Kino do with his riches?

- Kino would marry Juana, buy new clothes, a harpoon and a rifle, and send Coyotito to school.

4. Why does the doctor come? What does he do?

- The doctor comes because he, too, has heard that Kino has a great pearl. He wants to get some money from Kino, and we are led to believe that he has ideas of stealing the pearl for himself.

5. What bad thing happened to make Juana want to throw away the pearl?

- Someone comes to steal the pearl. Kino knifed him, but he got knocked over the head with something.

CHAPTER FOUR SUMMARY

In La Paz, the entire town knew that Kino was going to sell the pearl that day. Kino's neighbors speak of what they might do with the pearl. One man says that he would give it as a present to the Pope, while another said he would buy Masses for the souls of his family for a thousand years, while another thought he would distribute it among the poor of La Paz. Everyone worries that the pearl will destroy Kino and Juana.

Before leaving to sell the pearl, Juan Tomas warns Kino and Juana to get the best price for the pearl, and tells him how their ancestors got an agent to sell their pearls, but this agent ran off with the pearls. Kino had heard the story told as a warning of punishment against those who try to leave their station. Kino and Juana, followed by neighbors, reach the offices of the pearl buyers.

The pearl dealer inspects the pearl and tells him that his pearl is like fool's gold, for it is too large and valuable only as a curiosity. Kino cries out that it is the Pearl of the World, and no one has ever seen such a pearl. The dealer offers a thousand pesos, to which Kino says that it is worth fifty thousand and the dealer wants to cheat him. The dealer tells Kino to ask the others around him. Kino can feel the evil around him as other dealers inspect the pearl. One dealer refuses the pearl altogether, while a second dealer offers five hundred pesos. Kino tells them that he will go to the capital. The dealer offers fifteen hundred pesos, but Kino leaves with the pearl (When Kino realizes that the pearl dealers are working together to get the pearl for the small amount of money, says that he will go to the capital to sell his pearl. The first pearl dealer raises his offer to buy the pearl, but it is too late, Kino leaves).

That night, the townspeople argue whether Kino should have accepted the money, which was still more than he would have ever seen. Kino buries the pearl again that night, and remains terrified at the world around him. Juan Tomas tell Kino that he has defied not only the pearl buyers, but the whole structure of life, and he fears for his

brother. Juan Tomas warns him that he treads on new ground. Juan Tomas reminds Kino that his friends will protect him only if they are not in danger, and tells him "Go with God" before he departs.

In the middle of the night, Kino feels a sense of evil from outside of his brush house, and he prepares to wield his knife. Kino steps outside to see if there are prowlers. Juana can hear noise from outside, so she picks up a stone and steps out of their hut. She finds Kino with blood running down his scalp and a long cut in his cheek from ear to chin. In other words, Juana listens inside the hut to Kino's being attacked and rushes out with a brick to help him, but it is too late Kino in blood and beaten up by the attackers. The attackers have escaped without Kino being able to identify them. Juana once again tells Kino that the pearl is evil and they must destroy it. Kino insists that he will not be cheated, for he is a man.

He says if the pearl is sold, the money will be used to fund Coyotito's education. He decides to sell the pearl in the capital.

CHAPTER 4 ANALYSIS

Steinbeck begins the chapter with the reactions of the people of La Paz, who propose what they might do if they were to find a pearl of such great value. Their reactions reveal a sense of animosity toward Kino, for the great plans for charity that these people suggest contrast with the seemingly self-interested ideas that Kino proposed in the previous chapter. This is important to show the undercurrent of criticism for Kino. Steinbeck suggests the jealousy that people have for his good fortune. Additionally, the idealistic and charitable ideas that people propose reveal a simplistic attitude toward receiving such a great fortune; as Steinbeck has shown and will continue to show, Kino and Juana do not face easy decisions with regard to their newfound fortune, and in fact may be in serious danger.

The pearl dealer, who symbolizes the ruling elite classes, proves to be another example of a manipulative professional man akin to the priest and the doctor. He shamelessly attempts to cheat Kino out of his money, offering a price that seems far too low for such a pearl; although there remains the possibility that the pearl may be an oddity with little practical value, the numerous attempts to steal the pearl, perhaps

instigated by the pearl dealers, suggest otherwise. Kino's refusal is no small feat; as Juan Tomas declares, he has defied the structure of life around him. This places the parable in a larger political context, suggesting that a hierarchy around Kino works to exploit him and others of his station and resists any attempts to shift this social order. This idea is bolstered by the story concerning the pearl agent in which punishment is inflicted upon those who attempt to secure a better station for themselves.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. In selling the pearl, what advantages and disadvantages did Kino have?

Advantages

- a. Kino could support his family and send Coyotito to school to get an education
- b. Kino believed he had a pearl of great value and would not compromise on the price.

Disadvantages

- Pearl buyers worked together and would set price.
- Kino does not know the actual value of the pearl.
- Belief that Kino should not leave his station in life and questions others.
- Kino and his family still live in fear.

2. Can you explain the attitude the dealers had toward Kino and his “Pearl of the World”? How did the townspeople react to what happened?

The dealers believed that Kino would not know any better and would believe the lies they were telling him about his “monstrosity of a pearl” (p.51). One of the dealers doesn't even make an offer to buy the pearl. Another dealer said ‘better pearls are made of paste.’ Their job was to get the pearl for the lowest price and they would employ any method necessary to do so.

There were different reactions to what happened. Some felt that the pearl buyers must know more than the townspeople about the pearl. To think otherwise would mean that they had been cheated all of their lives by the dealers. Therefore, Kino should accept the money offered and not act in a stubborn manner. Some townspeople were afraid that the buyers would no longer want to work with them. Finally, others admired Kino's courage and thought he was a hero (p.52-53).

- 3. In the description of the pearl buyers, what do we find out about the market in Kino's village?**
 - The market is fixed. The buyers get together and set prices to cheat the village men.
- 4. What happened when Kino went to sell his pearl?**
 - The pearl buyer told him it was a curiosity, not a valuable pearl. He offered Kino 1,000 pesos. When Kino disagreed, three other buyers were brought in; each one said it was of little value. It is made obvious to the reader that the buyers had arranged their prices earlier. Kino says he will go to the capitol instead of dealing with these buyers.
- 5. Juan Tomas says to Kino, "You have defied not the pearl buyers, but the whole structure, the whole way of life. I am afraid for you." What does he mean?**
 - No one of the village men had ever gone against the buyers. No one had "taken on city hall," so-to-speak. It was not Kino's place to try to do better. He was just a lowly village man; that was his station in life. Now, he was trying to improve his station and would have to have a major conflict in order to do so. Juan Tomas thinks this goes against the laws of nature and that bad things happen when you go against the laws of nature. As I heard it put once, "Little fish don't eat big fish."
- 6. Again at the end of the chapter, Juana wants to throw away the pearl because it is evil. What evil thing happened?**
 - Kino is attacked again. This time he is hurt worse than the first time.
- 7. By the end of chapter 4, what decision had Kino reached? What helped him to make this decision?**

Kino decided to go to the city to sell the pearl after he was attacked at night outside his brush house.

CHAPTER 5

Kino senses movement near him, but it is only Juana who arises silently from beside him. Kino sees her near the hanging box where Coyotito lay, and then watches her go out the doorway. Kino begins to feel a great sense of rage as he hears her

footsteps going toward the shore; Juana is going to throw the pearl back into the ocean. Kino chases Juana, then strikes her in the face with his clenched fist and kicks her in the side. He then turns away from her and walks up the beach. Juana knows that when Kino said that he is a man, he meant that he was "half-insane and half-god" and knows as a woman that "the mountain would stand while the man broke himself; that the sea would surge while the man drowned in it."



While walking on the beach, men accost Kino in search of the pearl, which is knocked from his hand and lands on the pathway. Juana soon sees Kino limping toward her with a stranger whose throat has been slit. (The pearl is knocked from his hands, but he is able to stab one of his attackers before he is knocked unconscious.) She finds the pearl for Kino, and tells him that they must go away before daylight. When Kino regains consciousness, Juana returns the pearl to him from where she found it lying behind a rock and tells him that they must run away from the village because Kino has killed a man. Kino says that he struck to save his life, but Juana says that this does not matter. He orders her to get Coyotito and all of the corn they have. Kino finds his canoe with a splintered hole in the bottom. He rushes home to find Juana and Coyotito, but Juana tells Kino that their house was torn up and the floor dug, and someone set fire to the outside.

Juana and Coyotito go to Juan Tomas and Apolonia. When Kino tells about the man he has killed, Juan Tomas says that it is the pearl and he should have sold it. Kino begs his brother to hide them until nightfall. Kino tells Juan Tomas that he will head north.

Kino says that he will not give up the pearl, because "if I give it up I shall lose my soul."

Important Notes from chapter 5

- Juana tries to throw the pearl away. Kino stops her violently and is then attacked
- Kino kills the attacker and then realizes that his house is burning and his canoe has been destroyed.
- Kino stays with Juan Tomas for the day and then decides to go to the capital to sell the pearl

Conflict

- Kino vs. Juana – the physical attack that occurred against Juana (external)
- Kino vs. the attacker – the physical attack that occurred between Kino and the attackers (external)
- Juana vs. Herself – Juana struggles with whether or not to throw away the pearl when she finds it after Kino's attack (internal)
- Juan Tomas vs. Himself – Juan briefly struggles with whether or not he should agree to hide Kino, Juana and Coyotito

Important Points

1. Kino's dream/desire...Kino's dream has challenged the system. Kino is losing everything that connects him to the town. This separation can only mean one thing – destruction.
2. Kino's battle with Juana foreshadows the death of his family. Kino is like the deviant from the system. He is separated from his natural environment. From now on, he will lack the protection of his kin and the strength of his tradition. He is a "free agent", flung into the world, to face the ruthless predators.
3. The canoe...the destruction of Kino's canoe is an immeasurable loss. Not only does it mean the loss of his prized possession and his means of making a living, it also means the loss of a part of his heritage.

*It represents the importance of his culture and something he could pass on.

*The old way of life is over. Kino now becomes like an animal, living only to protect himself and his family.

4. The pearl as Kino's soul...Kino has become so obsessed with the pearl that nothing

else matters. Every breath is devoted to making his dream come true, at the risk of placing his family in grave danger. In a material sense, a person dies when his soul leaves his body. If Kino were to throw away his pearl – he would die spiritually as well. His soul – the pearl and his dream – is all that holds him to life.

*The truth is that in keeping the pearl he is losing his soul and only in the act of throwing it away, will save his soul.

5. Kino's attack on Juana...The attack is primitive and savage, the act of an animal rather than of a rational man. He feels if he gives up the pearl he will be admitting defeat and will lose his position as "the man". He will lose his position as the head of the household, if he allows Juana to decide about the pearl.

*The pearl has meant so much to Kino in his dreams that he cannot easily sacrifice those dreams.

CHAPTER 5 ANALYSIS

Steinbeck builds a sense of paranoia and imminent tragedy for Juana and Kino during this chapter, in which anonymous enemies threaten their safety. The men who attack Kino are never named and their origins are never revealed; although Kino suspects that they are the agents of the pearl dealers. This anonymity is significant, for the men who assault Kino symbolize a more generalized "evil" than the specific villainy of the pearl dealer or the doctor.

This continues the string of various calamities that occur to Juana and Kino; they lose their boat and their home while defending themselves. These two losses are significant, for the canoe symbolizes the ability that Kino has to provide for and protect his family and the home symbolizes the idea of the family that once gave Kino great comfort. By this point in the story, Juan Tomas joins Juana in warning Kino of the problems of the pearl, but Juana's predictions of disaster have already been partially fulfilled. When Juan Tomas tells Kino "go with God" when Kino prepares to venture to the capital, this statement has a sense of impending doom; Steinbeck makes it very clear that a tragic end for Kino and Juana is imminent.

Steinbeck also makes the explicit point that the greatest damage caused by the

pearl is the change that it effects within Kino. The caring father and partner of the first chapter at this point in the story attacks Juana when she attempts to take the pearl. Juana realizes the change in her husband from a normal man to one with a questionable grip on sanity. It is ironic that, when Kino declares that he is a man, he begins to act "half insane and half god," thus negating the qualities that define him as a man. Steinbeck creates a tone of futility about Kino's enterprise; as the rational and level-headed Juana realizes, Kino is a man raging against an obstacle as insurmountable as a mountain or a storm, and his struggles will only cause him to destroy himself.

Kino even finds himself capable of murder to defend himself; whether Kino is capable of a more cold-blooded killing still remains questionable. Kino's comment that the pearl has become his soul is the defining statement of his condition. It shows that Kino has ceased to be in some level human; he cannot consider normal human needs and emotions, but defiantly focuses on the pearl.

The reaction of the community to the tragedies that occur to Kino and Juana is significant. While the neighbors followed every detail of Kino's life once the pearl promised to bring him fortune and renown, during this time his neighbors remain silent. Only Juan Tomas and Apolonia hide Juana and Kino but do so reluctantly. While Kino's neighbors have commented on all of the events in previous chapters, they do not manifest any reaction to the attacks on Kino and Juana.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

With what important incident did this chapter begin? Can you explain Juana's actions?

Juana is beaten by Kino when she tries to throw the pearl back into the ocean. Juana believes she is protecting her family by trying to get rid of the pearl.

What does Juana try to do with the pearl? How did Kino react and explain why he behaved so savagely?

Kino follows Juana, Juana runs when she sees him coming. Kino grabs her arm before she can throw the pearl into the sea. Hissing like a snake, he beats her. He behaved so savagely because the pearl is part of his "manhood". By giving up the pearl he will

be admitting defeat and lose his position as "a man". It represents his dreams!

What does Juana mean when she thinks, "that the old life was gone forever"?

Juana means that her happy, simple life (life before the pearl) was no more...instead her life was full of sadness/worry and complexity (life after the pearl)

What happened when Kino left Juana at the beach?

Kino was attacked by more than one person. Kino ends up killing one of the people in self defense.

Although Kino reminds Juana several times that his a“man”, Juana knows that she is a “woman”. What quality of being a woman does she rely on to “save them all”?

Juana is cautious, determined, has a sense of logic. She is patient, has a watchful eye and a sense of preservation.

Why does Juana accept her beating so passively?

Juana accepts her beating so passively because she felt she deserved it for disobeying her husband.

*She had gone beyond the boundaries of being a primitive wife.

What has happened to Kino's canoe? Why is the damage so devastating?

Kino's canoe was destroyed. The damage was devastating because it was an heirloom, passed down from his grandfather, as well, Kino had planned to use the canoe to travel to the capital to sell his pearl.

After the discovery of the damage to the canoe, Kino becomes hardened past all breaking. The old life is over and he is described as an animal. Why is this comparison made?

Kino is now forced to live a life of hiding, attacking. He is living only to protect himself and his family to survive.

Why do you think someone burned down Kino's house?

Someone burns Kino's house as a scare tactic, to show that Kino and his family are no longer welcome and also the fire could have been a warning that the conflict wasn't over.

How does Juan Tomas help Kino's family?

Juan Tomas allows Kino to hide in his house until night when they could leave for the

mountains. He gathered items from the neighbors for Kino to take and he also went among the neighbors spreading the idea that Kino and Juana had fled to escape evil.

Discuss the danger for Juan Tomas to become involved.

The danger for Juan Tomas is that he ends up putting not only himself but his family in jeopardy.

Why does Kino compare himself to leprosy?

Kino compares himself to leprosy because he felt he was contaminated; contagious with evil that might infect his brother/neighbors, etc.

Where did Juana go early in the morning?

- Juana tried to sneak out with the pearl to throw it away.

What did Kino do when he figured out where she went?

- He went after her, took the pearl away, and (in the process) beat and kicked Juana.

What happened to Kino up the beach through the brushline on the path?

- He was attacked again. This time he was badly injured, and he killed a man. He thought he lost the pearl, but (ironically) Juana found it again in the path.

What happened to their hut while they were away?

- Someone had gone in searching for the pearl. It was a total wreck, then someone set fire to it.

What additional events made it impossible for Kino and Juana to remain in the village?

Kino's canoe was damaged and his house was searched and then set on fire. Kino and his family were no longer safe.

How did Kino and Juana spend their last day in the village?

Kino, Juana, and Coyotito hid in Juan Tomas' house.

Why did they leave the village?

- They left the village because Kino had killed a man. They did not think that, given Kino's

What incident in this chapter put peace behind Kino and Juana forever?

Kino killed a man who was trying to steal the pearl.

EXTRA QUESTIONS

1. What did Juana try to do with the pearl which Kino strongly disagreed? Why do you think she wanted to do this?
2. What type of action did Kino take to prevent this? Explain.
3. Discuss the event that took place after he recovered his prized pearl.
4. Although Kino reminds Juana several times that he is a "man" Juana knows that she is a "woman." What quality of being a woman does she rely on to "save them all?"
5. After Kino ordered Juana to return to their house, what, to her surprise did she find?
6. What did Kino's brother do for them after that?
7. Why was the damage to Kino's boat so devastating?
8. Discuss the danger it was for Juan Tomas to hide Kino's family.
9. Which direction would Kino take to escape the village

CHAPTER SIX SUMMARY

As Kino and Juana travel northward, Kino feels a sense of exhilaration along with his fear. They walk all night and rest during the day so that they may not be found, and attempt to cover their tracks so that they cannot be followed easily. Kino warns Juana that "whoever finds us will take the pearl," but Juana wonders whether the dealers were right and the pearl has no value. Kino says that they would not have tried to steal it if it were not valuable. Kino repeats what they will have once they sell the pearl: the church wedding, the rifle, education for Coyotito.

When they stop to rest during the day, Juana does not sleep and Kino stirs as he dreams. When they hear noises from the distance, Kino orders Juana to keep Coyotito quiet. While Juana hides, Kino moves through the brush to see what he heard, and notices in the distance three bighorn sheep trackers, one of whom is on horseback. Kino realizes that if the trackers find them, he must leap for the horseman, kill him and take his rifle. As the horseman passes by Kino, he does not notice him. Kino and Juana both realize that if the trackers find them, they will kill them to get the

pearl.

Kino and Juana escape into the mountains, not bothering to cover their tracks. Kino orders Juana and Coyotito to leave him, for he can go faster alone, but she staunchly refuses. Kino and Juana take a zigzag path in order to thwart the trackers, and eventually find a small stream and the entrance to a cave. Kino tells Juana to hide in the cave, and he fears that Coyotito will cry, alerting the trackers.

While hiding in the cave, Kino finds that the trackers are by the stream. So that he will not be seen, Kino takes off his white clothing and stealthily creeps near them as they rest. The trackers can hear Coyotito, but think that it is merely a coyote pup. As the tracker prepares to shoot what he thinks is a coyote, Kino approaches the trackers and pounces on them. He grabs one of the trackers' rifle and shoots him between the eyes, and stabs another with his knife. The third tracker escapes up the cliff toward the cave, but Kino shoots him. Kino stands silently and hears nothing but the cry of death. Coyotito has been shot.



Kino and Juana arrive back in La Paz; he carries a gun while she carries her shawl with a limp, heavy bundle. Their return to La Paz becomes a notable event: "there may be some old ones who saw it, but those whose fathers and whose grandfathers told it to them remember it nevertheless. It is an event that happened to everyone." Juana appears hardened and tight with fatigue. Kino thinks of the Song of the Family, which has become his battle cry. As they return to La Paz, nobody speaks to them and even

Juan Tomas cannot bear to say a word. Kino and Juana approach the gulf, and in the surface of the pearl Kino remembers seeing Coyotito lying in the cave with his head shot away. Kino throws the pearl into the ocean.

CHAPTER 6 ANALYSIS

The final chapter focuses primarily on the hunt for Kino and Juana as they try to escape La Paz and reach the capital so that they can sell the pearl. Steinbeck creates the sense that Kino and Juana are followed at all times. Pursued by bighorn sheep trackers, Juana and Kino are literally hunted like animals. The division between man and animal is an important motif throughout this chapter. It primarily relates to Kino's descent from those human qualities he once displayed.

Steinbeck illustrates this through a number of events, such as when Kino attacks the trackers. In this instance, Kino moves from being capable of murder for self-defense to a more cold-blooded killing. Kino kills the three men out of fear and instinct and not because of any tangible threat they pose to him.

Steinbeck also shows the loss of human qualities within Kino when he crawls naked to find the trackers so that his white clothes will not expose him. He loses final vestiges of humanity and society to become even more animalistic. This descent is particularly ironic when considering the death of Coyotito. Kino behaves as an animal so that he can protect himself and his family, but Coyotito dies when the child is mistaken for a coyote pup.

Coyotito plays a significant role in this chapter as a reminder of the serene domestic environment that Kino and Juana once had and as a danger for them. In the savage wilderness where Kino and Juana find themselves, Coyotito serves as their one reminder of society and civilization. Coyotito also represents the hope that Kino and Juana have for the future; it is the infant child who will benefit most from the pearl, according to his parents' plans, and he thus symbolizes the advantages that the pearl may bring.

Once again, Steinbeck keeps the adversaries who pursue Kino and Juana anonymous in order to preserve their symbolic connotations. The bighorn sheep

trackers may not even be pursuing Kino and Juana; they are more important for how Kino and Juana perceive them than their actual personalities. Whether or not they are actually a threat, Kino is so assured that they are dangerous that he murders them before they have a chance to strike. In contrast to the savage and brutal Kino, Juana becomes stronger through the suffering she faces. She reveals herself to be dedicated to her husband even at the most dire moments, demanding that he does not break up their family despite the practical advantages. Furthermore, it is Juana who remains awake at night, guarding Kino and Coyotito as Kino sleeps. Steinbeck shows Juana the woman retains her particularly human qualities while the Kino becomes more animalistic;. While Kino becomes suspicious and paranoid, when he looks "for weakness in her face, for fear or irresolution . . . there is none." The return of Kino and Juana to La Paz is anticlimactic, yet contains some degree of ironic horror. Kino returns to La Paz with the one possession that he desperately wanted, a rifle, but has lost his child and rejects the pearl. His rejection of the pearl fully demonstrates the horror that the pearl has wrought upon him. Steinbeck constructs Kino's return to La Paz as an event that brings Kino back to the family-centered ideals with which he began the story, but his recollection of the Song of the Family has a significant undercurrent of defiance and anger. His family has been destroyed, yet he clings to that ideal, for it is all that remains for him. The Pearl is therefore a parable with an uncertain meaning at best and a morbidly determinist one at worst. The story does seem to warn against attempting to improve one's social situation, recalling Juan Tomas' story of the pearl agent who stole the townspeople's pearls. Although it seems to indict Kino for his attempts to gain the fortune that the pearl offers, it offers equal if not greater censure to the elites of La Paz who attempt to exploit Kino and thwart his attempts to sell the pearl. Even if Steinbeck does not intend the story to be a critique of Kino for his behavior, the story has a decidedly deterministic viewpoint that implies that Kino and Juana could do nothing to improve their situation. Perhaps the most valid critique that Steinbeck offers in the pearl concerns the effects that the newfound chance for riches has on Kino, who replaces human, civilized values with an obsessive preoccupation with the pearl and suspicion of those around him.

Steinbeck criticizes the idea that the pearl has become Kino's soul, demonstrating that there are far greater losses that Kino can face. Yet where the story remains problematic is that the hope that the pearl brings is never tangible; calamities occur nearly immediately for Juana and Kino, making the pearl into a simple curse for the family. Kino does not choose to sacrifice his fortune; he chooses to repudiate his pain. When Kino throws the pearl into the ocean, he discards a meaningless object. The pearl has no value in the sense that, without Coyotito, the pearl has no power to provide for a better future for Kino and Juana, who could gain only simple material items from their fortune. Kino's repudiation of the pearl is an empty event, for he does not make a meaningful sacrifice. He instead rids himself of an unwanted object that causes him pain. As a parable, The Pearl is an empty one, merely choosing to heap tragedy upon its protagonists and forcing them into pain and agony without offering them an alternate option or any possibility for hope.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

What "songs" does Kino hear on the first part of their journey?

- He hears the music of the pearl and the quiet melody of the family.

What made the music of the pearl become "sinister in his ears . . . interwoven with the music of evil?"

- Kino looked at Coyotito's face. We assume that means he thought of the evil of the scorpion and his distrust of the doctor.

What happens to Coyotito?

- Coyotito cries. The tracker shoots towards the sound, towards the cave where Juana and Coyotito are hiding, and the shot hits and kills Coyotito.

4. What happens to the trackers?

- Kino kills the trackers.

What happens to Kino and Juana?

- They return to the village with their dead baby.

What do they do with the pearl?

- They throw it away.

What does the return of Kino and Juana and their throwing away the pearl mean

symbolically?

- It means that Kino has given up his dream, his hope for a better future for himself and his family. He has lost in his conflicts with man and nature. It appears as though Juan Tomas was right.

This chapter might be subtitled, “The Flight” Discuss it through the important incidents that happened.

- Kino and his family leave to try to reach, a city in the north.
- Trackers come after Kino to steal the pearl.
- Kino retreats the mountains to hide his family.
- Coyotito is killed
- Kino and Juana return to their village.

Explain Kino’s final action.

- Kino threw away the pearl. The pearl lead to this loss-the death of Coyotito.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

What happen when Kino tries to attack while his wife was hiding in the cave? Provide an example of animal imagery used in this chapter.

Right before Kino lunges toward the trackers, they hear Coyotito and shoot him. Then Kino rages and kills all of the trackers. Scrabbles away like a crab, Kino moved like a slow lizard.... and the baby sounded like a coyote”.

What tragedy strikes the family? Why is Coyotito’s name significant?

Coyotito is killed by the trackers gun and it devastates his parents. “Coyotito” means like coyote in Spanish, and ironically the trackers think his cries are a small coyote’s and that’s why he is shot.

How has Kino’s visions about the pearl changed? What does he see now?

Because of his fear and the feeling the pearl is bringing them bad, he now sees negative things such as a dead body, Juana with a beaten face and Coyotito who is sick. it is like almost like evil music is taking over the pearl.

How did the pearl buyers get satisfaction out of their job?

Answer: by buying the pearl at a price as low as they want.

MSCE ENGLISH LITERATURE PEARL COMPREHENSIVE STUDY NOTES

How did the family prepare themselves for their trip into town to sell the Pearl?

By dressing up in nice clothes and bought a leather bag to keep the pearl in.

How does Kino's conversation with Juan Tomas about the value of pearls further demonstrate their naivety (innocence) of their people?

By saying that they don't know the prices of pearl in other places and that they don't know if the price they have been offered is fair.

Explain what happens in the first chapter?

Kino and Juana wake up, and prepare for the day. The scorpion strikes Coyotito. They call for the doctor, but the doctor refuses to come. They go to the doctor, but he refuses to treat Coyotito because they have no money to pay for it.

Notice that the townspeople follow Kino. What does that tell you?

It tells us two things: the people were curious and the people liked Kino and his family.

Why did the doctor refuse to treat Coyotito?

To the doctor, Coyotito was an Indian "animal." Also, Kino could not pay the doctor well for his services.

About the Doctor refusing to treat Coyotito, What does that tell you about the doctor's personality?

The doctor is not a caring individual. He is materialistic and cold-hearted. He is a doctor for the title, social position and money, not at heart.

What are the conflicts in Chapter 1?

The conflicts are man vs. man, man vs. society, and man vs. nature.

What is the Song of the Family?

The Song of the Family is a song of happiness, of being "whole." It is a song of peaceful existence, of being together in harmony with the family.

What is the Song of Evil? When does it first appear?

The Song of Evil is a song of disruption, of evil, of the breaking of happiness. It first appears with the scorpion.

Why did Steinbeck include the first section about the life in the Gulf water

This section shows the natural world of which Kino is part of it.

It shows the old way of survival of the fittest.

MSCE ENGLISH LITERATURE PEARL COMPREHENSIVE STUDY NOTES

The canoe is mentioned quite often, what does it symbolise?

Yes. It symbolizes the old way of life, tradition. It was Kino's grandfather's canoe. It shows the continuation of the tradition how it was passed on from one generation to another.

To what new Song are we introduced to after the Pearls discovery?

We are introduced to the Song of the Pearl that might be.

To what does Steinbeck compare the town where Kino wants to sell the pearl?

He compares it to a living being.

The news of Kino's pearl spread quickly across town. What did each person think of when he heard it?

Each person thinks of how he personally could benefit from the riches of the pearl.

What would Kino do with his riches?

Kino would marry Juana, buy new clothes, a harpoon and a rifle, and send Coyotito to school.

Why does the doctor come?

The doctor comes because he, too, has heard that Kino has a great pearl. He wants to get some money from Kino, and we are led to believe that he has ideas of stealing the pearl for himself.

What bad thing happened to make Juana want to throw away the pearl?

Someone comes to steal the pearl. Kino knifed him, but he got knocked over the head with something.

In the description of the pearl buyers, what do we find out about the market in Kino's village?

The market is fixed. The buyers get together and set prices to cheat the village men.

What happened when Kino went to sell his pearl?

The pearl buyer told him it was a curiosity, not a valuable pearl. He offered Kino 1,000 pesos. When Kino disagreed, three other buyers were brought in; each one said it was of little value. It is made obvious to the reader that the buyers had arranged their prices earlier. Kino says he will go to the capital instead of dealing with these buyers.

Juan Tomas says to Kino, "You have defied not the pearl buyers, but the whole structure, the whole way of life. I am afraid for you." What does he mean?

one of the village men had ever gone against the buyers. No one had "taken on city hall," so-to-speak. It was not Kino's place to try to do better. He was just a lowly village man; that was his station in life. Now, he was trying to improve his station and would have to have a major conflict in order to do so. Juan Tomas thinks this goes against the laws of nature and that bad things happen when you go against the laws of nature. As I heard it put once, "Little fish don't eat big fish."

Again at the end of the chapter, Juana wants to throw away the pearl because it is evil. What evil thing happened?

Kino is attacked again. This time he is hurt worse than the first time.

What did Kino do when he figured out that his wife sneaked out with the pearl?

He went after her, took the pearl away, and (in the process) beat and kicked Juana.

What happened to Kino up the beach through the brushline on the path?

He was attacked again. This time he was badly injured, and he killed a man. He thought he lost the pearl, but Juana found it again in the path.

Why did Kinos family leave the village?

They left the village because Kino had killed a man. They did not think that, given Kino's recent upsetting of authority, anyone would believe the man was killed in self-defense.

What "songs" does Kino hear on the first part of their journey?

He hears the music of the pearl and the quiet melody of the family.

(31)What made the music of the pearl become "sinister in his ears,. interwoven with the music of evil?"

Kino looked at Coyotito's face. We assume that means he thought of the evil of the scorpion and his distrust of the doctor.

What does the return of Kino and Juana and their throwing away the pearl mean symbolically?

It means that Kino has given up his dream, his hope for a better future for himself and his family. He has lost in his conflicts with man and nature. It appears as though Juan Tomas was right

Explain how the following themes have been portrayed in the book ‘the Pearl’?

a. Knowledge is power

Firstly, Kino understands that real power lies in knowledge, his son will read and open the books and he will be able to teach his parents once educated that's why he intends to send him to a better school so that once educated the son will remove ignorance from their parents.

In addition, Juana understands far sooner than Kino the danger in possessing the pearl that it will destroy them and Juan Tomas realized quickly the danger of possessing the pearl who insist the pearl to be sold to buy peace but Kino is ignorant of that as a result it leads to the destruction of their properties.

Another point is that Kino is aware that the pearl buyers want to cheat him by offering low prices so he decides not to sell it because he has some knowledge on the value of pearl.

Lastly, Kino has gained more power and has no fear of anyone because of the pearl which he regards more valuable and defends it by killing dangerous people who wants to steal his pearl yet by the time he had no pearl he was afraid of people.

b. Greed

Firstly when the doctor's servant informs him that Coyotito is in dire need of help, the doctor replies, "I am a doctor, not a veterinary" and refuses to treat Coyotito without payment, which Kino does not have.

Secondly when the doctor hears that Kino has acquired "the Pearl of the World", he claims that Kino is a client of his and goes to visit Kino in his home. He is not concerned about the chance of Coyotito dying, and instead tries to squeeze as much money out of Kino as possible.

Thirdly The priest comes to visit Kinos house after hearing about the world pearl discovery but he's super-condescending because he considers the natives to be

children. He flatters Kino and puts in his two cents about how they should donate money to the church.

Lastly The pearl buyer pokes at the pearl and calls it "clumsy" for being too large and finally offers a thousand pesos just to make sure they keep a low price for something which is worth fifty thousand so that they should make more profits out of it.

Discuss eight points that show the theme of curiosity in the book “The Pearl”.

Curiosity is the strong desire to know about something in this case the pearl. Almost everyone in the book is curious to know the pearl of Kino which drives some people to come to his house to see this pearl. The book of Pearl has displayed a lot of curiosity from different characters found in the book, it is therefore this essay's reason to offer detailed analysis of the theme of curiosity found in the book of the pearl.

In the first place, the pearl divers at the ocean are very curious to know and see the pearl which Kino has just found. This has led them to abandon their work for a while and rush where Kino and his wife are just in order to see the pearl. By this time Kino has not officially informed them but they have enough evidence that Kino has found the pearl due to his shouting for joy.

In addition to that, Kino becomes curious after finding the pearl he looks forward to what it can bring. His life has become ambitious, he thinks of buying new clothes, wedding at church, buying a rifle and sending Coyotito to a good school.

Another point is that, Juana becomes curious for Kino to find the pearl as a result she prays when Kino dives into the ocean so that he can be successful. Even when Kino comes out of the water she becomes curious to know if Kino has really found the pearl from the different Oysters he has collected deep down the sea.

Fourthly, relatives and neighbours of Kino are very curious to see the pearl and they all rush to his brush house to see this pearl. They gather at his house in order to have a look at the pearl and to know what Kino will do with the money after selling the pearl.

Above that, the priest becomes very curious when he hears the news of Kino's pearl which he later visits Kino for the same. He desires to see it and reminds Kino to

remember the un-repaired church after the sale of the pearl and thanking God by giving tithe to the church.

Furthermore, the French Doctor becomes curious about Kino's Pearl and visits him. At his house the doctor become curious to know where Kino has hidden the pearl, this made him to have glances at the corner of the house where he thinks the pearl can be hidden. He later asks Kino to give him the pearl so that he can keep it in safe place as Kino in order to avoid been stolen.

The seventh point is that, the pearl buyers are curious to see the pearl of Kino which have shaken the whole area because of its large size. They prepare to give Kino the cheapest price so that they sale it at a higher price.

Lastly, the beggars become curious to see the sudden change of Kino from poverty to prosperity and they wanted to escort the Kino to see how his fortune will become at the market. In this case they are even hopeful to get more from Kino because as he once tested poverty so he will remember his friends still suffering.

This essay have discussed how the theme of curiosity is portrayed in the book of the pearl beginning with the pearl divers, Kino's wife, Kino himself, the neighbours, the priest, the doctor, the pearl buyers and the beggars.

Describe the mistakes made by individuals and explain how each mistake would have been avoided in the book, "the pearl".

Firstly Juana makes a mistake by thinking that the doctor is going to cure her baby. She does not realize that he is the one who made the baby sick in the first place by giving the baby the white powder. This could be avoided by sticking to their tradition medicine rather than involving the doctor who does not have the best interests of the people at heart.

Secondly, Juana makes another mistake by returning the pearl to her husband. Superstition aside, Juana is right about one thing. The pearl is trouble. This item they thought would make them rich causes them to lose everything. Because of it, their baby dies, and their lives will never be the same and this could have been avoided by throwing the pearl back into the sea when she had the chance.

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Thirdly Kino is aware that everybody in the town /village wants to steal his pearl and faces many attacks in the process. This could be avoided by selling the pearl just to get rid of it and free himself from the attackers when he is offered fifteen hundred pesos.

In addition to that, the Pearl buyers knows that the world pearl is worth a lot of money and will give them more profits once they buy it but they offer an acceptable price as low as six hundred pesos which makes Kino not to sell it . This could be avoided by the buyers offering at least a fair price.

Furthermore Kino knows that after the pearl discovery everybody is an enemy because they all eye the pearl to the point of hunting him like an animal. Despite all this, He proceeds to take with him his wife and a kid on a dangerous journey to sell the pearl and lost the baby on their way.

This could be avoided by putting some senses into Juana's head to stay safe at his brother's house.

Kino also makes a mistake by not taking advise from Juana and Juan Thomas that the pearl is evil and he should get rid of it. It later brought troubles like losing their only house and a canoe which could have been avoided by taking the advice.

Another mistake is made by the doctor who refuses to help Kino when his Son Coyotito is beaten by a scorpion because Kino has no money. Later The Doctor pays a visit to Kino upon hearing that he has found the world pearl and asks for the pearl to keep it safe but is not given. This could have been avoided by being there for Kino when he needed help to gain his trust.

Lastly Juan made a mistake by not listening to Kino when she was told not to follow Kino on his way to sell the Pearl because that is where the son was shot dead. This could have been avoided by staying at Juan Thomas house.

With examples from the book, “the pearl” show how the following themes are portrayed:

a. Poverty

Kino's family lives in a brush house which shows that the family is poor. Kino is failing to provide money for the medicine to treat his son Coyotito which also indicated that they are poor.

The baby has no crib or cradle. His bed is hung from ropes that extend from the ceiling. This is to prevent any insects or scorpions from hurting the baby. In addition to that when the story begins, Kino is waking up in the early morning inside his hut on the beach. Juana starts the fire in a fire pit which is where she has to cook the meals and The hut that they live in has no door and the floor is dirt. After the discovery of the pearl Kino said after the sells he will make a church wedding and send his son to school which shows that he was poor and could not even afford a church wedding and school for his son.

b. Exploitation

Firstly, the pearl buyers want to exploit the poor Kino so that he remains poor by buying his pearl at the cheapest price.

They actually have a meeting agreeing on the cheapest price to buy the pearl of Kino in order that he continues to live a miserably life.

In addition, the priest want to take advantage of Kino by demanding him to thank God in form of paying little to church and to repair the church simply because he has the pearl.

Another point is that, the doctor wants to exploit the poor Kino by demanding to keep the pearl on his behalf as if he does not know how to keep. In true sense he wants to steal the pearl from him in this way.

Lastly, the doctor exploits the poor people by not giving them treatment even if they are at a point of death simply because they cannot or they can pay little.

Explain eight points that show Kino as a strong character

in the book, “the pearl”.

Kinno dives in the ocean searching for the pearls and He is able to stay under the waters for almost two minutes which shows that he is strong even in the waters.

Kino also shows a strong character by going to the sea everyday using his canoe to dive for the pearls so he can provide for his family.

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Upon discovery of the great pearl, one intruder comes to Kino's house at night in attempt to steal the great pearl. Kino gets smashed on the head, but chases off the bad guy this also shows how strong he is.

Although Kino is pushed by pressure from the surrounding people like Juana n Juan of about the pearl that it is evil, Kino is able to stand still on his idea of having the Pearl to improve his life and family since it is his only hope to become rich after the sales .This shows how strong minded he is.

When the doctor visited Kino's house, he proposed an idea to Kino that he need to keep his pearl at his safe since the house is not safe for valuable things, but Kino rejects the offer and He is ready to defend his pearl against all odds.

Juana seeing that the Pearl is evil and that Kino is rejecting to throw it away, she decides to throw the Pearl back into the ocean but Kino manages to stop her just as she is about to throw the pearl into the water. He wrestles it back, strikes her in the face, and kicks her once she's fallen to the ground. As Kino makes his way back to the hut, a figure attacks him. He stabs the figure with his knife and leaves him on the ground bleeding while the pearl is knocked onto the ground proving how strong he is once again.

As the trackers follows into the mountain, Kino leaps up and stabs his knife into the man's neck just as the gun goes off.

Kino goes nuts on the three men, managing to stab two, steal the rifle, and shoot the other man between the eyes proving even more how strong he is.

Discuss eight points that shows the theme of disillusionment.

Kino dives into the sea, and finds the great pearl which He and His Wife Juana believes will bring more money to the family which will be used for medical payment to the doctor for Coyotito's but later Juana discovers that the Pearl is evil and a source of problems into their family.

When Kino is about to sell the Pearl, the buyers quoted that the pearl is useless and far away from what they are expecting as the way people are talking about the pearl and this disappoints Kino.

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Just like Juana, looking at the situation that has reached of burning Kino's house, Juan Thomas also starts to believe that the pearl is evil and that Kino should throw it away since it is bringing more trouble than expected.

The priest comes to visit, but he's super-condescending because he considers the natives to be children. He flatters Kino and puts in his two cents about how they should donate money to the church after the sells but the great pearl ends back into the sea.

After Kino's discovery of the pearl the native Indians believes that the pearl will bring more wealth to Kino and his family but at last they end up realizing that the pearl is not good because of what the buyers say and it leads to the death of their son Coyotito.

The native Pearl divers think collecting all pearls together extracted from the ocean and give it to one person to sell it to the capital will earn them more money in attempt to run away from the low prices. Unfortunately the one assigned for the job ends up running away with all the money. When Kino disagrees with the buyers offer for the pearl, He decides to sell it to the capital thinking he will get better prices there but along the way his son is shot dead and the pearl is thrown back into the sea.

Kino decides he wants to get married to his wife—officially and in the church, now that they can pay for it after selling the great pearl. He looks into the pearl and sees a vision of them at the altar, dressed all spiffy. Then he says he wants a rifle and continues that his son Coyotito will go to school but the great pearl turns out to be an evil thing.

With examples from the book “the pearl” show how the following theme of violence is portrayed:

Firstly in chapter 3, we see Kino waking up from his sleep with the song of evil pulsing through him. What follows is a scuffle in the dark with at least one intruder who smashed Kino on the head, but chases off the bad guy.

Secondly in chapter 4 we see Kino going home from La Paz after failing to sell the pearl. While at home as the night grows darker, Kino goes to the doorway, after

sensing some danger and when Juana follows she finds him on the ground bleeding from the head after being kicked by the pearl chasers.

Thirdly when Juana is about to throw the pearl into the water, Kino wrestles it back, strikes her in the face, and kicks her once she's fallen to the ground. This also shows how violent Kino has become because of the pearl.

Lastly in chapter 6 Kino leaps up and stabs his knife into the man's neck (the trackers) just as the gun goes off and Kino goes nuts on the three men, managing to stab two, steal the rifle, and shoot the other man between the eye.

Explain in eight ways symbols used in the book “the pearl”.

Firstly the pearl is a symbol of wealth which is quite ambivalent in its nature throughout the novel. When Kino first finds the pearl, it is a symbol of hope and salvation. The pearl and what it holds of wealth represents a great potential for the family and so their ambitions grow big.

Secondly Like wealth, the same Pearl represents all the evil in the world. It seems all the greed and evil surfaces in the presence of wealth.

Thirdly the scorpion is a form of foreshadowing as well as a symbol of the evil that is yet to come into Kino's life. The scorpion sneaks into the family's home in attempts to take away their most valuable possession, their son.

Another symbolic meaning of a scorpion is also a foreshadowing of the many towns' people who are filled with poisonous envy and evil as they sneak into Kino's home to steal the pearl and poison his life.

Kino's canoe is the tool he uses to provide for his family and is an essential part of his life. Kino's canoe enables him to catch fish and carries him to deeper waters, where he dives for pearls. Steinbeck writes that Kino's canoe was the "one thing of value he owned in the world" and was passed down through generations in his family. Symbolically, the canoe represents Kino's heritage, culture, and family.

Given the fact that Kino planned on escaping the village in his canoe, the destroyed canoe symbolically represents the loss of hope and peace in Kino's life. The Song of Evil surrounds the sunken canoe, and Kino's life takes a turn for the worse. Kino's

family, heritage, and peaceful existence are destroyed once his canoe is irreparably damaged.

QUOTATIONS EXPLAINED

"And, as with all retold tales that are in people's hearts, there are only good and bad things and black and white things and good and evil things and no in-between. If this story is a parable, perhaps everyone takes his own meaning from it and reads his own life into it."

Found within the prologue, this quote reveals how The Pearl's plot is not entirely original to Steinbeck. In fact, it is a known story that is often told, perhaps like a folk legend. And as with most parables, there is a moral to this story.

"When Kino had finished, Juana came back to the fire and ate her breakfast. They had spoken once, but there is not need for speech if it is only a habit anyway. Kino sighed with satisfaction—and that was conversation."

From Chapter 1, these words paint Kino, the main character, and Juana's lifestyle as unembellished and quiet. This scene depicts Kino as simple and wholesome before he discovers the pearl.

"But the pearls were accidents, and the finding of one was luck, a little pat on the back by God or the gods both."

Kino is diving for pearls in Chapter 2. The act of finding pearls represents the notion that events in life are not actually up to man, but rather chance or a higher power.

"Luck, you see, brings bitter friends."

These ominous words in Chapter 3 spoken by Kino's neighbors foreshadow how the discovery of the pearl can harbor a troublesome future.

"For his dream of the future was real and never to be destroyed, and he had said, 'I will go,' and that made a real thing too. To determine to go and to say it was to be halfway there."

Unlike the deference to the gods and chance in an earlier quote, this quote from Chapter 4 shows how Kino is now taking, or at least trying to take, full control of his future. This raises the question: is it chance or self-agency that determines one's life?

"This pearl has become my soul... If I give it up, I shall lose my soul."

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Kino utters these words in Chapter 5, revealing how he is consumed by the pearl and the materiality and greed it represents.

"And the music of the pearl drifted to a whisper and disappeared."

Kino finally escapes the siren call of the pearl, but what does it take for him to change?

The ants were busy on the ground, big black ones with shiny bodies and the little dusty quick ants. Kino watched with the detachment of God while a dusty ant frantically tried to escape the sand trap an ant lion had dug for him.

The quotation from Chapter 1 occurs during the idyllic opening description of Kino and Juana's life. Kino's detached attitude toward nature suggests that he is a part of nature but also above it, like God. The description of the ant caught in the sand trap is a subtle instance of foreshadowing, as it mirrors Kino's eventual experience as a helpless prisoner of his own ambition.

He watched the ants moving, a little column of them near to his foot, and he put his foot in their path. Then the column climbed over his instep and continued on its way, and Kino left his foot there and watched them move over it.

The quotation from Chapter 6 describes Kino after the pearl has corrupted him. He is no longer detached from nature, and therefore he is no longer like God. Yet, as he becomes more animal-like, he aspires to be more like God by trying to affect the ants' behavior when he places his foot in their path. He does not succeed in changing nature, however; rather, nature simply renders him insignificant, as the ants methodically ignore him and climb over his shoe. As Kino's greed brings him from his initial human dignity to a plane closer to that of animals, he loses something essential to his humanity, as well as the easy, simple relationship with nature he enjoys early in the novella.

"But the pearls were accidents and the finding of one was luck, a little pat on the back by God or the gods or both."

This short quotation is from Chapter 2, when Kino prepares to make the dive on which he finds the Pearl of the World. The narrator contends that certain occurrences that shape human life are accidents willed by a divine power, events over which human

beings have no control. It becomes clear that the discovery of pearls is a function of such seemingly arbitrary divine fate. Kino's eventual downfall can thus be seen as not entirely his own fault.

"In the pearl he saw Coyotito sitting at a little desk in a school, just as Kino had once seen it through an open door. And Coyotito was dressed in a jacket, and he had on a white collar and a broad silken tie.

Moreover, Coyotito was writing on a big piece of paper. Kino looked at his neighbors fiercely. "My son will go to school," he said, and the neighbors were hushed. . . .

Kino's face shone with prophecy. "My son will read and open the books, and my son will write and will know writing. And my son will make numbers, and these things will make us free because he will know —he will know and through him we will know. . . . This is what the pearl will do."

This passage from Chapter 3 describes the moment of Kino's pivotal decision to direct all his energies toward using the pearl to obtain an education for Coyotito.

Kino's ambition constitutes an attempt to shake the foundations of his society by placing his son on a level with the natives' European oppressors. The vehemence with which Kino reacts to his vision, as well as the hushed silence with which the neighbors hear it, is a testament to the improbable nature of Kino's plan not only to improve his son's lot but to break "free" of a centuries-long cycle of oppression. From this moment forward, Kino remains obsessed with his goal, which he can achieve only by making a great deal of money from his pearl

And the evils of the night were about them. The coyotes cried and laughed in the brush, and the owls screeched and hissed over their heads. And once some large animal lumbered away, crackling the undergrowth as it went. And Kino gripped the handle of the big working knife and took a sense of protection from it.

This quotation from Chapter 6 demonstrates how Kino's relationship with nature has changed, symbolizing his personal and moral downfall. In general, Steinbeck portrays the natural world positively in The Pearl, using beautiful language and images of sun-drenched scenery.

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This scene reverses that trend, as Steinbeck illustrates the dark and frightening aspect of nature. We sense that the universe itself opposes Kino's course of action. Kino himself reveals an adversarial relationship with nature by his defensive gripping of his knife handle to reassure himself. Where Kino earlier lived in harmony with nature, his ambition has made him nature's enemy.