

English II: The Pearl Study Guide

Chapter 1

1. What, in general, happens in the first chapter? Write a 3-5 sentence summary.
2. Why do the townspeople follow Kino into town?
3. Why did the doctor refuse to treat Coyotito?
4. What does that tell you about the doctor's motives?
5. Are there any conflicts in the story yet? Explain.
6. What is the Song of the Family?
7. What is the Song of Evil? When does it first appear?

Chapter 2

8. Why did Steinbeck write about the life in the Gulf waters in the beginning of the chapter?
9. The canoe is mentioned quite a number of times. What does the canoe symbolize?
10. What is the main event of this chapter?
11. Do you think it is coincidence that when on/in the water, everything goes well? What does the water symbolize?
12. What new song is the reader introduced to?

Chapter 3

13. To what does Steinbeck compare the town? Why does he do this?
14. The news of Kino's pearl spread quickly across town. Tell what each person thinks of when he hears the news?
15. What does Kino want to do with his riches?
16. Why does the doctor come to see Kino's family? What does he do?
17. What event occurred to make Juana want to throw away the pearl?
18. How is Kino changed by his discovery of the pearl? Describe how the pearl changes his:
 - dreams (what he thinks is possible)
 - routine of daily life
 - perception of the world (how he sees other people)

Chapter 4

19. In the description of the pearl buyers, what do we find out about the market in Kino's village?
20. What happened when Kino goes to sell his pearl? Write out what occurs.

21. 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 by "the whole structure"?
22. Again at the end of the chapter, Juana wants to throw away the pearl because it is evil. What evil thing happened?

Chapter 5

23. Where does Juana go in the early morning?
24. What did Kino do when he figured out where she had gone?
25. What happened to Kino on the path?
26. What happened to their hut while they were away?
27. Why did Kino and his family leave the village?

Chapter 6

28. What "songs" does Kino hear on the first part of their journey?
29. What made the music of the pearl become "sinister in his ears . . . interwoven with the music of evil?"
30. What happens to Coyotito?
31. What happens to the trackers?
32. What happens to Kino and Juana?
33. What do they do with the pearl?
34. What does the return of Kino and Juana mean symbolically? What about getting rid of the pearl?

Final Review

35. Write about how Juana and Kino's relationship changes over the course of the story. Write at least three main events in their relationship, and any shifts that occur.
36. How does the pearl change as a symbol in the story?
37. What is ironic about what Kino hoped the pearl would do for his family and what it actually did for his family?
38. Read the following interpretations of what happens to Kino. Write a defense for each one.
 - Kino is a normal, decent man who learns the hard way that greed can be destructive
 - Kino is utterly devastated by his own greed
 - Kino learns, through everything, that he will never escape his life of being a poor Indian.
39. What is the main moral, or lesson, provided in *The Pearl*? Why do you think this?