

The Pearl

Chapters Three and Four

Comprehension and Analysis

Directions: To give you a comprehensive understanding of all aspects of the novella, answer the following questions using complete sentences on a separate sheet of paper. Be sure to use your Note-Taking chart to keep important notes for each chapter and to help you answer the Comprehension and Analysis questions.

Chapter Three

1. What is a “colonial animal” as used on page 21? What is Steinbeck’s purpose in comparing a town to a colonial animal?
2. The priest, the shopkeepers, the doctor, and the beggars all wonder about the pearl that Kino has found. What do you imagine they are thinking?
3. What is the goal of the pearl buyers in town?
4. What has happened in the past if a pearl buyer offered too low a price for a pearl?
5. What is the relationship among the pearl buyers?
6. How did Kino become “every man’s enemy” by finding the pearl? Does he know this is happening? Explain.
7. What does Kino plan to do with his new wealth?
8. How does Kino think Coyotito’s education will benefit the village as a community?
9. The last two paragraphs on page 26 explain the two possible reactions the neighbors will have to Kino and his future. In one reaction, they are proud of him. In the other, they call him foolish. What does this tell you about the neighbors? Explain.
10. What is Kino’s reaction to the priest’s visit?
11. After everyone leaves for the evening, Kino feels “alone and unprotected.” All of the natural sounds around him make him feel uneasy. What word would best describe Kino’s emotions at this point? Explain your choice of words.
12. Kino is very superstitious about plans he has made for his family in anticipation of the wealth the pearl will bring. Explain his suspicions and how they have begun to affect him.
13. When the doctor and his servant arrive, the doctor explains that he was busy earlier in the day. He says this is the first chance he has had to come see the baby. Does Kino believe him? Cite evidence from the novella that illustrates your answer.
14. How does the doctor manipulate Kino into letting him look at his son?
15. Do you think Coyotito would have actually become sick again? Explain your answer using specific details from the text.
16. Why does the doctor lie and pretend he does not know about Kino’s pearl? Is Kino fooled? Explain.

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17. When talking to the doctor, what mistake does Kino involuntarily make that puts his family in jeopardy? How does he try to correct it?
18. During the night, an intruder trying to find the pearl awakens Kino. What is Kino's reaction? What does it tell you about Kino's character?
19. How does Juana react? Is Kino supportive of her? Explain.
20. What word best describes Kino and Juana's attitudes the next morning? Explain your choice of words.

Chapter Four

1. To what or whom is the opening paragraph of Chapter Four referring? Explain.
2. How do the pearl buyers intend to appraise the value of the pearl? Cite evidence from the novella to support your opinion.
3. Who will accompany Kino and his family into town to sell the pearl? Why?
4. How do Kino and Juana prepare for their trip into the city?
5. In your own words, what is the theme of the story Juan Tomás tells Kino about their ancestors who tried to sell their pearls for more money?
6. How have Kino and his ancestors been treated for four hundred years? By whom? How have they learned to act because of this treatment?
7. Does the first pearl buyer that Kino comes across seem genuine? Should Kino trust him, in your opinion? Why or why not?
8. Looking closely at the text, determine what the first pearl buyer's true reaction is to Kino's pearl.
9. What is the first pearl buyer's explanation for why he will only offer a thousand pesos for it?
10. What does the first pearl buyer do to try to convince Kino that his offer is fair? How is he being deceitful?
11. The text says that Kino "felt the creeping of fate, the circling of wolves, the hover of vultures." What is the significance of this sentence?
12. What are the offers from the other pearl buyers?
13. In this chapter, a conflict exists between Kino and the pearl buyers. How does this conflict propel the action of the plot forward?
14. How do Kino's neighbors feel about his decision to accept or not accept the offers from the pearl buyers?
15. What are Kino's true feelings about traveling to the capital with his pearl?
16. Does Juan Tomás believe Kino's problems will end if he goes to the capital and gets a good price for the pearl? Explain.
17. After Kino is attacked for a second time, what is Juana's reaction?
18. Kino assures Juana, "I am a man," several times at the end of Chapter Four. Why does he do this?

