

The Pearl

Chapters Five and Six

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 Five

1. At the beginning of Chapter Five, why do you think Kino follows Juana to the beach rather than stopping her immediately?
2. What do you think has caused Juana to take the situation with the pearl into her own hands after having listened to Kino for so long?
3. Is Kino's violence towards Juana surprising? Explain.
4. The text states, "It meant that Kino would drive his strength against a mountain and plunge his strength against the sea. Juana, in her woman's soul, knew that the mountain would stand while the man broke himself; that the sea would surge while the man drowned in it." Explain the significance of this passage.
5. How is the mood affected by the use of the phrase, "the old life was gone forever."
6. When Juana sees Kino, the figure, and the "dark-bladed" knife on the path, what conclusion does she make?
7. Why does Juana insist that Kino's explanation that he was attacked will not be enough to keep their family safe?
8. How does Kino plan to take his family away in the night? Why does his plan fail?
9. Kino doesn't even consider taking another canoe. What does this tell you about his character?
10. Infer who might have set the brush house on fire. Explain your reasoning.
11. Explain the irony in the statements, "The light made him afraid," and then later, "for light was danger to him."
12. Who tries to help Kino and his family? How?
13. Juan Tomás tries to convince Kino that he still has the option to get rid of the pearl. Do you think this would help? Explain your thoughts.

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Chapter Six

1. “Some ancient thing stirred in Kino...some animal thing was moving in him” as they escaped in the night. To what is the author alluding?
2. Kino obstructs the path of ants with his foot. How is this situation symbolic of Kino’s life?
3. What finally convinces Kino that the pearl is worth more than the pearl buyers offered?
4. When Kino looked into the shining surface of the pearl he used to see the dreams he held for his family. Now, he only sees negative images. What could the pearl symbolize in this situation?
5. How does the author characterize the people who are following Kino and his family? Why does he use animals in his comparison?
6. After he realizes they are being followed, why does Kino stop covering his footprints?
7. Kino considers turning himself in to the trackers to protect Juana and Coyotito. How does Juana react? What does this tell you about their relationship?
8. How does Juana’s insistence that she will not leave her husband and go ahead to Loreto or Santa Rosalia affect Kino?
9. How is the pool of water Kino finds a place of both life and death?
10. Where does Kino decide to hide his family for the night? What does he decide he must do when the trackers camp by the pool nearby?
11. What steps does Kino take to make his plan go as smoothly as possible? What complicates his plan?
12. As Kino attacks the men, how does the author’s use of the phrase “terrible machine” set the tone of the piece?
13. Kino heard “the keening, moaning, rising hysterical cry from the little cave in the side of the stone mountain, the cry of death.” What is your first prediction about who/what may be moaning, crying?
14. As the family returns to LaPaz, describe how Kino and Juana act and look.
15. “The people say that the two seemed to be removed from human experience.” Explain the author’s meaning in using this passage at this time in the chapter.
16. What does Kino finally do with the pearl?
17. What do you predict their life will be like now?

