Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *The Pearl* Character List

Directions: Show how each of the following characters can be connected with one of the five major themes from *The Pearl*. What evidence can you offer to show the connections?

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| --- | --- |
| Character | Proof of theme |
| **Kino**:  A strong, young Native American, Kino is *The* *Pearl’s* protagonist and the head of its central family. He lives with his wife, **Juana**, and their son, **Coyotito**, in a brush house near the Gulf Sea. They lead a simple and dignified life, and Kino works hard to keep his family nourished and protected. In the beginning of the novel, Kino is deeply connected to the culture of his ancestors—to their musical customs, their intimacy with nature, and their veneration of the family structure. When he finds the pearl, however, Kino develops grand ambitions and lofty aspirations, which distract him from these traditional values and lead him to commit uncharacteristic acts of violence in protection of the pearl—against his own wife as well as his greedy neighbors and others. By the end of the novel, after his efforts to keep the pearl have resulted in the disaster of Coyotito's death, Kino demonstrates a renewed respect for his wife and a return to his initial values, particularly when he allows Juana to walk by his side and then offers her the honor of throwing the pearl into the ocean. |  |
| **Juana**:  Like her husband, **Kino**, **Juana** is hard-working, serious, and able to endure great physical and emotional strain. She nurses **Coyotito**, builds fires for corncakes, prays in times of distress, and attempts to heal her baby’s scorpion sting. Though she defers to her husband as a wife is expected, Juana is also strong-willed, and it is she who insists that Coyotito see **the** **doctor**. When she takes initiative and tries to get rid of the evil pearl, however, Kino beats her into submission. Yet even Kino’s violence Juana accepts rationally, reminding herself of the necessity of man for woman. |  |
| **Coyotito**:  Perhaps the most important, though most silent, character in the novel, **Coyotito** is **Juana** and **Kino’s** infant son. He is a naïve instigator of action: in the beginning of the novel, he shakes the rope of his hanging box, causing the scorpion to fall on his shoulder and sting him. It is to pay for his treatment that Kino searches for the pearl, and in the end, his cries awaken **the trackers** and cause them to shoot in his direction and kill him. |  |
| **The doctor**:  **The doctor** is the ultimate embodiment of evil and greed in The Pearl. The opposite of what one would expect of a doctor, whose job is to care for others, he is selfish, indulgent, and malevolent, and cares only about his own wealth and pleasure. He lives alone (his wife is dead) and lies in bed all day, eating candies and chocolate. When he is first asked to care for **Coyotito**, he refuses and cruelly proclaims that he is not a “veterinarian.” As soon as he hears of **Kino’s** pearl, however, he falsely claims that he always intended to treat the baby. It is not clear, then, whether the treatment he uses on Coyotito is effective, or if he just manipulates Coyotito’s condition to worsen and then improve, making himself look good. All he cares about is getting Kino’s pearl and it can be assumed, given that he watches Kino’s eyes so closely to see if they indicate the pearl’s location, that he is responsible for at least one of the violent nighttime theft attempts in Kino's house. |  |
| **The pearl-dealers**:  While the **pearl-dealers** appear to be individual buyers, each providing estimates independently of one another, they are, in fact, all operating under a single master buyer, who controls their bids and wages. Unbeknownst to **Kino’s** family or his **neighbors**, before Kino comes in with the pearl, the buyers have conspired to give him the lowest estimate possible. Their underestimation infuriates Kino, making him feel powerless and cheated, and forces him to go to the capital for a fairer assessment. |  |
| **The neighbors**:  **Kino** and **Juana’s** **neighbors** often assemble as a unified chorus or procession to follow and support the family. For the most part, they unite only in times of particular excitement and, even then, their primary function is to listen, observe, and spread news. Some townspeople, however, after hearing of Kino’s pearl, peel away from the passive chorus of villagers and turn against Kino, raiding his house, injuring him, and finally lighting his house on fire. These attacks occur at night, when Kino cannot see the faces of his attackers. So, while the neighbors present a unified front in the daylight, at night they attempt to realize their individual desires, in the privacy of darkness. |  |
| **The trackers**:  These are the three men, two on foot and one on horseback, who come from the town to capture **Kino’s** family and pearl. In defense, Kino kills **the trackers** while they are resting around a fire during. Before he does, however, one of them mistakes **Coyotito's** cries for those of a coyote, and shoots and kills him. |  |
| **The priest**:  The priest plays an active colonizing role in La Paz by spreading the Christian faith of the Europeans to the natives of the land. While **Kino** and **Juana** are persuaded by his benevolence—they follow his advice and repeat his sermons and prayers—he may not be as virtuous as they assume. It seems at times, as when he reminds Kino and Juana to thank God for their discovery, that he, too, is only interested in the wealth that their pearl promises. |  |
| **Juan Tomas**:  **Juan Tomas** is **Kino’s** older brother, who provides his younger sibling with shelter, wisdom, and support. He articulates important truths in the novel: that the pearl is evil, that mankind is innately selfish and greedy, and that **the pearl-dealers** are likely to cheat Kino. |  |
| **Doctor’s servant**:  The Doctor’s servant is an example of someone who shares Kino’s race and ancestry but does not share Kino’s drive to resist the influence of European colonizers. When Kino tries to speak to him in the old language, he responds in the language of the doctor. |  |
| **Apolonia**:  **Apolonia** is **Juan Tomas’s** wife and **Kino’s** sister-in-law. |  |