

John
STEINBECK



The Pearl



The Pearl

by John Steinbeck

Reading diary entries

- First entry after chapter 1

⇒ Up to now, I am really convinced, that the pearl by John Steinbeck is a great book, in which I really like reading ahead. I hope that this will stay like it is now, so I understand the different meanings of the book. But as far as I have read now, I think that everything written in this literature should have an important and also special meaning. The most important thing which came over to me, was that for Kino his family is the most important thing in his life. Because things are described like that the smells of the neighbours breakfast smell very good, but not as wonderful as the one of his family does, the pigs in the neighbourhood are not the same as his pigs and everyone in the village has got one wife, but Kino has Juana and she is also one of the most important person in his life. Juana knows exactly what she wants and she also does what she wants, doesn't matter what all the others say about it and Kino isn't always sure about what he is doing. That Juana does what she wants is obvious in the part of the chapter where she wants the doctor to cure her son. It's something very important to her, because it is her only son, her one and only and I think she would do everything for him, not only at this particular moment, but in general I think that she would do everything she can for her family. I don't really know, how the village looks like, where they live, but I can imagine it like a small place, where everyone knows everybody and that every family lives in a wooden house not far away from the sea. I think that it is like this, because the whole village follows Juana and Kino to the doctor, to cure Coyotito. I mean it is normal, that some family members for example Kino's brother would join, but I cannot really understand, why the whole village come along with Coyotito and his parents. I also realized, that Kino has a few different songs in his mind and depending on how his mood is, these songs play in his head. I like the idea of the music, because like this the reader can imagine, how character is feeling and then it is easier to make a picture of the person. I am looking forward, reading the next to chapters as soon as possible, to get to know more about Kino and his family!

● Second entry after chapter 3

⇒ I think chapters two and three are very interesting. Kino has found the pearl of the world. It is perfect as the moon, is as large as a sea-gull's egg and it is the greatest pearl in the world. Kino's pearl goes into the dreams, the speculations, the schemes, the plans, the futures, the wishes, the needs, the lusts, the hungers of everyone. So straight after finding the pearl, everything is great, and of course Kino and Juana are the happiest people, because they think that they can cure their son with this pearl. But I think that many problems are going to appear in the second half of the book, because in the third chapter it is mentioned that this pearl is like a sin and that it will destroy them. Of course some of the people of the village are happy with Kino and Juana, that they maybe can cure their son, but most of them turn to real enemies of Kino and Juana because of the pearl. But especially in such a town, where everyone is rather poor and feels the same emotions it is very hard. And I can understand that it is very difficult, because they have also got the dream of a better life. But I think that these people also want the best for Coyotito, because he is somehow the one and only son.

● Third entry after finishing the book

⇒ Great, this is a book, which I really like. As I expected it to be it was, because I thought after one great first half, the second half also has to be interesting. I cannot say, wether I like the first or the second half more, because I liked both of them. I always thought about it, how the literature could end, but I never thought of such one. I have never had the idea, that Coyotito would die at the end, because I thought this book has got a happy ending. And the feelings of Kino and Juana are not very detailed described in my opinion, and I think this is very sad, because through the whole book the emotions and feelings of them come across very well and at the end of the most important part, it isn't. And I would have been very interesting how she feels, because it was her one and only son, and she did everything for him. The end is very simple and clear, because the pearl disappears, but I think that it isn't really a happy end, because Coyotito dies and the pearl is gone. I didn't think of such an ending, but I am satisfied with it, and I enjoyed reading the whole book!

Chapter 1

EVIL	GOOD
<p>✗ page 9 => In the morning, before the sun rose, the air was moist and dark. It is described of the poisonous air which Kino had to take care of with the blanket in front of his mouth and nose.</p>	<p>✗ page 9 => The smells of the breakfast and the family songs. The pigs of Kino and all the things that belong to his family are good and make him happy.</p>
<p>✗ page 11 => The scorpion is described like an enemy of Kino and his family. They tell that it is the source of the death and that they have to do something against such evil.</p>	<p>✗ page 11 => The ancient magic should help against these evils and enemies.</p>
<p>✗ pages 13, 14, 15, 17 => The doctor, with his ignorance and cruelty hates Kino's race and thinks they should be treated like animals.</p>	<p>✗ page 12 => Juana is a fragile wife. She is cheerful and patient and she stands fatigue and hungers for her family. She would do everything for them, especially for her one and only son Coyotito.</p>

Pearls and People

- What do you associate with pearls? Write down anything that comes to your mind in the box below.

I associate pearls with the ocean and its water. To me, pearls are very valuable and because of this, I also associate it with jewellery, because lots of these necklaces with pearls can be seen in jewellery shops.

- What does the pearl signify for Kino and his family at the end of Chapter 2?

I think it signifies, that Kino and Juana can pay their wedding and that they can afford a doctor, to cure their son Coyotito.

- Describe the characters of Kino, Juana, Coyotito and the doctor. What do they stand for, what do they represent?

Kino	Kino is the father of Coyotito and the husband of Juana. I think that Kino is a optimist. I think he represents the nice family father which does everything for his family members and he of course thinks, that the smell of his breakfast, his pigs and his wife is better than all these things from the people in the neighbourhood. In his head, there is always playing music, depending on his mood.
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Juana	Juana is the lovely Mother of Coyotito and the wife of Kino. Juana just wants the best for her one and only son, because he is everything to her. When Kino finds the pearl of the world, Juana is of course very happy, because she thinks that they can cure her son, because they have enough money to pay the doctor.
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Coyotito	He is the one and only son of Juana and Kino. He gets beaten by a scorpion and it is sad but true, the doctor don't wants to cure him, so he dies.
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Doctor	He is an arrogant person, because for him, money is more important than human life. Because of this he doesn't cure Coyotito, so he dies.
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Exploring the Symbolism in The Pearl

1.)

Page 16	The pearls were accidents, and the finding of one was luck.
Page 19	The great pearl, perfect as the moon. It captured the light and refined it and gave it back in silver incandescence. It was as large as a sea-gull's egg. It was the greatest pearl in the world.
Page 21	It was the Pearl of the World.
Page 23	Kino's pearl went into the dreams, the speculations, the schemes, the plans, the futures, the wishes, the needs, the lusts, the hungers of everyone.
Page 24	The lovely grey surface of the pearl.
Page 38	The pearl is like a sin, it will destroy us.
Page 39	And the beauty of the pearl, winking and glimmering in the little candle, cozened his brain with its beauty. So lovely it was, so soft, and its own music came from it.
Page 50	The pearl was large, but had a strange colour.
Page 51	The great pearl glistened. / This is not a pearl - it is a monstrosity. / 'Better pearls are made of paste'. This is soft and chalky it will lose its colour and die in a few months.
Page 56 - 57	'Kino this pearl is evil. Let us destroy it before it destroys us. Let us crush it between two stones - Let us throw it back in the sea where it belongs. Kino it's evil, it's evil!'
Page 59	It glinted in the soft moonlight.
Page 60	The glimmer of the great pearl.
Page 64	There is a devil in this pearl!
Page 67	This pearl has become my soul, said Kino. If I give it up I shall lose my soul. Go thou also with god.
Page 89	He looked into its surface and it was grey and ulcerus. / And the pearl was ugly, it was grey like a malignant growth.

● Summary => At the beginning of the book the pearl is described as **the Pearl of the World**. It is the greatest, the most beautiful one and the best one of the World. For Kino and his family it symbolises a better standard of living. For him this means buying new clothes and practicing their biggest dream, they want to marry. In this great pearl he sees a better future for his family and up to now it is the most positive thing that has ever happened to him. But sooner or later everybody except his family members including his brother turned to enemies. And I think this is because all the people who live in La Paz are poor, and they have also dreamed of a better life.

2.) Music

Page 7 - 8	Kino closed his eyes again to listen to his music. Perhaps he alone did this and perhaps all of his people did it. His people had once been great makers of songs, so that everything they saw or thought or did or heard became a song. That was very long ago. The songs remained; Kino knew them, but no new songs were added. That does not mean that there were no personal songs. In Kino's head there was a song now, clear and soft, and if he had been able to speak of it, he would have called it the song of the Family.
Page 8	The song of the Family came now from behind Kino. And the rhythm of the family song was the grinding-stone where Juana worked the corn for the morning cakes.
Page 10	In his mind a new song had come, the Song of Evil, the music of the enemy, of any foe of the family, a savage, secret, dangerous melody, and underneath, the Song of the Family cried plaintively.
Page 10	Evil music of the enemy
Page 10	Song of the enemy roared in his ears.
Page 13	The music of the family sounded in his head with a steely tone.
Page 15	The pounding music of the enemy beat in his ears.
Page 23	They had made songs to the fishes, to the sea in anger and to the sea in calm, to the light and the dark and the sun and the moon, and the songs were all in Kino and in his people - every song that had ever been made, even the ones forgotten. And as he filled his basket the song was in Kino, and the beat of the song was his pounding heart as it ate the oxygen from his held breath, and the melody of the song was the grey - green water and the little inner song, hardly perceptible, but always there, sweet and secret and clinging, almost hiding in the counter - melody, and this was the Song of the Pearl that might be, for every shell thrown in the basket might contain a pearl.
Page 23	The little secret melody of the pearl that might be was stronger this morning. Whole phrases of it came clearly and softly into the Song of the Undersea.
Page 24	His heart beat out a heavy rhythm and the melody of the maybe pearl shrilled in his ears.
Page 25	Kino the secret melody of the maybe pearl broke clear and beautiful, rich and warm and lovely, glowing and gloating and triumphant.
Page 29	And the music of the pearl had merged with the music of the family so that one beautified the other.
Page 30	And the music of the pearl rose like a chorus of trumpets in his ears.
Page 31	But the music of the pearl was shrilling with triumph in Kino.
Page 33	The music had gone out of Kino's head, but now, thinly, slowly, the melody of the morning, the music of evil, of the enemy, sounded, but it was faint and

	weak.
Page 34	He felt alone and unprotected, and scraping crickets and shrilling tree frogs and croaking toads seemed to be carrying the melody of evil.
Page 34	The song of the Family came from behind him like the purring of a kitten.
Page 39	Juana rocked from side to side and moaned out the little Song of the Family as though it could ward off the danger, and the baby vomited and writhed in her arms. Now uncertainty was in Kino and the music of evil throbbed in his head and nearly drove out Juana's song.
Page 42	The music of evil was sounding in his head and he was fierce and afraid.
Page 43	The evil music pulsing in him, and he lay in the darkness with his ears alert.
Page 45	Its music of promise and delight, its guarantee of the future, of comfort, of security.
Page 45	The lovely music of the undersea, the tone of the diffused green light of the sea bottom.
Page 60	In his head he heard only the dark music of the enemy.
Page 60	And as though she too could hear the Song of Evil, she fought it, singing softly the melody of the family, of the safety and warmth and wholeness of the family. She held Coyotito in her arms and sang the song to him, to keep the evil out, and her voice was brave against the threat of the dark music.
Page 66	Now the evil music filled the night, hung over the mangroves, skirled in the wave beat.
Page 74	The music of the pearl was triumphant in Kino's head, and the quiet melody of the family underlay it.
Page 76	The music of the pearl had become sinister in his ears, and it was interwoven with the music of evil.
Page 81	Oh, the music of evil sang loud in Kino's head now, it sang with the whine of heat and with the dry ringing of snake rattles.
Page 94	In Kino's ears the song of the family was as fierce as a cry. He was immune and terrible, and his song had become a battle cry.
Page 94	And Kino heard the music of the pearl, distorted and insane.
Page 95	And the music of the pearl drifted to a whisper and disappeared.

✿ Summary => The music plays a very important role in the book called the Pearl. Kino has different songs in his mind and depending on how his mood is, these songs play in his head very often. For example when he gets up, always every morning, the same music is played in the head of Kino. The one of his family. When he is happy, a happy song is played in his head, and if he is sad or angry, he hears the song of the evil. I think it is great, that John Steinbeck has done it like this, because like this it is easier for the reader to interpret the feelings of the character. I really like the idea.

The Pearl

=> a Parable

✘ To me, this literature has many different meanings, because it covers many different things. For example it tells of very poor people, which also have the dream to have a better life. And because Kino found this pearl, they are somehow jealous, because they also want to buy new clothes and maybe also marry. And as a second thing which I want to recommend on, is the bite of the scorpion. I mean, Kino and his family have got the pearl of the world, but they but they also can't cure their son, because the doctor just don't want to cure him, because money is more important to him, than human life, which is very sad I think. And because of this, I don't think, that you need money, or the pearl of the world to be happy, because money cannot always give you health. I also think that Kino and his family would have been happier, if they wouldn't have found the pearl. I consider this to be the moral too. I don't think, that it has any relevance on our life today, because I don't think that there are so many things you can pay or buy with a pearl, and maybe also not many people search for these. And I think in today's life money is not such a big problem as criminality.

Summary Writing

3 – 5 paragraph summary

SUMMARY

The Pearl by John Steinbeck

The story takes place in La Paz, Mexico. The main characters are Kino, Juana's husband, Juana, Kino's wife, Coyotito, the son of the couple and the doctor. Kino thinks that his breakfast smells best, his pigs are the greatest and that Juana is the most wonderful wife of the village. Juana is the lovely mother, who does everything for her one and only son Coyotito. He is the baby, who gets stung by a scorpion. The doctor is the one, who should cure Coyotito, but he doesn't do it.

More or less it is about a family, who finds a pearl and they see it as the Pearl of the World and they think that their future will become better and that they can cure their ill son, but in the end the pearl becomes evil and they throw it back into the sea.

The story begins with a description of the family life of Kino, his wife Juana and their baby Coyotito. Kino watches at his son as he sleeps, but soon he sees a scorpion crawl down the rope that holds the box, where Coyotito lies. Kino tries to catch the scorpion, but his son plays around with the rope and the scorpion falls on him. Although Kino kills the scorpion it stings Coyotito. Kino and Juana go to see the doctor, who refuses to treat Coyotito because Kino and his wife cannot pay. Then Kino and his wife leave the doctor and they take Coyotito with them to the sea. Juana tries to put water on the swollen shoulder of her one and only son. Then Kino goes out the sea with his canoe to get some oysters, trying to find pearls. So, he finds a very large oyster, and when he opens it, he can see a big, great pearl. Many people go out with their canoes to search for pearls, but these pearls were accidents and the finding of one was luck. Of course the news, that Coyotito finds the pearl of the world spreads in whole La Paz. Kino and Juana are really happy, because they think that they can make their wish come true. They want to marry, and of course they think, that they can pay the doctor to cure their son. But then when somehow all of the neighbours are getting enemies, Juana tells Kino that the pearl will destroy them, but Kino is convinced that the pearl is their one chance and that on the next day they will sell it.

The neighbours of Kino and Juana wonder what they would do if they had found the pearl and they suggest giving it as a present to the pope, for distributing it among the poor of La Paz. Kino believes, that he deserves fifty thousand pesos for the pearl, but all the pearl dealers only offer a thousand pesos, which he thinks is much to less. Juana reminds him again, that the pearl is evil, but he somehow doesn't care. Later at

night, Juana tries to take the pearl and throw it into the ocean, but Kino finds her and is somehow gets very angry about it. Later Kino finds, that his canoe is damaged and the outside of their house is set afire. So for the next day, they are hiding at the brother of Kino and his wife.

Trackers appear. These hear something, when they hear Coyotito crying. After a tracker shoots in teh direction of the cries, Kino attacks the three trackers, killing all three of them. But it is to late. Coyotito is dead from the first shot. Then Kino and his wife return to La Paz and they throw the pearl back into the sea again.

Activities

1. How did you think *The Pearl* was going to end before you finished reading the book? Were you satisfied with the ending?

I thought that Coyotito would survive and that the Pearl could help them, to pay the money for the doctor! I really didn't think, that Kino would throw the Pearl into the sea again first, because I thought that it was very valuable for them, but then the pearl turned into an evil object. It's sad, that the only beloved baby dies at the end. But somehow I was satisfied with the end, because for me it was a surprising end, because I thought of a totally different one.

2. In Ch. VI Kino's flight with his family is described in great detail. The atmosphere, sights, sounds and smells of the desert and mountains are portrayed very vividly. There are also constant references to animal life.

- a) Juana and Kino are frequently compared to wild animals. Find a few passages which illustrate this well and quote.

- Kino looked down at her and his teeth were bared. He hissed at her like a snake, and Juana stared at him with wide unfrightened eyes, like a sheep before the butcher.
- He found his place near the road, a little clearing where deer might have lain.
- Kino moved sluggishly, arms and legs stirred like those of a crushed bug, and a thick muttering came from his mouth.
- He listened again, an animal light in his eyes.

- b) How are the trackers portrayed? Quote from the text to illustrate your answer.

- The trackers whined a little, like excited dogs on a warming trail.
- Three figure, two on foot and one on horseback.
- They were the trackers, they could follow the trail of a bighorn sheep in the stone mountains. They were as sensitive as hounds.
- They had dark horny feet and ragged white clothes, and you could hear the creak of leather of the saddle and the clink of spurs.

- For a long moment the trackers bent over the road and then they moved on slowly, studying the ground ahead of them, and the horseman moved after them.
- The trackers scuttled along, stopping, looking and hurrying on.
- They would be circling and searching, peeping, stopping, and they would come back sooner or later to his covered track.
- The trackers would find his trail, Kino knew.

c) Comment on the passage where the trackers hear Coyotito crying.

It looked like the ending is going to come and the book is finished and that there is a tragically ending.

3. Read Ch. I, para. 8 and Ch. VI, para. 7.

In Ch. I Kino watches the ants "with the detachment of God". How does he treat the ants in Ch. VI? Can you account for this?

He puts his foot on their path as an obstacle for them. But the ants take that obstacle and they know they have to go on and they go on walking. Maybe Kino thinks the same and I think that Kino compares the ants on the ground to human beings or even to himself.

4. Read Ch. III, paras. 9-15 and Ch. VI, par. 10.

What has happened to Kino's vision?

In chapter III Kino looks into the pearl and he can see a better future and he of course is looking forward to the wedding with Juana, because it is their biggest dream and he is sure that the day will come, on which they will be married.

In chapter VI Kino's sight is not as "positive" any more because he does not hear that they will marry and that Coyotito will go to school but that his son must learn reading and that they have to marry. So his visions can't tell him a lot.

5. Read Ch. III, second last paragraph and Ch. VI, fourth last paragraph.

Describe the transformation of the pearl as Juana and Kino perceive it.

They see the pearl as a guarantee for security in the future, whereas in chapter VI is the opposite. They throw the pearl into the water because they want security, which they can only get without the pearl.

6. One of Kino's dreams is fulfilled at the end of the story. However, he has to pay a much higher price than the pearl. What does Kino gain and what does he lose?

Kino gained an experience for his life and he gained his freedom again. He realised that the social surroundings and his family are more important to him than a great pearl. He loses his one and only son Coyotito.

7. What is Juana and Kino's original reason for hoping to find the perfect pearl in Ch. II?

What is their ultimate reason for getting rid of the perfect pearl at the end of Ch. VI?

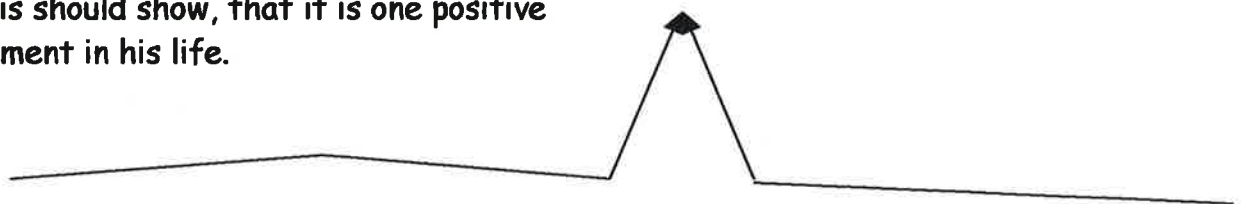
Who is the only character in the story who has no direct personal interest in the pearl?

- They are hoping to find a pearl to pay the doctor to cure their baby.
- The ultimate reason for getting rid of the perfect pearl was that it destroyed almost everything what was very important for Kino and his wife, and they don't want to lose even more.
- Juan Tomás.

8. Imagine The Pearl as a film script. If you had to choose a freeze frame from Ch. VI to use as a poster advertising the film, which one would you choose and why?

I would take the part where Coyotito finds the pearl, because it is a happy moment and it is somehow one exciting thing in the Kino's and his family's life.

This should show, that it is one positive moment in his life.



I would take it because I think that you could show the feelings of the people very good at this part.

John Steinbeck

His Life and Work

might described the characters like this, because he also had a three brothers and sisters and two sons. I can imagine, that life the time when he lived, and I also think that the people have been en't had many clothes and not enough to eat. I don't know but