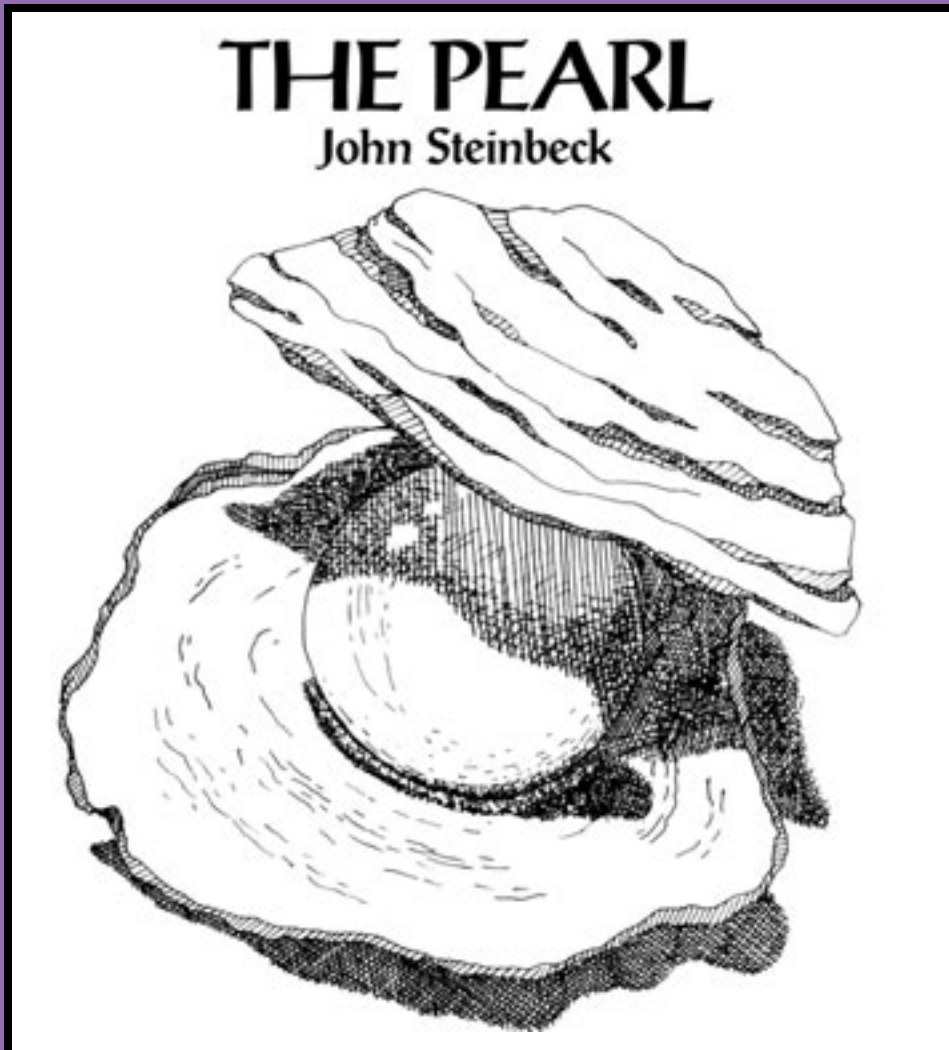


Novel·Ties



A Study Guide

Written by Joyce Friedland and Rikki Kessler

Edited by Barbara Reeves

LEARNING LINKS

P.O. Box 326 • Cranbury • New Jersey 08512

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Synopsis	1 - 2
About the Author	2
Pre-Reading Activities	3 - 4
Chapter 1	5 - 7
Chapter 2	8 - 10
Chapter 3	11 - 12
Chapter 4	13 - 14
Chapter 5	15 - 16
Chapter 6	17 - 18
Cloze Activity	19
Post-Reading Activities	20 - 22
Suggestions For Further Reading	23
Answer Key	24 - 25

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For the Teacher

This reproducible study guide consists of instructional material to use in conjunction with the novel, *The Pearl*. Written in chapter-by-chapter format, the guide contains a synopsis, pre-reading activities, vocabulary and comprehension exercises, as well as extension activities to be used as follow-up to the novel.

NOVEL-TIES are either for whole class instruction using a single title or for group instruction where each group uses a different novel appropriate to its reading level. Depending upon the amount of time allotted to it in the classroom, each novel, with its guide and accompanying lessons, may be completed in two to four weeks.

The first step in using NOVEL-TIES is to distribute to each student a copy of the novel and a folder containing all of the duplicated worksheets. Begin instruction by selecting several pre-reading activities in order to set the stage for the reading ahead. Vocabulary exercises for each chapter always precede the reading so that new words will be reinforced in the context of the book. Use the questions on the chapter worksheets for class discussion or as written exercises.

The benefits of using NOVEL-TIES are numerous. Students read good literature in the original, rather than in abridged or edited form. The good reading habits formed by practice in focusing on interpretive comprehension and literary techniques will be transferred to the books students read independently. Passive readers become active, avid readers.

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES

1. Preview the book by reading the title and the author's name and by looking at the illustration on the cover. What do you think the book will be about? Where and when does it take place? Have you read any other books by this very famous American author?
2. In the preface to *The Pearl*, Steinbeck suggests that his tale may be a parable from which each person can derive a meaning based upon his or her own life. Use a dictionary or an encyclopedia to define the word "parable." Are you familiar with any other parables? As you read the book, determine for yourself whether it is meant to be a parable or a work of realistic fiction.
3. **Social Studies Connection:** Steinbeck based *The Pearl* upon an old tale that he heard from the native people of the Baja Peninsula in Mexico. He used the area near the city of La Paz, Mexico as the setting for the novel. Locate the Baja Peninsula on a map of Mexico. Then find La Paz in the southern part of the peninsula. What mountain range is north of La Paz? Upon which major body of water is La Paz located? Do some further research to learn about the history and economic conditions of the region.
4. Even though the native people of Steinbeck's novel are poor pearl fisherman, they live a peaceful life in harmony with nature. With your classmates, discuss how living in harmony with nature might make a person's life richer. How have people of our modern society abused nature? What are some ways that people in modern society can reconnect with nature?
5. Throughout *The Pearl*, the main characters repeatedly recall songs that reflect their innermost feelings. How does music affect you? What kinds of songs fill you with emotion? Do any songs hold a special meaning for you or your family? Talk about this with a partner or a small group of classmates.
6. Imagine that you are a simple fisherman living in a crude brush house on the coast of Mexico. How would that life be different from your life now? What aspects of that life would be the hardest for you? In what ways might your life be better than it is today? List your ideas on paper. Then compare your ideas to those of your classmates.
7. **Social Studies Connection:** Do some research to learn about Mexico. Consider the following questions:
 - What are the names of three great Indian civilizations that flourished in Mexico between the years 250 and 900? What might have caused the downfall of those civilizations?
 - When did the Spanish first come to Mexico? How did the Spanish change the lives of the native people?
 - What is life like in the small rural villages of Mexico today?

CHAPTER 1

Vocabulary: Use the context to help you determine the meaning of the underlined word in each of the following sentences. Then draw a line from each numbered word below to its meaning.

- A covey of sparrows perched in a small tree near our house.
- The two roosters bowed and feinted at each other but did not actually fight.
- The man drank pulque for the first time when he visited Mexico.
- The dog whined plaintively when its master left it alone.
- Colorful bougainvillea climbed the stone walls of the tiny church.
- The wealthy landlord who raised his poor tenants' rent was guided only by avarice.
- The town built a shelter for its indigent families.
- The man's suppliant hands reached up toward heaven when he prayed.

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| 1. covey | a. flowering tropical vine or shrub |
| 2. feinted | b. small flock of birds |
| 3. pulque | c. humble; imploring |
| 4. plaintively | d. pretended to attack |
| 5. bougainvillea | e. greed; eagerness for riches |
| 6. avarice | f. fermented drink made in Mexico |
| 7. indigent | g. in a way that sounds sad and mournful |
| 8. suppliant | h. needy; very poor |

Questions:

1. In what ways did Steinbeck make the reader aware of the poor and simple life of Kino and Juana?
2. What evidence showed that Kino was content with his life even though he and Juana were very poor?
3. What sudden event disrupted the serenity of Kino and Juana's life? How did each character react to the event?
4. What did Juana's decision to take Coyotito to the doctor reveal about her nature?
5. Why wouldn't the doctor in La Paz see Coyotito? How did Kino react to the doctor's refusal?
6. What two kinds of songs did Kino hear? When did he hear each song?