Unit 7

Title: The Pearl

Suggested Time: 4 days (45 minutes per day)

Common Core ELA Standards: RL.8.1, RL.8.2, RL.8.3, RL.8.4; W.8.1, W.8.4, W.8.9; SL.8.1; L.8.1, L.8.2, L.8.4, L.8.5

Teacher Instructions

**Preparing for Teaching**

1. Read the Big Ideas and Key Understandings and the Synopsis. Please do **not** read this to the students. This is a description for teachers about the big ideas and key understanding that students should take away **after** completing this task.

Big Ideas and Key Understandings

Greed and power can bring corruption and unwanted complications.

Synopsis

The text begins with a poor fisherman, Kino, his wife, Juana, their baby Coyotito, and the great pearl that was found and lost again. When Coyotito is stung by a scorpion, Kino and Juana travel from their village to take him to the nearest doctor. However, being poor, they are unable to pay for treatment and are turned away. But once they have a large pearl in their possession, the greedy doctor makes a house call, hoping to get a share of the profits.

1. Read the entire selection, keeping in mind the Big Ideas and Key Understandings.
2. Re-read the text while noting the stopping points for the Text Dependent Questions and teaching Tier II/academic vocabulary.

**During Teaching**

1. Students read the entire selection independently.
2. Teacher reads the text aloud while students follow along or students take turns reading aloud to each other. Depending on the text length and student need, the teacher may choose to read the full text or a passage aloud. For a particularly complex text, the teacher may choose to reverse the order of steps 1 and 2.
3. Students and teacher re-read the text while stopping to respond to and discuss the questions, continually returning to the text. A variety of methods can be used to structure the reading and discussion (i.e., whole class discussion, think-pair-share, independent written response, group work, etc.)

Text Dependent Questions

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| **Text-dependent Questions** | **Evidence-based Answers** |
| Reread the first paragraph of the text. Who is speaking in the opening dialogue? Cite evidence from the text to support your claim. | The doctor is speaking. The other character is Kino. The doctor says the words “It is as I thought.” “The poison has gone inward and it will strike soon.” “See—it is blue.” This is followed by the words “And Kino, looking anxiously, saw that it was indeed blue.” |
| The setting of this text is not stated and must be inferred. What words from the excerpt help you determine the setting? Determine both the time and the place and identify the words or phrases that support your claim. | (see underlined words that aide in the understanding and inference of the time and setting)  Time: A long time ago –  “He took a deep breath and went out of the hut, and his servant followed him with the lantern”  “He wrapped the pearl in the rag, then went to the corner of the brush house and dug a little hole with his fingers in the dirt floor, and he put the pearl in the hole and covered it up and concealed the place. And then he went to the fire…”  Place: near a western gulf –  “Out in the estuary a tight woven school of small fishes glittered and broke water to escape a school of great fishes that drove in to eat them. And in the houses the people could hear the swish of the small ones and the bouncing splash of the great ones as the slaughter went on. The dampness arose out of the Gulf and was deposited on the bushes and cacti and on the little trees in salty drops.” Also, Kino is a fisherman |
| **Tone**, in fiction, creates for the reader the feeling or atmosphere of the situation and the characters. Read the first paragraph again. What tone is the author, John Steinbeck, creating with his choice of words? Cite evidence from the text to support your claim. | Answers will vary, but should include words synonymous of anxious, suspenseful, fearful, threatening, etc. Statements to back up these words include: “The poison has gone inward and it will strike soon.” “And Kino, looking anxiously, saw that it was indeed blue.” “But the trap was set.” “He couldn’t take the chance.” |
| The word “pursed” is a verb that means to pucker lips to express disapproval or irritation. The word “seem” means to give the impression of being something. Reread the introduction to the excerpt just above the beginning of the story and the last sentence of paragraph three (3). How do these two words help to reveal the tone you chose in the question above? | Students should know that the doctor is only back because he has heard that Kino found a large pearl and hopes to receive a large payment for pretending to treat Coyotito.  “Pursing” his lips and “seeming” to think shows that he is acting and not really concerned with the baby’s health, thus setting a suspenseful, ominous, foreboding, or manipulative mood. |
| What do the neighbors think of rich people? Cite evidence that supports your claim. | The neighbors do not think highly of the rich. First they talked about the size of the pearl and then made “little caressing gestures” to indicate that they are in awe of the pearl.  “Then they make a pact to watch Kino and Juana very closely to see whether riches turns their heads, as riches turn all people’s heads.” This indicates that they know that people who have money pay no attention to poor people such as themselves.  “Everyone knew why the doctor had come. He was not good at dissembling and he was very well understood.” Dissemble means to conceal one’s motives, feelings, and beliefs. The neighbors know that the doctor does not help them because they are poor and that he is only there for one reason – to get a large sum of money from Kino. |
| Steinbeck uses the words “the music of evil” twice in this passage. What do you think “the music of evil” is? Cite evidence from both line sets to justify your answer. | Students should indicate that “the music of evil” is: apprehension, dread, fear, threats, anxiety, etc.  The evidence from first line set: “…his mind was hard and suspicious and he was remembering the white powder.” Juana sang …as if it could ward off the danger, and the baby vomited and writhed in her arms.” Also the music throbbed in his head.  Evidence from the second line set: “…he listened for any foreign sound of secrecy or creeping, and his eyes searched the darkness for the music of evil was sounding in his head and he was fierce and afraid.” Kino also probed the night with his senses. All of these words or phrases are dark, suspicious, or dangerous words that could cause negative feelings. |
| Kino says the words, “So the doctor knew.” What did the doctor know? Cite evidence to support your claim. | The doctor made the house call to see Coyotito because he knew that the fisherman had found the pearl. Kino figured this out because he was remembering the white powder. He now realizes that the white powder is what made the baby vomit as if the poison was leaving his body. This is what Kino had suspected and this was the trap he talked about in the first paragraph. |
| Steinbeck uses the neighbors make the statement, “Luck, you see, brings bitter friends.” What does this statement mean? Cite evidence from the text to support your claim. | “Luck, you see, brings bitter friends” could mean that friends are sometimes jealous when someone they know finds success. In paragraph 7, the neighbors are talking about the size of the pearl. Steinbeck uses the words “caressing gestures” to describe the reverence the neighbors feel about the pearl. Paragraph also says reveals that the neighbors would be talking about this for a long time. They also reluctantly leave after the doctor. After the leave Kino sits up and uses his senses to ensure that no one is lurking in the darkness. He finally hides the pearl under his pillow. This could mean that he doesn’t trust anyone and has taken every effort to put the pear where no one can get to it. |
| Steinbeck uses symbolism in this story to reflect the idea of the big and powerful stalking and harming those who are less powerful. Cite the examples that prove this statement. | Some examples that prove the symbolism of the big and powerful stalking and harming those who are less powerful are first, the rich doctor who refuses treatment when the fisherman had no money, but is anxious to help now since Kino has found an expensive pearl. Also paragraph 8 includes information about the small fish in an estuary trying to escape larger fish, but not being successful. In addition, the dampness from the Gulf overpowers the bushes, cacti, and trees. Finally the last sentence tells that hawks hunt the small mice on the ground. |
| What is the overall theme of this text? How does Steinbeck convey this theme? Use evidence to support your reasoning, | One overall theme of this text could be that sudden wealth may cause unwanted complications. Kino is a fisherman in a small village who finds a large pearl. As the story proceeds he becomes more and more suspicious of the doctor who is treating his son and of the neighbors in his village. He begins to show suspicion when he suspects something is not quite right with the doctor when he sees a white powder in his bag. He buries the pearl in his brush house. He begins to hear the music of evil watches and listens for “secrecy or creeping” during the night.  Another theme of this text could be that the big and powerful often intimidate or threaten the smaller and less powerful. This is evident throughout the story as Kino, the poor fisherman, becomes suspicious of the wealthier doctor. His suspicions are correct because as a reader we know that the doctor is indeed seeking possession of the great pearl. We are told this is the introduction and by the hints Steinbeck gives us. He mentions the “white powder and gelatine” which is a clue, as is the imagery of the doctor “pursing his lips” and “seeming to think.” The doctor bullies the old women out of his way while entering the home of the fisherman. The doctor also asks about paying the bill and Steinbeck used the phrase “He said it even kindly.” This makes us aware that the doctor was acting out his kindness. The doctor offers to keep the pearl in his safe and, the doctor’s eyes never leaves Kino’s when Kino talks about selling the pearl. He knows the pearl is hidden and that Kino will reveal the place as he continues to talk. In addition to the doctor and Kino, Steinbeck includes lines 44-51 which is a description of a school of large fish stalking and attacking a school of small fish and of night hawks hunting the night mice. |

Tier II/Academic Vocabulary

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|  | **These words require less time to learn**  (They are concrete or describe an object/event/  process/characteristic that is familiar to students) | **These words require more time to learn**  (They are abstract, have multiple meanings, are a part  of a word family, or are likely to appear again in future texts) |
| **Meaning can be learned from context** | pursed  concealed  discontentedly  caressing gestures  estuary  frantic  slaughter  scuffled  spasm  adoration  clamored  taut  hooded | reluctantly  subsided |
| **Meaning needs to be provided** | deftly  intervals | dissembling  bitter  writhed |

Culminating Writing Task

* Prompt

*John Steinbeck uses characters and situations to express his discomfort with wealth and power. In an essay, state and develop a claim about how this excerpt from The Pearl shows that while the idea of wealth and power is attractive, it can bring corruption and unwanted complications. Discuss this idea using Kino, the doctor, and the neighbors. Who was corrupted by the wealth and/or power? Who was attracted to the wealth and/or power? What unwanted complications arose because of the wealth and/or power? You must cite evidence from the passage to support your thoughts.*

**Teacher Instructions**

1. Students identify their writing task from the prompt provided.
2. Students complete an evidence chart as a pre-writing activity. Teachers should guide students in gathering and using any relevant notes they compiled while reading and answering the text-dependent questions earlier. Some students will need a good deal of help gathering this evidence, especially when this process is new and/or the text is challenging!

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| ***Evidence***  ***Quote or paraphrase*** | ***Elaboration / explanation of how this evidence supports ideas or argument*** |
| “So begins the story of a poor fisherman, Kino, his wife, Juana, their baby Coyotito, and the great pearl that was found and lost again. When a scorpion stings Coyotito, Kino and Juana travel from their village to take him to the nearest doctor. However, being poor, they are unable to pay for treatment and are turned away. But once they have a large pearl in their possession, the greedy doctor makes a house call, hoping to get a share of the profits.” | This introduction of the excerpt helps readers to infer that the only reason the doctor goes to the village to take care of the baby is because Kino is now in possession of a large, valuable pearl that he hopes to possess. |
| Kino’s suspicions – The Doctor:  “Kino knelt beside his wife. “So the doctor knew,” he said, but he said it for himself as well as for is wife, for his mind was hard and suspicious and he was remembering the white powder.” | Kino is very suspicious of the doctor because he reappears after news of the pearl gets out, and he sees the white powder in the doctor’s bag. |
| “Now uncertainty was in Kino, and the music of evil throbbed in his head and nearly drove out Juana’s song.” | While Juana sang the “Song of the Family” in hopes of warding off the danger, the uncertain Kino heard “the music of evil” for the first time so loudly that it overpowered the hopeful song of Juana. |
| “But Kino was suspicious, and he could not take his eyes from the doctor’s open bag, and from the bottle of white power there.” | When the doctor pretended to have used his medical expertise to heal Coyotito, Kino saw again the white powder in the doctor’s bag rekindling his suspicions of the doctor’s intentions. |
| “Kino’s eyes were hooded now, his cheeks were drawn taut. ‘I have it secure,’ he said. | The doctor feigned surprise upon hearing of Kino’s pearl, and offered to keep it secure in his safe. Kino’s suspicions were heightened at this time. |
| Kino’s suspicions - The Neighbors:  “He moved his hand to look under the eyelid, and only then saw that the pearl was still in his hand. Then he went to a box by the wall, and from it he brought a piece of rag. He wrapped the pearl in the rang, then went to the corner of the brush house and dug a little hole with his fingers in the dirt floor, and he put the pearl in the hole and covered it up and concealed the place.” | After checking on Coyotito, Kino realized that he still had the pearl in his hand. His suspicions of the doctor made him suspicious of everyone – even the neighbors who live in his village. He went to a corner in his brush house, dug a hole, and buried the pearl. |
| “For these people do not sleep soundly all night, they waken at intervals and talk a little, and then go to sleep again. And after awhile, Kino got up and went to the door of his house.” | Since Kino lived in the village, he knew the habits of his neighbors including the fact that they were up and down all night. He realized that someone could possibly sneak into his house while he was asleep and steal the pearl. |
| “He smelled the breeze and he listened for any foreign sound of secrecy or creeping, and his eyes searched the darkness, for the music of evil was sounding in his head and he was fierce and afraid. After he had probed the night with his senses he went to the place by the side post where the pearl was buried, and he dug it up and brought it to his sleeping mat, and under his sleeping mat he dug another little hole in the dirt floor an buried the pearl and covered it up again.” | Because of his suspicions, Kino listened to and searched the darkness for signs that someone was lurking in the shadows. His suspicions began to pound in his head again igniting the “music of evil.” He immediately went to the hiding place that secured the pearl, and reburied it under his pillow. |
| “And Juana, sitting by the fire hole, watched him with questioning eyes, and when he had buried his pearl she asked, ‘Who do you fear?’” | Juana is concerned with Kino’s behavior toward the doctor and his watchfulness in the darkness for the unknown. She seemed to ask the question for both his reflection and her own feelings of the unknown. |
| The Doctor’s corruption:  “But once they have a large pearl in their possession, the greedy doctor makes a house call, hoping to get a share of the profits.” | This excerpt from the introduction of the text shows the greediness and cunningness of the doctor. Instead of treating the baby because he is an honest, compassionate doctor, he shows his true colors as a doctor who has fallen into corruption. His deceitful plan for getting his hands on the valuable pearl begins when he hears of the Kino’s discovery. |
| “His fat fingers placed the capsule far back on the baby’s tongue, back of the point where he could spit it out, and then from the floor he picked up the little pitcher of pulque and gave Coyotito a drink, and it was done. He looked again at the baby’s eyeball and he pursed his lips and seemed to think.” | When he hears of the discovery of the pearl he creates his plan and makes a house call to “cure” the baby with the “white powder” that Kino sees in his medical bag |
| “The doctor was closing his bag now. He said, ‘When do you think you can pay this bill?’ He said it even kindly.” | The doctor pretends innocence with this question. He is hoping for a positive response from Kino. |
| “’You have a pearl? A good pearl?’ the doctor asked with interest.”  “The doctor looked surprised. ‘I have not heard of it. Do you keep this pearl in a safe place? Perhaps you would like me to put it in my safe?’”  “The doctor shrugged, and his wet eyes never left Kino’s eyes. He knew the pearl would be buried in the house, and he thought Kino might look toward the place where it was buried. ‘It would be a shame to have it stolen before you could sell it,’ the doctor said, and he saw Kino’s eyes flick involuntarily to the floor near the side post of the brush house.” | These quotes work together and are all used to show the evil plan of the doctor. He pretends honesty by offering to put the pearl in his safe. He sees the expression on Kino’s face and realizes that he is not going to give him the pearl. He then suggests that someone might steal the pearl in hopes of Kino giving away his hiding spot, which he does. |
| “Everyone knew why the doctor had come. He was not good at dissembling and he was very well understood.” | Steinbeck included this to show that the whole village is aware of the doctor’s intention. Because of their poverty, these people realize that this doctor is not in their village as a compassionate doctor. They recognize the greediness and deception in the doctor’s actions. |
| The neighbors attraction:  “In the houses of the neighbors the subject that would lead all conversations for a long time to come was aired for the first time to see how it would go. The neighbors showed one another with their thumbs how big the pearl was, and they made little caressing gestures to show how lovely it was. From now on they would watch Kino and Juana very closely to see whether riches turned their heads, as riches turn all people’s heads.” | The neighbors’ excitement and attraction to the pearl are evident in this quote. They talk about the pearl all the time because they have never seen something so valuable in their village. They measure and caress it as if they holding it. |
| “And then the chorus of the neighbors broke in. ‘He has found the Pearl of the World,’ they cried, and they joined forefinger with thumb to show how great the pearl was.”  “’Kino will be a rich man,’ they clamored. ‘It is a pearl such as one has never seen.’” | Even though they know the doctor is not there for the right reasons, the neighbor’s cannot help but share their excitement. |
| “When the doctor had gone and all the neighbors had reluctantly returned to their houses,…” | Because of the neighbors’ excitement and attraction to the pearl, they are reluctant to leave where the pearl is hidden. They seem to want to be close to the pearl and the people who own the pearl. |

1. Once students have completed the evidence chart, they should look back at the writing prompt in order to remind themselves what kind of response they are writing (i.e. expository, analytical, argumentative) and think about the evidence they found. (Depending on the grade level, teachers may want to review students’ evidence charts in some way to ensure accuracy.) From here, students should develop a specific thesis statement. This could be done independently, with a partner, small group, or the entire class. Consider directing students to the following sites to learn more about thesis statements: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/545/01/ OR http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/ thesis\_statement.shtml.
2. Students compose a rough draft. With regard to grade level and student ability, teachers should decide how much scaffolding they will provide during this process (i.e. modeling, showing example pieces, sharing work as students go).
3. Students complete final draft.

* Sample Answer

People are attracted to other wealthy and powerful people. They admire the way they live, the power they have, and the material things they own. In *The Pearl,* John Stienbeckreveals this attraction through the characters and events. Three main characters specifically show how power can control a situation; Kino who values the pearl, the doctor who covets the pearl, and the neighbors whom are obsessed with the pearl.

The introduction reveals that Kino’s son Coyotito was stung by a scorpion, and he and his wife Juana took him to a nearby doctor who refused treatment because they didn’t have money to pay. However, news of the fisherman finding a valuable pearl brings out the greed in the doctor and he makes a house call to treat little Coyotito.

Throughout the text, Kino’s discovery of the pearl makes him suspicious of not only the doctor, but also his neighbors in the small village. This is shown by the fact that he feels he must hide the pearl in his hut. He starts by burying it in a hole in the dirt floor of his hut, but by the end of the excerpt he is so suspicious of everyone that he buries the pearl in the dirt under his pillow. He realizes when the baby reacts to the powder that the doctor gave him that the doctor knew about the pearl and was only treating his son in hopes of receiving a large payment for his services. The “music of evil” plays in Kino’s head proving that what he suspected was indeed true. When the doctor asks about Kino paying the bill, the neighbors excitedly inform the doctor of Kino’s find. Kino involuntarily reveals the pearl’s hiding spot when the doctor makes suggestions about the pearl being stolen. At the end of the excerpt, after the pearl has been reburied, his wife Juana asks the question, “Who do you fear?”

During the same time, the doctor is corrupted by greed. He actually comes to the hut to treat Kino and Juana’s son in a pretense of caring. He gives the baby a potion that will make it look as if the child is “healed” by what he has done, ensuring a large payment of gratitude from the father. He acts surprised when the neighbors excitedly tell him about the pearl, and suggests that Kino keep the pearl in a safe place so that it is not stolen. Kino refuses his offer. This does not deter the doctor, and he continues to press Kino with his aggressiveness. “The doctor shrugged, and his wet eyes never left Kino’s eyes. He knew the pearl would be buried in the house, and he thought Kino might look toward the place where it was buried. ‘It would be a shame to have it stolen before you could sell it,’ the doctor said, and he saw Kino’s eyes flick involuntarily to the floor near the side post of the brush house.”

Equally important, the neighbors are attracted to the pearl. They talk about the pearl in their house at night and on the street with each other. They show each other the size of the pearl while making “caressing gestures” to show how lovely the pearl is. They vow to watch Kino and Juana to see if the value of the pearl turns their heads like riches do to people. They know when the doctor shows up that he is there strictly for the pearl, but excitedly want to tell him all about it. They show up at Kino’s house when the doctor arrives, and do not want to leave the house, but reluctantly do so. This attraction worries Kino forcing him to mistrust his neighbors. “He smelled the breeze and he listened for any foreign sound of secrecy or creeping, and his eyes searched the darkness, for the music of evil was sounding in his head and he was fierce and afraid. Reacting to these suspicions, Kino reburied the pearl under his pillow.

Juana’s question, “Who do you fear?” shows that she too is aware of the power and value of the pearl and how it is affecting Kino. Her husband’s suspicious behavior proves to her that there are indeed underlying concerns in believing the corruption of the doctor and the obsession of the neighbors could bring them some major problems.

In this text, Steinbeck shows through these characters that while the idea of wealth is attractive, it can bring corruption and unwanted complications. The doctor was overcome with greed, the neighbors were obsessed with the wealth in their village, and Kino became suspicious of everyone and everything. All of these characters helped to enforce the themes that sudden wealth may cause unwanted complications and that the big and powerful often intimidate or threaten the smaller and less powerful.

Additional Tasks

* Characterization helps us understand what we read. Indirect characterization is when the reader has to interpret information in order to ascertain what kind of person the character is through what he/she says or thinks, what he/she does, what other characters think or say, or how other character react. Choose one of the main characters (Kino, the neighbors, or the doctor) and complete a Bubble Map with five (5) adjectives or adjective phrases. Under each bubble, cite text evidence to support your choice of words.

Answer: In a Bubble Map for the doctor, a student could use these words to describe him:

Greedy – He treated Coyotito only after hearing about Kino’s discovery of the pearl. Deceptive – He treats Coyotito with something that would make him sick and vomit, making everyone think that the doctor had done something to help him get rid of the poison. Arrogant – he refuses to treat Coyotito because Kino is poor and has no money. Callous – he sits patiently for the hour it takes to make it look like he helped Coyotito without feeling remorse. “The doctor, back at his house, settled into his chair and looked at his watch.” Cunning – he pretends surprise when the neighbors tell him about the pearl. He pretends kindness by offering to keep the pearl in his safe so that no one steals it.

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**“The Pearl”**

1. Reread the first paragraph of the text. Who is speaking in the opening dialogue? Cite evidence from the text to support your claim.
2. The setting of this text is not stated and must be inferred. What words from the excerpt help you determine the setting? Determine both the time and the place and identify the words or phrases that support your claim.
3. **Tone**, in fiction, creates for the reader the feeling or atmosphere of the situation and the characters. Read the first paragraph again. What tone is the author, John Steinbeck, creating with his choice of words? Cite evidence from the text to support your claim.
4. The word, “pursed” is a verb that means to pucker lips to express disapproval or irritation. The word, “seem” means to give the impression of being something. Reread the introduction to the excerpt just above the beginning of the story and the last sentence of paragraph three. How do these two words help to reveal the tone you chose in the question above?
5. What do the neighbors think of rich people? Cite evidence that supports your claim.
6. Steinbeck uses the words “the music of evil” twice in this passage. What do you think “the music of evil” is? Cite evidence from both line sets to justify your answer.
7. Kino says the words, “So the doctor knew.” What did the doctor know? Cite evidence to support your claim.
8. Steinbeck uses the neighbors make the statement, “Luck, you see, brings bitter friends.” What does this statement mean? Cite evidence from the text to support your claim.
9. Steinbeck uses symbolism in this story to reflect the idea of the big and powerful stalking and harming those who are less powerful. Cite the examples that prove this statement.
10. What is the overall theme of this text? How does Steinbeck convey this theme? Use evidence to support your reasoning,