

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt
The Pearl, Day 1



Key Paragraph – 1

“Kino awakened in the near dark. The stars still shone and the day had drawn only a pale wash of light in the lower sky to the east. The pigs were already beginning their ceaseless turning of twigs and bits of wood to see whether anything to eat had been overlooked. Outside the brush house in the tuna clump a covey of little birds chattered and flurried with their wings.”

Writing Prompt

Everyone is worried when the scorpion stings Coyotito. A sting from a scorpion is a serious injury because it can kill an infant. Pretend you are a medic responding to Coyotito sting. Write 2-3 **narrative paragraphs** for a medical report that describes what happened, the treatment needed, and the healing process. Provide three details from today's reading to develop a descriptive narrative. Include one quote from the reading. Remember to site the quote.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt
The Pearl, Day 2



Key Paragraph – 11

“Have I nothing better to do than cure insect bites for ‘little Indians?’ I am a doctor, not a veterinary.”

Writing Prompt

Pretend you are a human rights reporter that believes everyone should be treated equally and have equal access to medical treatment. Write **narrative article** that tells the story of Coyotito’s desperate need for medical attention and the doctor’s refusal. In a second paragraph describe the injustice of the doctor’s actions. Include two quotes in your article, one quote from the doctor justifying his decision and another quote from a beggar that witness the entire story.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt
The Pearl, Day 3



Key Paragraph – 19

“Kino deftly slipped the knife into the edge of the shell. Through the knife he could feel the muscle tighten hard. He worked the blade lever-wise and the closing muscle parted and the shell fell apart. The lip-like flesh writhed up and then subsided. Kino lifted the flesh, and there it lay, 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.”

Writing Prompt

Kino opened the large oyster. Inside he found a large, perfect pearl- The Pearl of the World. Pretend you are Kino. Write a journal entry detailing the story of how you found The Pearl of the World. Established the context of the story through a **narrative paragraph** that describes Coyotito’s recent tragedy. In a second **narrative paragraph** tell the story of how you found the pearl. Use the details provided in today’s reading as well as your imagination to fully describe the marvels of this pearl. Consider its shape, its color, what can be seen in its reflection, and the emotions it invokes. End your journal entry explaining how this discovery will significantly change your life.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt
The Pearl, Day 4



Key Paragraph – 23

“All manner of people grew interested in Kino—people with things to sell and people with favors to ask. Kino had found the Pearl of the World. The essence of pearl mixed with essence of men and a curious dark residue was precipitated. Every man suddenly became related to Kino’s pearl, and Kino’s pearl went into the futures, the wishes, the needs, the lusts, the hungers, of everyone, and only one person stood in the way and that was Kino, so that he became curiously every man’s enemy. The news stirred up something infinitely black and evil in the town; the black distillate was like the scorpion, or like hunger in the smell of food, or like loneliness when love is withheld. The poison sacs of the town began to manufacture venom, and the town swelled and puffed with the pressure of it.”

Writing Prompt

Pretend you are a wise and close friend to Kino, one who has no desire for the pearl or anything that the pearl can provide. In a letter to Kino, provide him advice. In a **narrative paragraph** lay out steps Kino should take to prevent him from being robbed or taken advantage of. What should he do first, second, third, etc.? Explain the importance for taking each step of advice. Remember to begin and end the letter with salutations.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt
The Pearl, Day 5



Key Paragraph – 30

“He said, ‘Sometimes, my friend, the scorpion sting has a curious effect. There will be apparent improvement, and then without warning—pouf!’ He pursed his lips and mad a little explosion to show how quick it could be, and he shifted his small black doctor’s bag about so that the light of the lap fell upon it, for he knew that Kino’s race love the tools of any craft and trust them. ‘Sometimes,’ the doctor went on in a liquid tone, ‘sometimes there will be a withered leg or a blind eye or a crumpled back. Oh, I know the sting of the scorpion, my friend, and I can cure it.’”

Writing Prompt

It is quite likely that the doctor does not have a true cure for the scorpion sting, nor does he have true knowledge of the how the poison works. As an educated man, the doctor is in a role where he can easily persuade Kino to believe his treatment. As the doctor, write a technical sounding paragraph that explains how the venom of the scorpion attacks the body. Use your imagination to create a false account of how the sting attacks the body. In a **narrative paragraph** logically explain how a scorpion’s sting spreads through the body. At every stage of the scorpion’s sting explain the pain and suffering the human body experiences. Finally describe the deadly effects of the sting and how it affects the body, especially in small children.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt
The Pearl, Day 6



Key Paragraph – 36

“And Juana, sitting by the fire hole, watched him with questioning eyes, and when he had buried the pearl she asked, ‘Who do you fear?’

Kino searched for a true answer, and at last he said, ‘Everyone.’ And he could feel a shell of hardness drawing over him.”

Writing Prompt

Because Kino has come into possession of a valuable object, he has to be very careful. Imagine that you have acquired such an object, such as the winning lottery ticket. Write a **narrative paragraph** detailing the steps you would take to protect your new wealth. How would you keep it safe from others until you cashed it in? How would you keep it and your loved ones safe once you became wealthy? Be specific and include at least 5-10 steps.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt
The Pearl, Day 7



Key Paragraph – 43

“In the brush houses by the shore Kino’s neighbors sat long over their breakfasts, and they spoke of what they would do if they had found the pearl. And one man said that he would give it as a present to the Holy Father of Rome. Another said that he would buy Masses for the souls of his family for a thousand years. Another thought he might take the money and distribute it among the poor of La Paz; and a fourth thought of all the good things one could do with the money from the pearl, of all the charities, benefits, of all the rescues one could perform if one had the money. All of the neighbors hoped that sudden wealth would not turn Kino’s head, would not make a rich man of him, and would not graft into him the evil limbs of greed and hatred and coldness. For Kino was a well-liked man; it would be a shame if the pearl destroyed him. ‘That good wife Juana,’ they said, ‘and the beautiful baby Coyotito, and the others to come. What a pity it would be if the pearl should destroy them all.’”

Writing Prompt

Imagine you have acquired a great amount of wealth. Write a **narrative paragraph** detailing how you would spend or invest your money. In a second **narrative paragraph** detail how you would distribute your acquired wealth if you were not allowed to spend the money on yourself. How would you help your family, your community, and society? Be sure to include how you acquired this wealth and the amount you acquired.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt
The Pearl, Day 8



Key Paragraph – 52

“‘I am cheated,’ Kino cried fiercely. ‘My pearl is not for sale here. I will go, perhaps even to the capital.’”

Writing Prompt

Pretend you are Juan Tomas, the only person who has no desire to get rich off Kino’s good luck. In a **narrative paragraph** detail a plan to help Kino get the full worth of his pearl. Begin by telling him how to find out the value of the pearl. Next, explain how he should develop his ideal price for the pearl and develop the lowest price we will sell it for. Based on your advice, end your narrative by telling him what to do about the 1500 peso offer.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt
The Pearl, Day 9



Key Paragraph – 53

“And now, said other fearful ones, now that he had defied them, those buyers will not want to deal with him at all. Maybe Kino has cut off his own head and destroyed himself. And others said Kino is a brave man, and a fierce man; he is right. From his courage we may all profit these were proud of Kino.”

Writing Prompt

While Kino waits to sell his pearl he is attacked by an intruder. Pretend you are a police officer. Write a police report detailing the incident. Write a **narrative paragraph** depicting the sequence of events. Include a second paragraph that provides a detailed description of the intruder. Provide three facts from today's reading.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt
The Pearl, Day 10



Key Paragraph – 65

“And Kino said, ‘Oh my brother, an insult has been put on me that is deeper than my life. For on the beach my canoe is broken, my house is burned, and in the brush a dead man lies. Every escape is cut off. You must hide us, my brother.’”

Writing Prompt

Now that the beach has been cut off and the authorities will be looking for Kino, they family must come up with a new plan. Write a **narrative letter** providing step-by-step instructions to help the family escape. Be clear so that there are no mistakes. Anticipate Kino’s misunderstandings. Include 10-15 actions steps. The step-by-step instructions should end with the family in safety.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt
The Pearl, Day 11



Key Paragraph – 67

“‘This pearl has become my soul,’ said Kino. ‘If I give it up I shall lose my soul. Go thou also with God.’”

Writing Prompt

After discovering the pearl, Kino has gone through many attacks and has sacrificed the safety of his family. However, despite the risk he cannot give up the pearl. In a **narrative paragraph** describe Kino’s attachment to the pearl. Provide three examples that show he cannot give up the pearl. Include an explanation of what Kino means when he says that the pearl has become his soul and that giving up the pearl means he will lose his soul.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt
The Pearl, Day 12



Key Paragraph – 75

“And then helplessness and hopelessness swept over him, and his face went black and his eyes were sad. ‘Perhaps I should let them take me.’

Instantly, Juana was on her feet and her hand lay on his arm. ‘You still have the pearl,’ she cried hoarsely. ‘Do you think they would take you back alive to say they had stolen it?’

His hand strayed limply to the place where the pearl was hidden under his clothes. ‘They will find it,’ he said weakly.

‘Come,’ she said. ‘Come!’

And when he did not respond, ‘Do you think they would let me live? Do you think they would let the little one here live?’

Writing Prompt

Kino has three choices: he can stay and prepare to fight when the trackers come back; he can flee with his family into the mountains; or he can turn himself in. Choose one of these scenarios and write a **narrative story** that explains how the story will end. Provide three key events that happen as the result of this choice.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt
The Pearl, Day 13



Key Paragraph – 79

“The lowest step, where the stream collected before it tumbled down a hundred feet and disappeared into the rubbly desert, was a little platform of stone and sand. Only a pencil of water fell into the pool, but it was enough to keep the pool full and to keep the ferns green in the under hang of the cliff, and wild grape climbed the stone mountain and all manner of little plants found comfort here. The freshets had made a small sandy beach through which the pool flowed, and bright green watercress grew in the damp sand. The beach was cut and scarred and padded by the feet of animals that had come to drink and to hunt.

The sun had passed over the stone mountains when Kino and Juana struggled up the steep broken slope and came at last to the water. From this step they could look out over the sun beaten desert to the blue gulf in the distance. They came utterly weary to the pool, and Juana slumped to her knees and first washed Coyotito’s face and then filled her bottle and gave him a drink. And the baby was weary and petulant, and he cried softly until Juana gave him her breast, and then he gurgled and clucked against her. Kino drank long and thirstily at the pool. For a moment, then, he stretched out beside the water and relaxed all his muscles and watched Juana feeding the baby, and then he got to his feet and went to the edge of the step where the water slipped over, and he searched the distance carefully. His eyes set on a point and he became rigid. Far down the slope he could see the two trackers; they were little more than dots or scurrying ants and behind them a larger ant.”

Writing Prompt

Kino and Juana are trying desperately to escape their trackers. They try different methods to cover their tracks while fleeing in difficult desert conditions. From Coyotito’s point of view write a **narrative paragraph** describing how Kino and Juana are trying to escape the trackers and survive the desert conditions. Provide three examples to support your answer. In a second paragraph explain whether or not you thought your parents were doing the right and moral action.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt
The Pearl, Day 14



Key Paragraph – 87

“And then Kino stood uncertainly. Something was wrong; some signal was trying to get through to his brain. Tree frogs and cicadas were silent now. And then Kino’s brain cleared from its red concentration and he knew the sound—the keening, moaning, rising hysterical cry from the little cave in the side of the stone mountain, the cry of death.”

Writing Prompt

Without reading any further, write your own ending to this story. Create a **narrative paragraph** that details what happens. Who died in the cave and who survived? What is left of his family in the days that follow? Include an explanation of what happens to the pearl.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt
The Pearl, Day 15



Key Paragraph – 90

“And when they came to the water’s edge they stopped and stared out over the Gulf. And then Kino laid the rifle down, and he dug among his clothes, and then he held the great pearl in his hand. He looked into its surface and it was grey and ulcerous. Evil faces peered from it into his eyes, and he saw the light of burning. And in the surface of the pearl he saw the frantic eyes of the man in the pool. And in the surface of the pearl he saw Coyotito lying in the little cave with the top of his head shot away. And the pearl was ugly; it was gray, like a malignant growth. And Kino heard the music of the pearl, distorted and insane. Kino’s hand shook a little, and he turned slowly to Juana and held the pearl out to her. She stood beside him, still holding her dead bundle over her shoulder. She looked at the pearl in his hand for a moment and then she looked into Kino’s eyes and said softly, “No, you.”

Writing Prompt

Write a short survival guide for anyone who is about to acquire wealth. Write a step-by-step **narrative article** that guides your readers in what they should do and not do. Provide a reason for each action you suggest that they do and not do. (The guide should include at least 5 of each suggestion) Include a paragraph that details the risks, danger, and pitfalls they are likely to encounter. Provide three solutions to deal with their own feelings of greed and the greed of others.