The Pearl
Guided Reading Questions

Directions: Use these questions as a guide to what is important in each chapter. You may use the notes from these questions on your quiz.

Chapter 1-2

1. Who were the three main characters described in Chapter 1?
2. Songs and music are usually very important in cultures where people cannot read or write. Why?
3. When does Steinbeck use the "Song of the Family?" When is the "Song of Evil or Song of the Enemy" used? (hint: foreshadowing clues)
4. What is the first "song" that Kino hears in the morning?
5. What happens to Coyotito?
6. What does Juana mutter to herself to guard against the evil of the scorpion?
7. What unusual person does Juana ask for? Why is it an unusual request?
8. What kind of people are the four beggars who wait in the front of the church?
9. What is Kino and Juana's religion?
10. What do the neighbors do when the family sets off for the doctor's house? Describe the procession.
11. Write the quotation that shows that the doctor thinks of Indians as animals.
12. What adjectives would you use to describe the doctor?
13. Why doesn't the doctor treat Coyotito?
14. What does Kino do to show his anger?
15. How do Kino and Juana earn a living?
16. What does Kino find?
17. How do Juana and Kino react to Kino's discovery?

Chapter 3

1. Describe how news travels in the small town.
2. When the priest hears of Kino's discovery, what does he think?
3. Why is the pearl called, "The Pearl of the World."
4. What are Kino's dreams? Name some of the things he would like to do with the money from the pearl. How does Kino's personality change as soon as he has made plans for the future?
5. Why does the priest visit Kino and Juana?
6. Why does the music of evil sound in Kino's ears when the priest visits them?
7. Why do Kino's knuckles burn when the doctor visits them?
8. Do you think the doctor is telling the truth about Coyotito's illness? Why?
9. What conflict forces Kino to allow the doctor to treat Coyotito?
10. After the doctor has given the baby powder, Steinbeck comments on a school of fish that slaughters smaller fish and night hawks that hurt little mice. What does he do this? What does it mean?
11. How does the discovery cause Kino to become "every man's" enemy?
12. Kino's friends realize that all future time will date from the discovery of the pearl. What two possibilities do they see in Kino's dreams and plans?
Chapter 4-5

1. Kino's discovery affected everyone with whom he came into contact. How did it affect the following people: the shopkeeper, the doctor, the beggars, the priest, Kino himself?
2. Describe the pearlbuyers.
3. What does the pearlbuyer tell Kino about his pearl?
4. Was Kino fooled by the pearlbuyer? Explain.
5. Had the pearlbuyers system been challenged before?
6. What does Kino mean when he says, "I have lost one world and not gained another."
7. What is the role of the priest in this society of Indians? What is it that he preaches that truly defines his role?
8. What does Kino's brother mean when he says, "You have defied not the pearlbuyers, but the whole structure, the whole way of life, and I am afraid for you."
9. How might the pearl destroy Kino and his wife?
10. After Kino is attacked, what does Juana suggest they do with the pearl?
11. Why is the town like a nervous system?
12. What does Kino do to show he has changed since finding the pearl?
13. List as many animal images you can find from Chapter 5 of The Pearl.

Chapter 6

1. Who are the trackers?
2. What is Kino's plan to destroy the trackers?
3. What did one of the trackers do when he heard a cry the second time?
4. What had the tracker really killed?
5. Why did Kino and Juana always pray to God?
6. Juana and Kino's return to the town is another procession. What differences do you see in this procession as compared to the procession in the beginning of the novella.
7. How has the vision of the pearl changed as regards to: the rifle, the wedding, and Coyotito's education?
8. Did Kino win his battle against society? Why?
9. How is this novella a parable?
10. Why did Kino give Juana the pearl to throw away?
11. How do you think Kino and Juana feel after they had thrown the pearl back into the sea?
12. What happen to Juana and Kino? Does it matter what happens to them? Why?