

Lesson 3: The Pearl

Getting Started

In yesterday's reading, Kino feels shamed and powerless because he can't pay the doctor to help his son. In this lesson you will learn more about Kino's circumstances and his financial poverty; however, you will also see how Kino's life changes forever because of a discovery he makes.

Stuff You Need

- ✓ *The Pearl* by John Steinbeck
- ✓ colored pencils
- ✓ journal

Ideas to Think About

- What is natural human response to change?
- How can poverty or wealth change a person's life, character, and perspective?
- How do people's experiences shape and change their circumstances and their perspectives?

Things to Know

- Verbs help show the reader what is happening instead of just telling the reader what is happening.
- Vivid adjectives help the reader create images of what is being described in a piece of writing. When you use adjectives, you must be selective and effective in the adjectives you use.
- **Coordinate adjectives** are two or more adjectives that describe the same noun and are separated by commas.

Reading and Questions

Read Chapter 2 and then answer the questions below in complete sentences.

1. What is the only thing of value that Kino owns? What does this tell you about Kino?

2. Why do you think his canoe is so valuable?

3. In this chapter, Steinbeck often uses phrases such as "vagueness of a dream" and "things of the imagination" and "more illusions than realities." What effect do these phrases have on the reader?

Activities

Activity 1: Editing Sentences

Copy these sentences in your journal, correcting any grammar, spelling, or punctuation errors:

- A copper haze hanged over the water and the hot, morning sun beat on it, and made it vibrate blindingly.
- The brush houses of the fishing people was back, from the beach, on the right hand side of town and the canoos were drawed up in front of this area.

Activity 2: Effective Verbs and Adjectives in Writing

In this activity, you will analyze Steinbeck's use of verbs and adjectives to create effective descriptions, helping the reader imagine what is being described. Steinbeck uses intense, descriptive language to describe the setting of the story. In the second chapter he describes the bottom of the ocean. His vivid use of language gives the reader an image of what the pearlers see when they dive.

The use of strong verbs is essential to narrative writing. Strong verbs keep the action going, engage the reader, and show rather than just tell the reader what is happening. You could write, "The man walked up the stairs." This tells the reader what is happening. Or you could write, "The man stumbled up the stairs." This helps show the reader what is happening.

Which of these sentences is more effective?

"The girl ate her lunch." OR "The girl gobbled down her lunch."

The second sentence shows you how the girl ate her lunch — it doesn't just tell you that she ate it.

Which of these sentences is more effective?

"The man wore an old shirt." OR "The man wore a faded, torn shirt."

The adjectives in the second sentence help the reader better visualize the type of shirt the character is wearing. Note that sometimes writers use more than one adjective before a noun. When two or more adjectives describe the same noun, they are called **coordinate adjectives**. These types of adjectives are separated by a comma.

A good way to determine if these adjectives need a comma in between them is to ask yourself if the sentence would still make sense if you inserted the word "and" in between them. For example, the sentence, "The man wore a faded and torn shirt" still makes sense, so "and" can be replaced with a comma.

Use the "Verbs and Adjectives Chart" sheet to identify the strong verbs and descriptive adjectives that Steinbeck uses to describe the ocean floor in the second paragraph of Chapter 2.

Next, select one of the following options. The first option encourages you to draw a picture based on Steinbeck's description of the ocean floor, and the second option asks you to write a poem to describe the ocean floor, borrowing from Steinbeck's own descriptive language.

Option 1: Drawing the Ocean Floor

On the page, "The Ocean Floor" (Option 1), draw the image your mind sees when you read Steinbeck's description of the ocean floor.

Option 2: Ocean Floor Poetry

On the page, "The Ocean Floor" (Option 2), write a poem to describe the ocean floor, based on Steinbeck's description. You can borrow some of Steinbeck's words and phrases for the poem, if you'd like. You can use free verse or any other poetic form you feel will effectively describe the ocean floor to the reader.

Wrapping Up

In Chapter 2, Kino made the discovery of a lifetime. His life will never be the same.

Life Application

As you read books outside of your assigned readings, record examples of sentences and passages that contain strong verbs and effective adjectives.

Verbs and Adjectives **CHART**

Directions: Record Steinbeck's verbs and adjectives found in the second paragraph of Chapter 2.

Strong Verbs	Vivid Adjectives

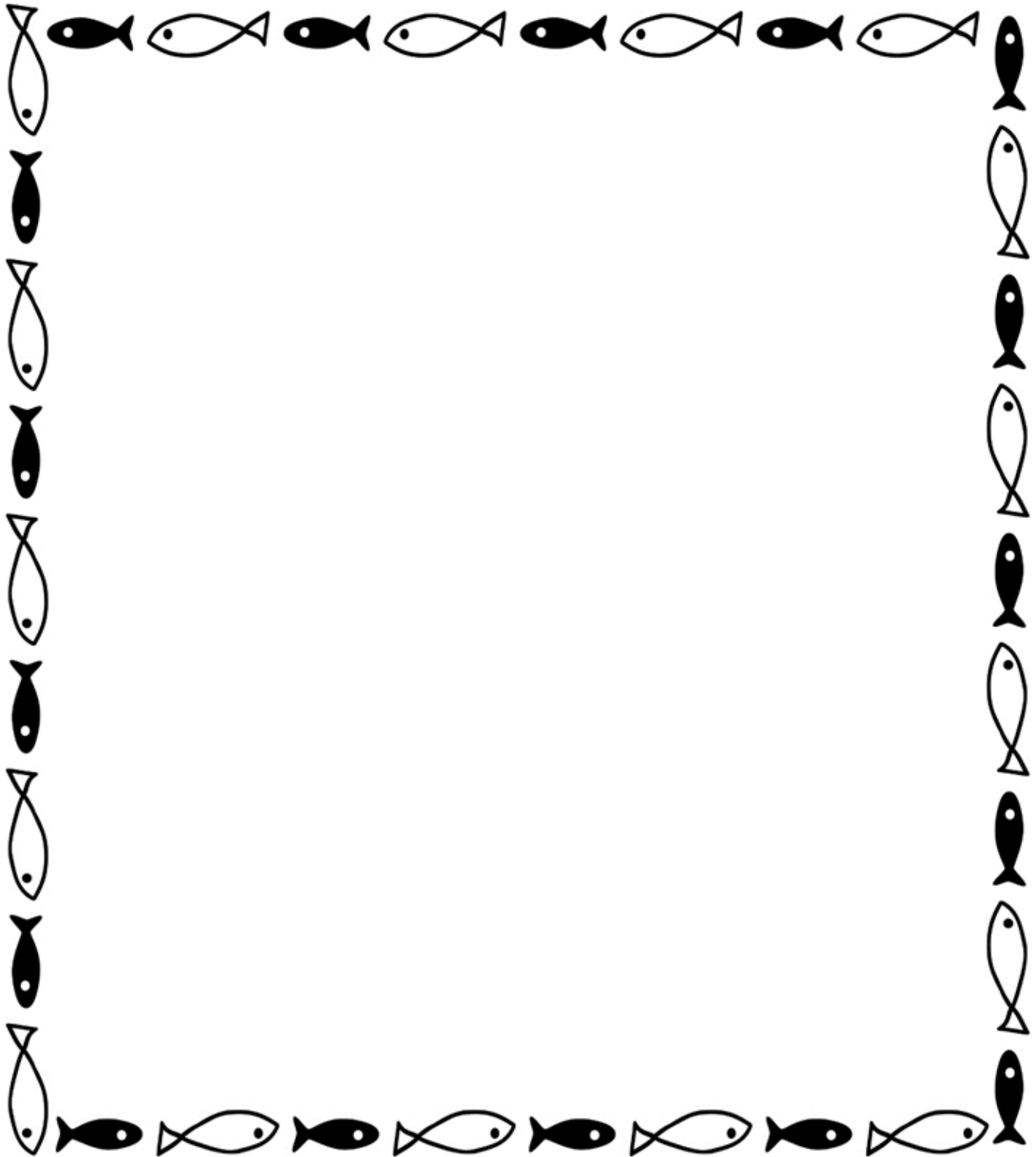
The Ocean Floor

Directions: Draw a picture of the ocean floor based on the passage that describes the ocean floor.



THE OCEAN FLOOR

Directions: Write a poem to describe the ocean floor. Borrow examples of Steinbeck's descriptive language for your poem.



Parent Overview

Lesson 3: The Pearl

Getting Started

? Big Ideas

- What is natural human response to change?
- How can poverty or wealth change a person's life, character, and perspective?
- How do people's experiences shape and change their circumstances and their perspectives?



Facts and Definitions

- Verbs help show the reader what is happening instead of just telling the reader what is happening.
- Vivid adjectives help the reader create images of what is being described in a piece of writing. When you use adjectives, you must be selective and effective in the adjectives you use.
- **Coordinate adjectives** are two or more adjectives that describe the same noun and are separated by commas.

⦿ Skills

- Determine the importance of literary effects on the reader/viewer/listener. (LA)
- Draw inferences and/or conclusions. (LA)
- Identify, use, and understand the function of verbs and adjectives in writing. (LA)

Introducing the Lesson

Today your child will read Chapter 2 and will analyze Steinbeck's use of verbs and adjectives in a descriptive passage taken from the story.

Reading and Questions (Answers)

1. What is the only thing of value that Kino owns? What does this tell you about Kino?
 - His canoe. That he is very poor. His canoe is worth more than his home.
2. Why do you think his canoe is so valuable?
 - He needs to provide food for his family from the ocean and he needs to find the pearls that he sells to support his family.
3. In this chapter, Steinbeck often uses phrases such as "vague of a dream" and "things of the imagination" and "more illusions than realities." What effect do these phrases have on the reader?
 - Answers will vary but might include that they make the reader feel as if the story is somewhat of a dream or a fantasy and cause the reader to question what is real versus what is not real. The phrases highlight the spiritual elements of Kino's people and their faith in the unseen. They draw a stark difference between the lives of the villagers and their almost ethereal existence and the lives of people in the town who seem to have no spiritual guidance.

Outline of Activities and Answer Keys

Activity 1: Editing Sentences

Here are the suggested sentence corrections. (Changes from the original are underlined.)

- A copper haze hung over the water, and the hot morning sun beat on it and made it vibrate blindingly.
- The brush houses of the fishing people were back from the beach on the right-hand side of town, and the canoes were drawn up in front of this area.

Activity 2: Effective Verbs and Adjectives in Writing

For this activity your child will identify verbs and adjectives in a descriptive passage taken from the book. He will then decide whether he wants to draw a picture (Option 1) or write a poem (Option 2) based on Steinbeck's description of the ocean floor.

Answer Key

Verbs: took, bubbled, sputtered, popped, waved, swayed, clung, lay, scampered

Adjectives: yellow, Fiddler, rich, little, tiny, crawling, swimming, growing, brown, gentle, green eel, poison, eel-grass, bright-colored, swimming

Option 1: Drawing the Ocean Floor

Read the second paragraph of Chapter 2 and look for evidence of Steinbeck's descriptions in your child's drawing.

Option 2: Ocean Floor Poetry

Read the second paragraph of Chapter 2 and look for evidence of Steinbeck's descriptions of the ocean floor in your child's poem.

Wrapping Up

Questions to Discuss

- When Juana prays that Kino finds a pearl to pay the doctor to heal their baby, rather than praying directly for the recovery of the baby, Steinbeck says, "...for the minds of people are as unsubstantial as the mirage of the gulf." What do you think this means? (Answers might include that the minds of people are often hard to understand or comprehend. Sometimes people hold faith or trust in the wrong things.)
- Steinbeck says the pearls found in the gulf "raised the King of Spain to be a great power in Europe in past years, had helped to pay for his riches, and had decorated the church for his soul's sake." How would you interpret this quote? (The wealth from the pearls profited the Europeans rather than the natives who found the pearls. The money from the pearls gave power and wealth to those who were in power and went to further their power and influence.)
- How do you think Kino's life will change as a result of finding the pearl? (Answers will vary.)

Things to Review

Ask your child why strong verbs and interesting adjectives add depth and effectiveness to a piece of writing. Discuss how verbs "show" the reader what is happening, rather than just telling the reader what is happening. Explain that adjectives add to the imagery of a piece of writing and help the reader to imagine what is being described in a passage. A good writer must use adjectives effectively — too many adjectives can weigh down a piece of writing and make it too wordy. Choose precise and interesting adjectives to use in your writing.