

Writing Sentences

(Adapted from submission by Meenal Parikh in ESL Café Idea Cookbook)

- Select nouns, verbs and adjectives from the text and write them on separate cards
- Put the word cards in corresponding envelopes labeled "Nouns" "Verbs" "Adjectives"
- Students pull one word from each envelope and create a sentence using the three words
- They may change the form of the words (sing/plural, verb tense and form, etc.)

For writing Paragraphs:

- Have the students write the first sentence as directed above.
- They then choose to keep one of the words and select 2 new ones from the other two categories. This allows them to connect one thought with the next. They can go on like this until they have 4-5 sentences.
- Have them cut out these sentences and lay them out on their desks.
- They may add connectors or transition words to put these sentences together into a short paragraph.

Whowhatwherewhenwhy

(Adapted from submission by Bonita Treinen in ESL Café Idea Cookbook)

- On a piece of paper, students write the words: *Who, What, Where, When* and *Why* in a column down the left margin.
- Next to the word "Who" they write the subject of a sentence as creatively as they like
- Ask students to choose a "who", "what", "when", "where", "why" from the context of the book (or a chapter of the book)
- They fold that part of the paper back so "What" is on top, and all students pass their papers to the left.
- Without looking at the subject, they write a verb next to "What", then fold the paper over again and pass their papers to the left.
- Students continue in this way, writing the "Where", "When", and "Why"
- When they are finished writing the final "Why", they open their papers, make sure the verb agrees with the subject and the time frame, and share their sentences with the class.

An example:

Who	Kino
What	was stung by the scorpion
Where	at the bottom of the sea
When	in the middle of the night
Why	because he was so lucky

Final sentence: Kino/was stung by the scorpion/at the bottom of the sea/in the middle of the night/ because he was so lucky.

Colored Paper and Speaking

(Adapted from submission in ESL Café Idea Cookbook)

- Half of the students write a synopsis of a part of the story (or the teacher can give each students a topic to write about) on one color of paper... say, green.
- The other half of the students write on a different color...say, blue.
- When students finish, collect all the papers and post all papers of one color at one end of the room and the other color at the other end.
- Pair off the students matching one green writer with one blue writer.
- Each student needs to retell their story to their partner.
- Then students must find their partners papers on the wall.

Students seem to write much more when they are given colored paper and pens. This activity gives students a tangible reason to write clearly, retell accurately, and listen actively to each others' stories.

Complete the Story

(Adapted from submission by Marzuki Maulud in ESL Café Idea Cookbook)

- Group students and distribute a piece of paper to each group with the beginning of a story/topic related to the text:
- For each group there is a different beginning (topic).
- Each individual in the group writes a sentence to continue the story.
- Give students a set time to write (3 min).
- When their time is up, the next student in the group continues to write...and so on, until the last member of the group has written.
- When finished, groups share their stories by reading aloud, or posting them on the wall.

Easy Abstraction Poems

(Adapted from submission by Angela Brenner in *ESL Café Idea Cookbook*)

This is a tried and true poetry exercise which always surprises students who do not think of themselves as writers...

- Brainstorm some ideas for feelings, or suggest some that apply to the text you are reading (for *The Pearl*, some feelings might include: fear, jealousy, anger, greed, anguish, love, peace, simplicity, friendship, hope, guilt, regret...)
- Students choose one of the feelings and write it at the top of their paper as their title.
- Beneath the title, have students write a line for each of the five senses.
 - Example:
 - Jealousy
 - tastes like pickled plums,
 - smells like rotten fish,
 - looks like a black night,
 - feels like rose thorns,
 - sounds like a traffic jam.
- You may want to write a poem together as a class first to get the students thinking and so they fully understand.
- Prompt students to use concrete images and encourage them to let their imaginations run wild.

Setting a time limit seems to help students from censoring their ideas and makes their writing more creative. Try about 10 minutes, and then give them more time if they need it when the 10 minutes are up.

Try writing your own Abstraction Poem before class or while the students are writing, so you can be the first to share your work. The encourage students to share their writing with the class.

A Collaborative Approach to Writing

(Adapted from a submission in ESL Café Idea Cookbook)

I have used this method with many adult ESL classes at the beginner and intermediate levels.

- Assign a topic, for example, finishing a story such as "The Lady or the Tiger?"
- The students double space their work and hand it in.
- Critique it thoroughly, circling errors, drawing arrows to show mistakes in word order, writing question marks where there may be a misunderstanding, etc.
- Photocopy all the stories and hand back a booklet containing all the stories to each student.
- Work through several during each class, checking with each writer as to what they really meant, and helping each writer to polish their work.
- This peer editing technique obviously demands a high level of student-student and teacher-student respect, and it builds even greater respect.
- Compliment the students on their interesting sentences and thank them for their efforts (i.e. "It's good you made that mistake so we could learn this new word."; "I'm glad you mixed up those two verbs so we could talk about how important it is to use the correct one.")
- Emphasize the miscommunication caused by errors, so they can see that writing correctly is not a matter of pleasing the teacher but of saying what they really mean. Telling the students how wonderful it is that they can all learn from each other helps them buy into it.
- With a small class, have the students write their paragraphs on the board. Go through them and correct them as a class. The students often like to copy each other's stories.

- Use some of their sentences on weekly tests. This validates the importance of the learning that occurs during this activity, as well as the students' ideas.
- Have students write about their home and re-write their stories after correction. Then put them all into a booklet and given it to the students at the end of the class.

Writing/discussion prompts

The following are writing and discussion prompts for each chapter in the book. These prompts can be used in a variety of ways:

1. Divide the class into small groups and discuss one of the questions. Each group can be given the same question or a different one.
2. Ask students to write about one of the questions in their journals.
3. Divide the class into small groups; give each group a different question and a sheet of flipchart paper for them to write answers and ideas a question. Groups present their results to the class. Alternatively, give each group the same question and have groups circulate at the end and compare answers.
4. Graphic organizers can help students arrange their thoughts visually and clarify their writing. The end of this folder shows a number of graphic organizers that can be used for these prompts. They can be written on flipchart paper, with small groups of students working together to fill them in, with results presented to the class.

Writing/discussion prompts for Chapter 1

1. In the first chapter, Steinbeck touches all of our senses - sight, sound, smell, touch, taste. For example, Kino "could

hear the pat of the corncakes in the house and the rich smell of them on the cooking plate.”

- a) In small groups, comb through the first chapter and write down all the things that touch your senses, and quotes from the book that talk about them.
- b) Write these on flipchart paper, and present them to the class.
- c) Choose one item from the story, and write a paragraph about that item.
- d) Choose another item, in your own life, and write a paragraph about it. Use all five senses, and your emotions.

Instructor notes: the following are examples of items about which the students can note in a) above:

the sunrise	the scorpion
music and song	the garden of the doctor's home
fire	breakfast

2. At the end of chapter 1, the doctor refuses to treat Coyotito. What was Kino's response? What caused him to do this? What were the effects? How would you have reacted?
3. Kino did not have enough money to pay the doctor to treat Coyotito. In a group, sort the following reasons into categories that you think connect them. Choose one

category that you think is most convincing. Some categories may have only one reason.

Pretend you are Kino. Write a letter to the doctor to convince him to treat Coyotito, using this category.

You have enough money. You don't need any more money.	Coyotito is just a baby!! You should always treat a baby for free!!
You're a doctor. Doctors should work for free if someone can't pay!	Your people have always been cruel to us. Make up for it by treating Coyotito.
If you don't treat Coyotito, I will put a scorpion in your bed to bite you!	If you don't treat Coyotito, I will kill you.
If you treat Coyotito, I will go to church and pray for you and your wife.	If you treat Coyotito, I will work in your garden for free for a year.
If you treat Coyotito, my wife will cook for you for a year. She makes delicious corncakes!	If I ever get any money, I'll give it all to you.

4. Compare your typical morning to Kino's typical morning. How are they alike? How are they different?

Writing/discussion prompts for Chapter 2

1. What is the sequence of major events for this chapter?
2. Describe the boat and why it is so important to Kino.
3. Throughout the book, the concept of the family is very important. How does Steinbeck portray Kino's family life? What roles do Kino and Juana play in the family? How are they different from the role you or your parents play in your family?
4. Describe the pearl that Kino finds. Use all five senses.
5. In chapters one and two, Juana prays often. To whom does she pray, and what does she pray for?

Writing/discussion prompts for Chapter 3

1. What is the sequence of major events for this chapter?
2. Write a newspaper article about Kino finding the pearl. Make it exciting, using vivid vocabulary and quotes from the book.
3. In this chapter, Kino begins to dream about things the pearl will bring. What are the things he wishes for? Would you wish for the same things? What other things would you wish for if you had found the pearl?

4. The concept of injustice begins in chapter 1 and grows in this chapter. Who is being unjust or unfair to Kino? How are they being unjust or unfair? Has anyone ever acted this way to you? What did you do?
5. What does Steinbeck mean when he writes about a town having a nervous system and a head and shoulders and feet? In what other ways does Steinbeck make the town seem human?

Writing/discussion prompts for Chapter 4

1. What is the sequence of major events for this chapter?
2. Describe the pearl buyers. What do they look like? How do they act? Do you think they are honest? Why/why not?
3. In this chapter Steinbeck writes of people "who tried to leave their station." What does he mean by this? Have you ever stepped outside of your station? What was other people's response to your actions? How did you feel about that?
4. Who is Juan Tomás? What advice and guidance does he give Kino? Does Kino take his advice? Why/why not?
5. Who do you think attacks Kino? What is Juana's response to his attack?
6. What mistakes has Kino made in this chapter? Why did he make the mistake? What were the effects of his mistake? What would you have done instead?

Writing/discussion prompts for Chapter 5

1. What is the sequence of major events for this chapter?
2. In your opinion, is Kino becoming greedy? Should he have been happy with the 1,000 pesos offered to him by the first pearl merchant, or did he do the right thing by rejecting the offer? At the end of the chapter Kino says "This pearl has become my soul." What does he mean by that?
3. Why do you think Juana tried to throw the pearl into the water? Would you have done the same thing? What was Kino's reaction? How was Juana affected by his reaction?
4. In this chapter, Steinbeck writes about the role of women and men. What are these roles; how are they alike and how are they different?
5. What happens to Kino's boat and house? Who do you think did these things, and why would they do them? How did Kino and Juana react?
6. Who attacked Kino? What was the result? What effect did this have on Kino and Juana?
7. How did Juan Tomás help Kino and Juana? Kino never follows Juana's or Juan Tomás' advice. Would Kino have been better off if he had? Could they have been more persuasive? How?

Write a letter to Kino to persuade him to throw the pearl

back into the ocean. Use strong reasons to support your advice.

8. What mistakes has Kino made in this chapter? Why did he make the mistake, and what were the effects of his mistake? What would you have done instead?

Writing/discussion prompts for Chapter 6

1. What is the sequence of major events for this chapter?
2. Why do Kino and Juana throw the pearl back into the Gulf? Did they do the right thing? Would you have done the same thing?
3. The pearl changes between chapter 2 and chapter 6. How does it change? Point to places in the text (in both chapters) where Steinbeck shows this.
4. Throughout chapter 6, Steinbeck mentions animals. In what ways are Kino and Juana like animals? Point to places in the text where Steinbeck shows this.
5. Throughout the book, Steinbeck refers to songs. What songs does Kino hear, and how do those songs change from chapter 1 to chapter 6?
6. Kino's personality changes throughout the book. Write some adjectives that describe Kino at each chapter in the book.
7. One sign of fine literature is that the meaning of the story never gets old. Throughout the book, Steinbeck

writes about human nature and good vs. evil, among many other things.

Re-write the story for modern times. Use the following as a guide to help you build the story.

- Describe a new setting
- Describe new characters (including occupations etc)
- How does your main character become rich?
- How do others try to cheat your main character?
- How does your main character try to avoid harassment?
- How does your main character become greedier?
- What mistakes does your main character make?