

Required Summer Reading For 7th Grade

Soon after reading the two books assigned to your class, please answer the following questions which will help you to think through the meaning of each book. Be ready, on the first day of school in September, to turn in this study guide and to take a quiz on each book as well. You will also be graded on your answers on this study guide.

II. Background Information for To Be a Slave

This collection of testimonies of former slaves gives an eye-witness account of the horrors of slavery. The book is divided into accounts of the slave trade, life under slavery, emancipation, and life after emancipation. The last section shows that slavery causes lasting damage that endures even after the slave is freed.

1) What different methods did slave traders use to capture slaves in Africa?

2) Give specific examples of the ways slaves were treated not as human beings with dignity but rather as objects or property. In each case, cite the speaker and the page number in your book, as follows: (Ball 54).

3) Give one example of a good master (cite the speaker and the page in the text), a good slave bidder.

4) What obstacles did freed slaves face after emancipation? Give at least three specific examples with citations.

II. Background Information for reading John Steinbeck's *The Pearl*

John Steinbeck, in *The Pearl*, shows the injustices that the native Mexicans in Southern California suffered under the white class. He also shows that greed for wealth can ruin a person, leaving him or her completely empty-handed in the end.

1. How do the whites take advantage of the Mexicans in the novel? Refer to the doctor, the priest, and the pearl buyers.

2. How does the pearl change Kino's priorities?

1. How, in the end, is Kino left empty-handed?
2. Do you think that this empty-handedness was Kino's own fault? Why? Explain below.

III. Comparison of novels: How is Kino in *The Pearl* treated much like the African Americans in *To Be a Slave*?

IV. Opinion Section: Did you enjoy reading *The Pearl*? Why or why not?

Did you enjoy reading *To Be a Slave*? Why or why not?