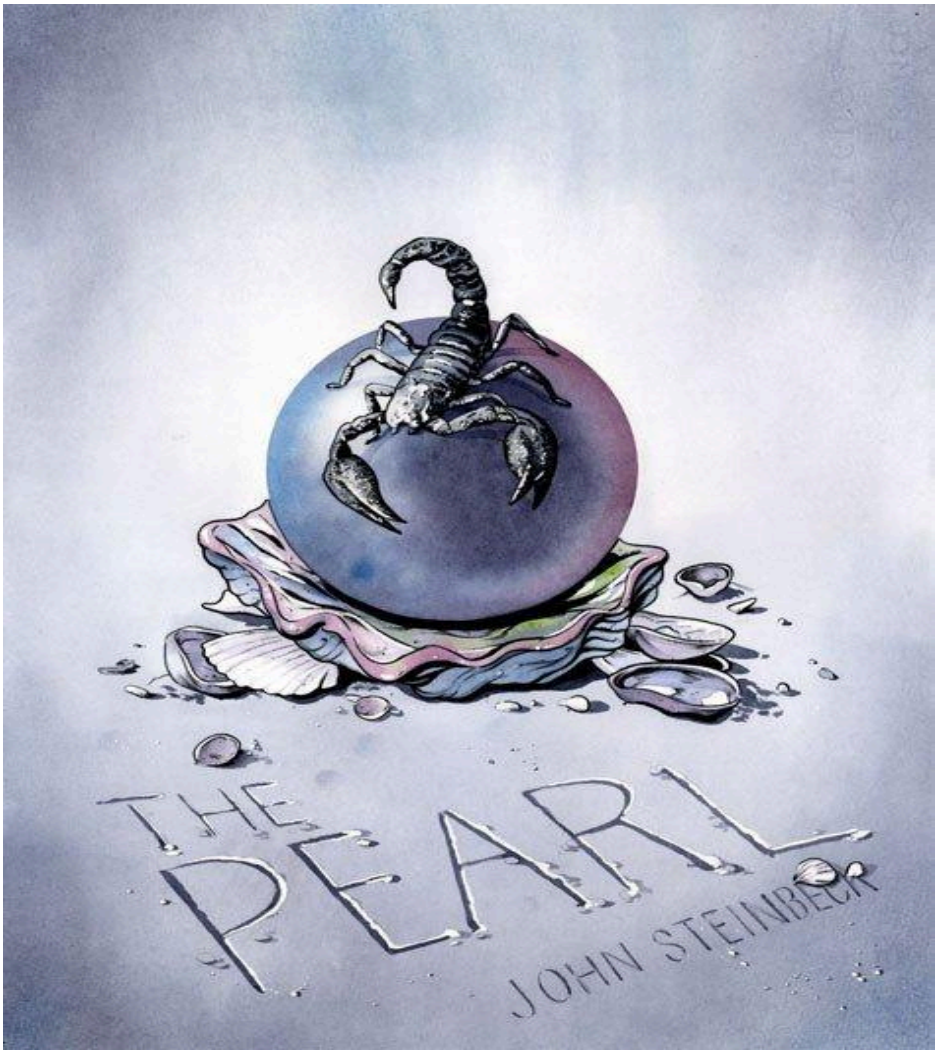
Paper 1A: Fiction texts

THE PEARL



In the extract below, set in Mexico during the 1940s, a child named Coyotito has been stung by a scorpion. The child's father, a Mexican pearl diver named Kino, takes his child to the white European doctor who works in a nearby town.

The scurrying crowd came at last to the big gate in the wall of the doctor's house. They could hear the splashing water and the singing of caged birds and the sweep of the long brooms on the flagstones. And they could smell the frying of good bacon from the doctor's house.

Kino hesitated a moment. This doctor was not of his people. This doctor was of a race which for nearly four hundred years had beaten and starved and robbed and despised Kino's race, and frightened it too, so that Kino came humbly to the door. And as always when he came near to one of this race, Kino felt weak and afraid and angry at the same time. Rage and terror went together. He could kill the doctor more easily than he could talk to him, for all of the doctor's race spoke to all of Kino's race as though they were simple animals. And as Kino raised his right hand to the iron door knocker in the gate, rage swelled in him, and the pounding music of the enemy beat in his ears, and his lips drew tight against his teeth—but with his left hand he reached to take off his hat. The iron ring pounded against the gate. Kino took off his hat and stood waiting. Coyotito moaned a little in Juana's arms, and she spoke softly to him. The crowd gathered close the better to see and hear.

After a moment the big gate opened a few inches. Kino could see the green coolness of the garden and little splashing fountain through the opening. The man who looked out at him was one of his own race. Kino spoke to him in the old language. ''The little one—my first born—has been poisoned by the scorpion,'' Kino said. ''He requires the skill of the healer.''

The gate closed a little, and the servant refused to speak in the old language. ''A little moment,'' he said. ''I go to inform myself,'' and he closed the gate and slid the bolt home. The glaring sun threw the bunched shadows of the people blackly on the white wall.

In his bedroom the doctor sat up in his high bed. He had on his dressing gown of red watered silk that had come from Paris, a little tight over the chest now if it was buttoned. On his lap was a silver tray with a silver chocolate pot and a tiny cup of eggshell china, so delicate that it looked silly when he lifted it with his big hand, lifted it with the tips of thumb and forefinger and spread the other three fingers wide to get them out of the way. His eyes rested in puffy little hammocks of flesh and his mouth drooped with discontent. He was growing very stout, and his voice was hoarse with the fat that pressed on his throat. Beside him on a table was a small Oriental gong and a bowl of cigarettes. The furnishings of the room were heavy and dark and gloomy. The doctor had once for a short time been a part of the great world and his whole subsequent life was memory and longing for France. ''That,'' he said, ''was civilized living''—by which he meant that on a small income he had been able to keep a mistress and eat in restaurants. He poured his second cup of chocolate and crumbled a sweet biscuit in his fingers. The servant from the gate came to the open door and stood waiting to be noticed.

''Yes?'' the doctor asked.

''It is a little Indian with a baby. He says a scorpion stung it.''

The doctor put his cup down gently before he let his anger rise.

''Have I nothing better to do than cure insect bites for 'little Indians'? I am a doctor, not a vet.''

'

'Yes, Master,'' said the servant.

''Has he any money?'' the doctor demanded. ''No, they never have any money. I, I alone in the world am supposed to work for nothing—and I am tired of it. See if he has any money!''

At the gate the servant opened the door a trifle and looked out at the waiting people. And this time he spoke in the old language. ''Have you money to pay for the treatment?''

Now Kino reached into a secret place somewhere under his blanket. He brought out a paper folded many times. Crease by crease he unfolded it, until at last there came to view eight small misshapen seed pearls, as ugly and grey as little ulcers, flattened and almost valueless. The servant took the paper and closed the gate again, but this time he was not gone long. He opened the gate just wide enough to pass the paper back. ''The doctor has gone out,'' he said. ''He was called to a serious case.'' And then he shut the gate quickly, out of shame.

For a long time Kino stood in front of the gate with his wife beside him. Slowly he put his hat on his head. Then, without warning, he struck the gate a crushing blow with his fist. He looked down in wonder at his split knuckles and at the blood that flowed down between his fingers.

Q1: Read again **lines 1 to 3**.

List 4 things the crowd **sees or hears** at the doctor's house**.**

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Q2: Read again **lines 22 to 34**.

How does the writer use language to show that the doctor is a **rich, greedy** character?

In his bedroom the doctor sat up in his high bed. He had on his dressing gown of red watered silk that had come from Paris, a little tight over the chest now if it was buttoned. On his lap was a silver tray with a silver chocolate pot and a tiny cup of eggshell china, so delicate that it looked silly when he lifted it with his big hand, lifted it with the tips of thumb and forefinger and spread the other three fingers wide to get them out of the way. His eyes rested in puffy little hammocks of flesh and his mouth drooped with discontent. He was growing very stout, and his voice was hoarse with the fat that pressed on his throat. Beside him on a table was a small Oriental gong and a bowl of cigarettes. The furnishings of the room were heavy and dark and gloomy. The doctor had once for a short time been a part of the great world and his whole subsequent life was memory and longing for France. ''That,'' he said, ''was civilized living''—by which he meant that on a small income he had been able to keep a mistress and eat in restaurants. He poured his second cup of chocolate and crumbled a sweet biscuit in his fingers. The servant from the gate came to the open door and stood waiting to be noticed.

You could include the writer's choice of:

- words and phrases
- language features and techniques
- sentence forms.

Q3: You now need to think about the whole of the source.

This text is from the middle of a story.

How has the writer structured the text to interest the reader?

You could write about:

• what the writer focuses your attention on at the beginning of the source

• how and why the writer changes this focus as the source develops

• any other structural features that interest you.