

STAAR CONNECTION™

Diagnostic Series™

Reading

6

teacher



KAMICO®

Instructional Media, Inc.

STAAR CONNECTION™

Reading

6

Teacher Edition

Diagnostic Series™



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Grade 6 Reading
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Name _____ Date _____

Gem Enthusiasts Guidebook

Chapter 5—Pearls

Chapter 5**Pearls**

1 Oysters' pearls are valued for their stunning beauty, which is a result of the unique way they form. Unlike other gems, gem-quality pearls do not have to be cut for light to pass through them. Due to the way they grow, these pearls are naturally buffed and shiny, in part because pearls are made of tiny crystals that form in perfect rows and layers. This arrangement of the crystals allows light to pass along the edge of one crystal and bounce off other crystals at the same time, making the pearl shine and gleam.

2 Since each layer of crystals is so thin, it can take years to form a pearl of large size. Most gem-quality pearls are produced by a type of oyster called a pearl oyster. These pearls are known to be relatively small, though pearls of extraordinary size do emerge from time to time. Large pearls have been found inside *Tridacna gigas* (a species of giant clam) in the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean. One specimen in the Philippines produced the largest pearl ever found. This huge pearl measured twelve inches long by seven inches in diameter, about the size of a football!

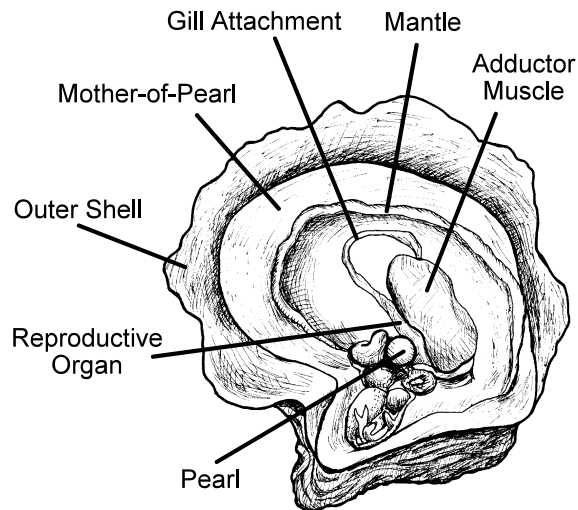
3 Many people believe that all pearls, even one as large as that found in the Philippines, form from tiny grains of sand, but this theory is only partially true. Pearls can form from any irritant, or foreign body, inside the shell. The irritant can be a grain of sand, but it can also be a small animal invader. Sometimes, irritants get inside through natural processes, and sometimes humans insert them. So, while all pearls do start out tiny, there are in fact several ways a pearl can form.

4 One way that a pearl can form inside a pearl oyster is through the natural defense mechanism of the oyster. At times, a small creature, such as a worm, will dig its way through the shell to try to make a home inside. Other times, a grain of sand or other small particle will get trapped inside the oyster's shell. The oyster will shield itself from this irritant by using a substance called nacre, also called mother-of-pearl. The cells of the oyster's mantle make nacre. The mantle is a layer of tissue that covers all of the oyster's vital organs. After the creature or sand particle has

entered the mantle, the nacre-producing cells within the mantle attack it. Once these cells cover the irritant, nacre is released onto it in thin sheets. Each sheet is about

one one-thousandth of a millimeter thick. About three or four layers are added each day. Over time, the layers build up and a natural pearl is formed.

Anatomy of Pearl Oyster



5 Another way a pearl can form inside a pearl oyster is with human help. A person can cultivate a pearl by placing a small bit of oyster shell and mantle tissue into the reproductive tissue of a pearl oyster. After this step is complete, the oyster is placed back into its saltwater environment to continue life as normal while the pearl develops. The bit of mantle tissue put into the reproductive tissue within the shell will begin to decay after a couple of days. However, the nacre-producing cells in the mantle tissue will begin to grow and attack the fragment of shell as a foreign substance in the oyster. The cells will cover the shell fragment and begin releasing nacre in

one one-thousandth of a millimeter layers over the shell. Slowly, the thin layers of nacre build, and a cultivated pearl is formed.

Whether the pearl forms naturally or through human means, it can be highly valued by people around the world. Many people buy cultivated pearls for great sums of money. The quality of a cultivated pearl is not at all substandard compared to a naturally formed pearl. Only a skilled jeweler can tell the difference between cultivated and natural pearls. In fact, the only sure way to detect the true origin is to x-ray the pearl. Thus, since natural pearls and cultured pearls are so alike, both types are valued.

6

The Four Category Classifications of Tahitian Black Pearls as Determined by the French Polynesia Assembly

These classifications are used to grade the quality of black pearls from Tahiti, one of the world's most important pearl exporters. Pearls falling within the "A Category" are the most prized; those in the "D Category" are considered the least desirable, yet they still have commercial importance.

A Category Pearls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● possess no more than one imperfection or possess only a group of localized imperfections concentrated over less than 10 percent of their surface ● have a very beautiful luster
B Category Pearls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● possess some imperfections concentrated over less than 33 percent of their surface ● have a beautiful or average luster
C Category Pearls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● possess light concentrations of imperfections over less than 67 percent of their surface
D Category Pearls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● possess light imperfections over more than 66 percent of their surface, but possess no deep imperfections
	OR
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● possess concentrations of deep imperfections over less than 50 percent of their surface ● have a soft luster

7 Pearls hold a special place in human history. They have been prized since prehistoric times and have symbolized wealth and beauty throughout the centuries. The love of the pearl, natural or cultivated, is as extraordinary as the number of grains of sand in the ocean—even if not all pearls start out as a grain of sand!



ADVERTISEMENT

Today ocean creatures around the world face serious threats from pollution, introduced species, and habitat loss.

From the pearl oyster to the blue whale, millions of marine species need your help. In fact, over seventy marine species are listed on the U.S. Endangered Species List, *including every single species of sea turtle.*

Once a species is extinct, it is gone forever.

These trends can be reversed. Let us hear your voice before it is too late.

Contact SaveOurOceanCreatures.org today to find out what you can do to save the creatures that live in our imperiled oceans.

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Feature Article

A New Tahitian Center for Black Pearl Study and Cultivation

An Open Letter to Louise Peltzer, President of the University of French Polynesia from the Polynesian Pearl Consortium, the Trade Association of Polynesian Pearl Farmers

Dear Madam President:

When many people think of pearls, they picture the lovely white spheres that are so highly valued in jewelry. Yet, we in Tahiti and across French Polynesia know we have a unique type of pearl that is just as highly valued—if not more so. Of course, we are talking about the prized Tahitian black pearl.

2 Tahitians have been cultivating, gathering, and selling black pearls for many years. Indeed, our black pearls are known for their beauty by jewelers around the world. Our black pearls have graced the necks, ears, hair, and fingers of people from New York to New Delhi. Ours are some of the highest quality black pearls in the world. As a result, Tahiti is the global center of black pearl production. Thus, we believe the Tahitian government should help promote black pearl farms and the people who gather black pearls. It should create the Tahitian Center for Black Pearl Study and Cultivation (TCBPSC). We are asking for your support in this effort. We are also asking for the support of the University of French Polynesia, which we feel would be a prime location for the future center.

3 As we see it, the center would offer important benefits for the people of this nation and for all of French Polynesia. For one, the center would provide a site where scientists could study the oysters that make black pearls. These experts would also study the environment in which the oysters and other sea creatures live. In addition, the center would promote oyster farms that grow the oysters. The TCBPSC could help those people who live in Tahiti who want to start oyster farms, thus improving the Tahitian economy. These are all important needs that should be filled to make sure Tahiti remains the world leader in black pearl production.

4 The new center would act as a magnet for biologists, oceanographers, and other experts. They would come to Tahiti to study the native black-lipped pearl oyster, which produces our famed black pearls. The TCBPSC's oyster biology experts would study the oyster and its life cycle. They would focus their study on pearl production and methods to enable the oysters to live healthy lives, ensuring that black pearl production grows and remains important in Tahiti. In this process, the already superb research facilities at the university would be greatly expanded, benefitting researchers at all levels.

5 Bringing these experts to Tahiti will have other advantages than just helping expand black-lipped oyster farms on the islands. Experts would also focus on ways to protect the sea life and oceans in and around Tahiti. These people could help us make sure that the beaches, bays, lagoons, and sea around the islands stay clean. Linking a healthy environment with the growth of black pearls would also help the nation's tourism industry. By keeping the environment clean, more tourists would want to come.

6 An increase in the amount of tourism would in turn lead to a rise in local black pearl sales. Tourists love to see the beautiful beaches and the ocean around Tahiti. They are also often impressed with the beauty and quality of the black pearls they find in our shops. They buy these pearls for themselves and

for family and friends back home. While tourism in general is a boon to the local economy, it is especially important to the sale of black pearls.

7 Another important role that would be played by the future center is the promotion of black-lipped oyster farms in Tahiti. Jewelers and other experts say that very little difference in quality exists between a black pearl that comes from an oyster farm and a black pearl that is formed naturally. Some people have started oyster farms on islands close to Tahiti. Yet, this number is still relatively small. The center would help the people who live in Tahiti start farms here. These farms would in turn produce black pearls, providing much-needed jobs and relieving stress on our nation's naturally occurring oyster beds.

8 The black-lipped oyster takes between eighteen and twenty-four months to grow a black pearl that can be harvested for sale. This long time period means that people have to watch and care for the oysters. Thus, several different types of jobs would be created by each new oyster farm. People would be hired to manage the oysters during the two to four years they need to grow high-quality pearls. Harvesters would be needed to harvest the pearls. Constructing and maintaining buildings and docks would provide jobs. So would preparing the sea beds. The rise in production would also mean that more jobs would be created in local retail sales and in shipping the pearls to all parts of the world.

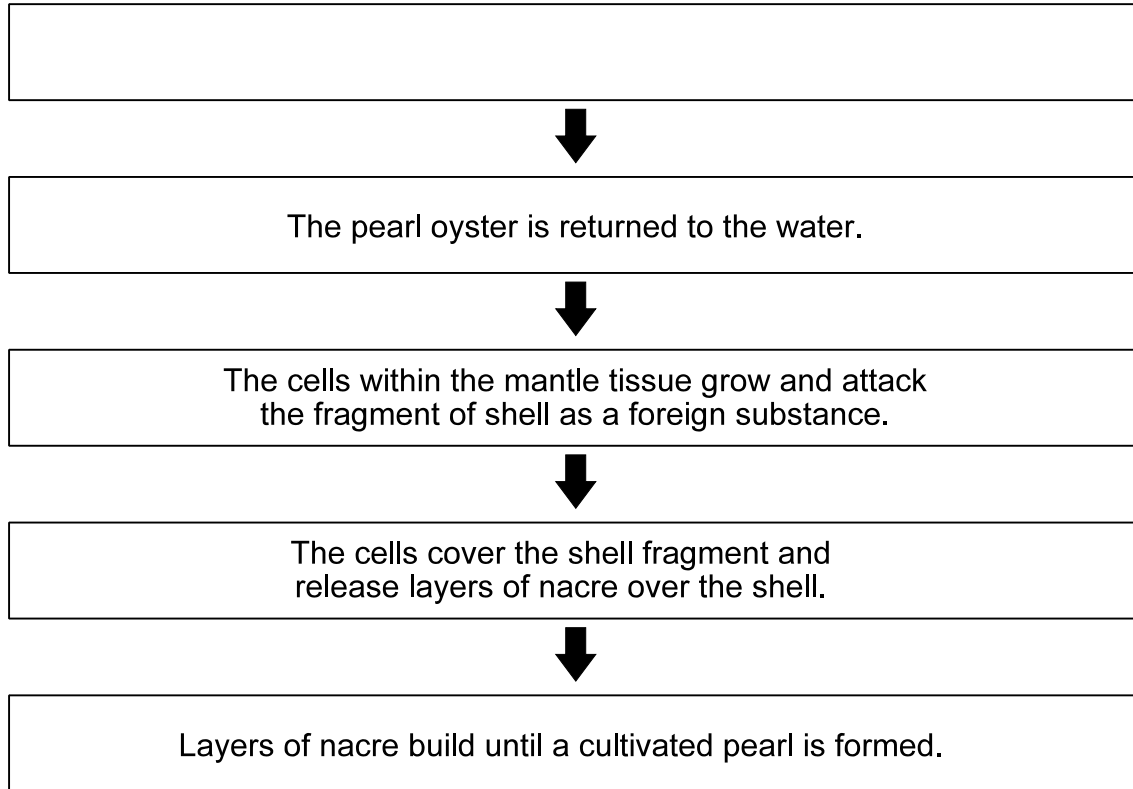
9 Finally, Tahiti stands to gain much from the small investment needed to launch the TCBPSC. Our nation's education and research status would benefit from the center, as would our environment and our economy. These improvements would make life better for all. The University of French Polynesia would make specific gains. For all of these reasons, Madame President, we ask for the support of your institution as we encourage the government to approve the establishment of this center.

Use "Pearls" to answer questions 1 through 4.

- 1** What does the word substandard mean in paragraph 6?
- A** beyond the required or usual quality or size
 - B** below the required or usual quality or size
 - C** between the usual quality or size and the desired quality or size
 - D** related to the required or usual quality or size
- 2** Which of the following is suggested by information in the selection?
- F** The pearl mentioned in the selection that was found in the Philippines was formed from a grain of sand.
 - G** Jewelers x-ray all the pearls they receive.
 - H** Cultured pearls are larger than natural pearls.
 - J** The pearl mentioned in the selection that was found in the Philippines had been forming for many years.
- 3** Based on the information in the selection, which of the following can the reader conclude?
- A** Diamonds and other gems are also made from nacre.
 - B** Pearls grow in thickness by about three to four one-thousandths of a millimeter each day.
 - C** Pearls have been considered valuable only since modern times.
 - D** Oysters' shells cannot be penetrated by any other animals.

- 4 Study the diagram. It shows the steps in which a cultivated pearl is formed in a pearl oyster.

Steps in the Formation of a Cultivated Pearl

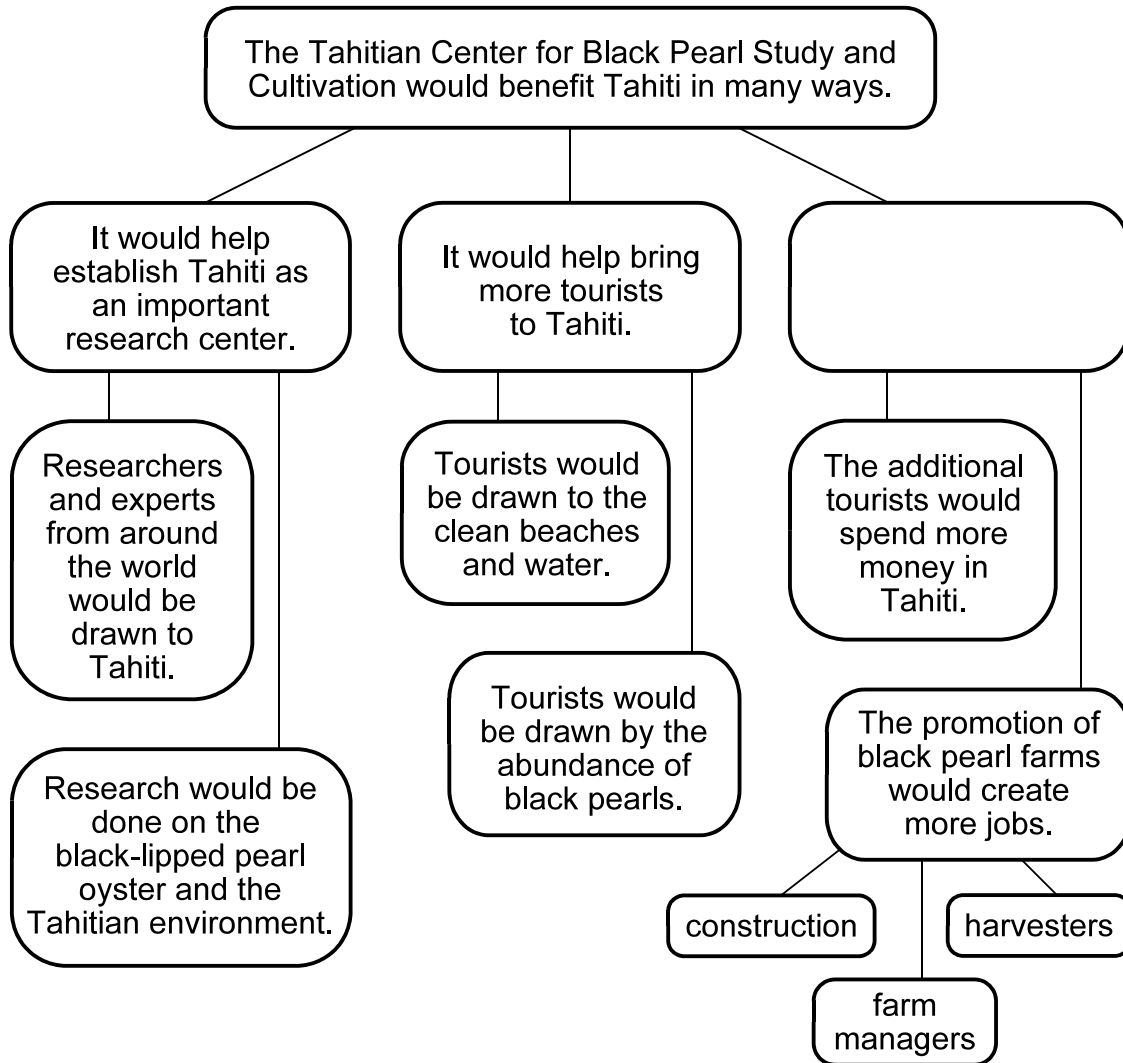


Which best completes the diagram?

- F A grain of sand or other small particle becomes trapped inside the pearl oyster's shell.
- G A small creature, such as a worm, digs its way through the shell of a pearl oyster.
- H A person places a small bit of oyster shell and mantle tissue into the reproductive tissue of a pearl oyster.
- J The pearl is x-rayed to determine whether it is a cultured pearl or a naturally formed pearl.

**Use "A New Tahitian Center for Black Pearl Study and Cultivation"
to answer questions 5 through 7.**

5 Look at the web.



What best completes the web?

- A It would improve the quality of the pearls produced on pearl farms.
- B It would help the Tahitian economy.
- C It would be located in the University of French Polynesia.
- D It would create a demand in retail sales jobs.

- 6** Look at the ad banner at the beginning of the article. How did the creators of the ad try to make viewers feel shocked and sad?
- F** by placing the ad at the top of an online news website
 - G** by providing contact information to learn more about what can be done
 - H** by using alarming facts and showing sad-looking marine creatures
 - J** by telling viewers that it is not too late to make a difference
- 7** Which of the following facts would best help the author's argument?
- A** The new center will cost taxpayers almost six hundred thousand Pacific francs (about seven million United States dollars).
 - B** The new center will be built of brick and imported stone.
 - C** The new center will take about five years to complete.
 - D** The new center will directly create over forty-five new permanent full-time jobs.

Use "Pearls" and "A New Tahitian Center for Black Pearl Study and Cultivation" to answer question 8.

- 8** Which of the following best describes the purposes of these selections?
- F** "Pearls" was written to express the author's appreciation of pearls, and "A New Tahitian Center for Black Pearl Study and Cultivation" was written to entertain readers with a story about a new research center.
 - G** "Pearls" was written to entertain readers with a story about unusually large pearls, and "A New Tahitian Center for Black Pearl Study and Cultivation" was written to convince more people to learn about black pearls.
 - H** "Pearls" was written to inform readers about pearls and how they are formed, and "A New Tahitian Center for Black Pearl Study and Cultivation" was written to persuade a university president to support a new research center.
 - J** "Pearls" was written to persuade readers to cultivate pearls on their own, and "A New Tahitian Center for Black Pearl Study and Cultivation" was written to express the writer's admiration for the beauty of black pearls.

STAAR CONNECTION™
Diagnostic Series™ Grade 6 Reading
TEKS Reading Alignment Chart and Cross-Curricular Alignments

KAMICO® supports cross-curricular teaching strategies and encourages efforts to apply, transfer, and integrate knowledge across multiple content areas. Therefore, many assessments in this reading book reinforce at least one grade 6 social studies, science, and/or health TEKS.

For each grade or course, TEA has identified some of the TEKS eligible to be assessed on STAAR as readiness standards. These readiness standards will be emphasized on the STAAR assessments. The remaining TEKS eligible to be assessed on STAAR are considered supporting standards. Although supporting standards will be assessed, they will not be emphasized on STAAR. KAMICO® has shown whether each question assessed in this book is aligned to a readiness standard or a supporting standard.

Readiness standards

- are essential for success in the current grade or course,
- are important for preparedness for the next grade or course,
- support college and career readiness,
- necessitate in-depth instruction, and
- address broad and deep ideas.

Supporting standards, although introduced in the current grade or course,

- may be emphasized in a subsequent year,
- may be emphasized in a previous year,
- play a role in preparing students for the next grade or course but not a central role, and
- address more narrowly defined ideas.

Assessment				
Question Number	Answer	Reporting Category	TEKS	Readiness or Supporting Standard
1	B	1	2A	Readiness
2	J	3	Fig. 19D	Readiness
3	B	3	Fig. 19D	Readiness
4	H	3	10C Fig. 19D Fig. 19E	Readiness Readiness Readiness
5	B	3	10A Fig. 19D	Readiness Readiness
6	H	3	13B	Supporting
7	D	3	10B	Supporting
8	H	1	9A	Supporting
Cross-Curricular Alignments				
"Pearls" Social Studies TEKS			6B	
"The Need for a Black Pearl Research Center" Social Studies TEKS			5C, 6B, 8A	