

# *Pearl of the Sea* Discussion Guide

Questions for exploring the themes & plot of *Pearl of the Sea*

1. *Pearl of the Sea* is set in a small fishing town in South Africa. In what ways is it similar to where you live? In what ways is it different? Does it remind you of anywhere you've been? Discuss what you know about the country of South Africa.
2. Pearl feels lonely a lot of the time. Can you think of a time when you've felt lonely? What did that feel like to you? Was there a place or a person that made you feel better, like the way Pearl feels better in the ocean and hanging out with Otto?
3. Naomi is kind to Pearl, but Pearl isn't always kind back, especially at the beginning of the story. Why do you think that is?
4. When Pearl first meets Otto, she notices that he has something stuck in his tentacle. What do you think it is? Why is it there?
5. What does it mean to "poach" something? Why does Pearl start poaching abalone? Why do you think abalone poaching, and fish poaching, is illegal? Who do you think has a more negative impact on the environment: the fishermen like Pearl who fish just for themselves and their community, or the large-scale commercial fishermen who fish for big companies?
6. Moby the dog is a really good sidekick to Pearl. Name some of the ways he protects her throughout the book.
7. Discuss Pearl's relationship with her father and how it changes throughout the story.
8. What are some life lessons Pearl learns in the story? What are some lessons her father learns? Does Otto learn any lessons?
9. How does becoming friends with Otto change Pearl's life?
10. At the end of the book, Pearl throws her bracelet into the ocean. Why do you think she does that?
11. Do you like reading comics and graphic novels? Is the process of reading them different from reading a text-based book?
12. If you had to create your own comic book, what would it be about? Take a few minutes to design your main character and outline your story.

