

BOOK KNOWLEDGE ORGANISER - THE PEARL DIVER BY JULIA JOHNSON

Important information

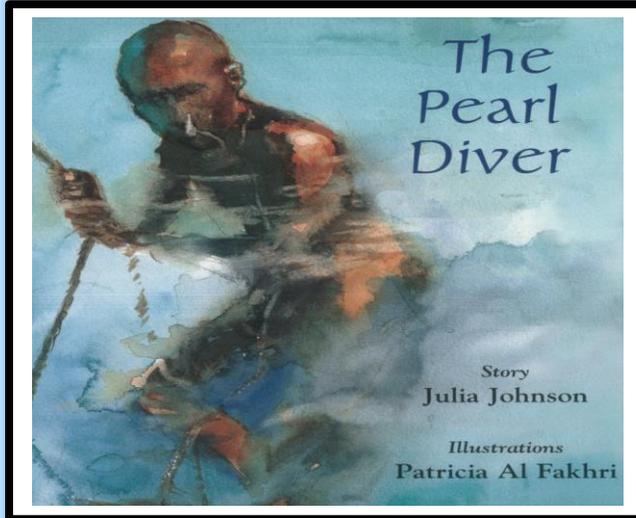
Plot

This is the story of Saeed, a six year old boy and his father Abdullah, one of the finest pearl divers in the Arabian Gulf.

We follow Saeed on his first adventure out to sea with his father and the rest of the divers. Saeed learns to dive and discovers the beauty and danger of the world beneath the waves. The sambuk and its divers encounter stormy seas and aggressive sharks. But will the story end happily? Will they return home safely having secured a rich haul?

Themes - courage, honesty, community and trust

Setting - the waters of the Arabian Gulf



What can the book teach us?

The importance of trust and responsibility
Being grateful for free education
The beauty of the seas and oceans

Writing genres

A discussion piece - Should Saeed go 'pearling' with his father?

A story - Dad dives for pearls. What happens?

A descriptive piece - either an underwater scene that a diver might see or a stormy sea setting.

Sentence types - Description: detail; using personification to enhance descriptions of settings; two pairs of sentences beginning with related adjectives.

Name of the book: The Pearl Diver

Author: Julia Johnson

Illustrations: Patricia Al Fakhri

Date published: 2003

Context - From Ancient times, the Gulf Arabs depended upon the treasures of the sea. Long before the discovery of oil, pearl diving and fishing were the main sources of income in the Arabian Gulf. Pearls have always been prized, and many of the world's finest pearls came from the waters of the Gulf. But the life of a diver was full of hardships and dangers. Not only was diving exhausting work, men suffered from cramps, skin diseases, dehydration and deafness and drowning was not uncommon. To survive, a man required inner strength and courage. This is the story of one such man.

Key vocabulary

Nakuda - the captain of a pearling boat

Sambuk - a pearling boat. Some were large enough to carry crews up to 80 men.

Fathom - about 1.8 metres deep

Devilfish - the name pearl divers gave to stinging jellyfish

Shamal - a sand-laden wind from the north

Nahham - the singer on the boat. Sang rhythmic chants to accompany the men in their work

Tawwash - a pearl merchant

Tabreh - a clutch of oysters, a rare find, and thus a piece of good fortune

Dhow - an Arabian trading vessel