

Read the following text:

How Do Oysters Make Pearls?

Most jewelry is made of precious metals and stones mined from our very own Planet Earth. But pearls grow inside living creatures called oysters.

Oysters are not the only type of shellfish that produce pearls. Although it is a rare occurrence, clams and mussels have the ability to produce pearls. Oyster pearls are special in that they inhabit both freshwater and saltwater environments.

Pearls begin to take shape when an irritant enters the oyster and bonds to the mantle. It can be likened to having something stuck in your teeth. The oyster's natural reaction is to cover the irritant by secreting a pearly solution that covers, hardens and becomes a pearl.

Pearls come in an array of different colors. They range from white, black, gray, red, blue, and green. Most pearls are cultured worldwide, but black pearls are indigenous to the South Pacific, making them very expensive.

The high demand rate for pearls has resulted in many oyster farms around the globe. The pearls from these farms are cultured. Harvesters make small cuts and insert small irritants into the mantle.

Cultured pearls are less expensive because they aren't as rare as natural pearls. It's believed that only 1% of the pearls used in jewelry are natural. This is because natural pearls are hard to find. The world's most expensive pearl costs \$100 million. It is the largest pearl known to exist. It measures 66 cm in length and weighs over 31 kg. A fisherman found the pearl and kept it under his bed for ten years. He believed it was a good luck charm.

Pearls are one of the official birthstones of the month of June. Pearls are considered to symbolize clarity, loyalty, and purity. This birthstone is a perfect gift for a friend or relative.

Reading Comprehension

Answer the following questions about the text:

1. Oysters are living creatures.

- a. Yes
- b. No

2. mussels are a type of _____.

- a. an oyster
- b. a pearl
- c. a shellfish

3. Oysters can exist in _____ water environments.

- a. various
- b. difficult
- c. salty

4. The oyster reacts to the _____ of the irritant by covering it with a pearly solution.

- a. reaction
- b. presence
- c. nature

5. The pearly solution must harden before it _____ a pearl.

- a. turns out
- b. turns over
- c. turns into

6. Why are black pearls especially expensive?

- a. Because they are bigger than other pearls.

- b. Because they are prettier than other pearls.
- c. Because they are rarer than other pearls.

7. What did the fisherman think about the pearl he found?

- a. That it would bring him good luck.
- b. That it would charm him.
- c. That it would be known around the world.

Vocabulary

Find in the text **synonyms** to the following words:

expensive, named, kind, skill, surroundings, start, various, world, tiny

Answers:

precious, called, type, ability, environment, begin, different, globe, small

Grammar

1. Write the PAST SIMPLE forms of the following verbs:

begin, cover, make, grow, call, enter, believe, consider, become

Answers:

began, covered, made, grew, called, entered, believed, considered, became

2. Rewrite the following sentences in the ACTIVE Voice:

- a. Precious metals and stones are used by people to make jewelry.
- b. Pearls are produced by oysters.
- c. The irritant is covered by a pearly solution.
- d. Small cuts are made in the mantle by harvesters.
- e. Pearls are bought at high prices.
- f. Pearls are believed to symbolize clarity, loyalty, and purity.

Answers:

- a. People use precious metals and stones to make jewelry.
- b. Oysters produce pearls.
- c. A pearly solution covers the irritant.
- d. Harvesters make small cuts in the mantle.
- e. People buy pearls at high prices.
- f. People believe that pearls symbolize clarity, loyalty, and purity.