

The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald

Essential Questions: How does literature reflect a culture or time period? Is there a dark side to achieving the American dream?

Tasks:

1. **Conduct** a careful and thoughtful reading of the text.
2. **Annotate** for analysis and inquiry.
3. **Color-mark** the following motifs and symbols throughout **the text**: green light, references to time, the eyes of Dr. T.J. Eckleburg, Valley of Ashes, East and West Egg, weather, clothes, and colors
4. **Answer** the focus questions on **a separate sheet of paper**. Your responses should be **very** thorough. *You can use your notes during discussions.*

When you return in September, we will discuss these color-markings and other important aspects of the novel during Socratic Seminars. You will also take a test and/or write an essay on *The Great Gatsby*. All work should be your own and represent individual thought. More details will follow in September.

Chapter 1

1. Describe the setting of the novel (time and place). Distinguish between East Egg and West Egg.
2. Who is the narrator? What point of view is this?
3. Describe Daisy and Tom Buchanan. How does Nick know them?
4. Describe Jordan Baker.
5. What are your initial impressions of the Buchanans and Miss Baker? Why?
6. When does Nick first see Gatsby? What does he observe Gatsby doing?

Chapter 2

1. Describe the “valley of ashes” located between West Egg and New York City.
2. How is Fitzgerald using colors in this chapter?
3. What are the “eyes of Dr. T. J. Eckleberg?”
4. Identify and describe Tom’s mistress. What does she look and act like?
5. Describe George Wilson. What kind of man does he seem to be?

Chapter 3

1. Describe some details of a typical party at Gatsby’s mansion.
2. List some words in the opening scene of this chapter that suggest unreality or a dream world.
3. Identify and describe “Owl Eyes.” What are some important details from the conversation that Nick and Jordan have with him in the library?

Chapter 4

1. In this chapter, we discover more about Gatsby from three different sources. First, we hear Gatsby himself telling of his past – coming from a wealthy, Midwestern family, going to Oxford, spending his youth in the capitals of Europe, and emerging from the war as an heroic officer. Do you believe this version of Gatsby’s background? Does Nick believe him?
2. Secondly, we meet Meyer Wolfsheim, a man who will give us another opinion of Gatsby. Who is this man? What is his opinion of Gatsby?
3. Finally, we hear Jordan Baker’s story about Gatsby’s early romance. What is this story?
4. What has Daisy’s life been like since her romance with Gatsby?
5. Why does Gatsby throw parties? Why did he buy this particular house?
6. What request does Gatsby make of Nick through Jordan?
7. Now that you know more about Gatsby, how do you feel and what do you think about him? Why?

Chapter 5

1. Describe the reunion of Gatsby and Daisy.
(This is the midpoint of the novel. The first four and one-half chapters introduce the characters, establish the setting, and reveal Gatsby's "dream.")
2. What clues are given in chapter five as to the source of Gatsby's wealth?
3. Describe the interior of Gatsby's mansion.
4. Why does Daisy cry when she sees Gatsby's shirts?
5. What do we find out about the green light to which Gatsby had been pointing when Nick first sees him in chapter one?

Chapter 6

1. Nick tells the reader some things about Gatsby's past. Identify the following and explain how each fits into Gatsby's past:
 - James Gatz
 - Dan Cody
2. At the end of this chapter, Nick and Gatsby have a conversation about the past. What does this conversation reveal about Gatsby?

Chapter 7

1. Why does Gatsby no longer have parties?
2. Compare the reactions of Tom Buchanan and George Wilson to the knowledge that their wives are having affairs.
3. Who kills Myrtle Wilson? Explain the events surrounding her death.
4. Why is Gatsby waiting outside Daisy and Tom's house? Why is this pathetic?
5. Re-read the passage which describes Nick looking into the Buchanan's kitchen window. How does Nick interpret this scene? What do you think is going on?

Chapter 8

1. What further details of the romance between Daisy and Gatsby are revealed in this chapter? (Why was Gatsby so taken with Daisy? Why did Daisy marry Tom? What else do you find out?)
2. What compliment does Nick pay Gatsby? Do you agree? Explain.
3. How is the Eckleberg billboard again seen as a parody of God in this chapter?

Chapter 9

1. Why, after Gatsby's death, does Nick decide to "come back home" to the Middle West?
2. Why do Gatsby's "friends" not attend his funeral?
3. What is Nick's assessment of Tom and Daisy? (What does he think of them now?)
4. How did George find out that Gatsby owned the "death car"? What does George do?
5. Explain the ending of the novel: "So we beat on, boats against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past." (What comment is Nick making about us all?)

Looking ahead Book titles for the 2017-2018 school year:

- **Macbeth** by William Shakespeare
- **The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn** by Mark Twain
- **Their Eyes Were Watching God** by Zora Neale Hurston
- **The Awakening** by Kate Chopin