

The **GREAT GATSBY** Chapter 1 Name: _____

1. At the very start of the novel, Nick Carraway explains a quality imparted by his father. What is the quality? Do you think that this trait is a blessing or a curse?

2. What does the narrator mean in saying, "...now I was going to ... become again that most limited of all specialists, the 'well-rounded man'"? (6)

3. Based on Nick's description, what is your initial impression of Tom Buchanan?

4. Nick explains that "Almost any exhibition of complete self-sufficiency draws a stunned tribute from me." (12) What does he mean? What does this comment indicate about Nick?

5. After the birth of her daughter, Daisy says, "And I hope she'll be a fool—that's the best thing a girl can be in this world, a beautiful little fool." (20) What does she mean by this?

6. How does Nick's speech to others differ from his narration? (Note his response to Daisy when she asks if Chicago misses her.) What can we make of this difference?

7. Is Daisy's marriage really on the rocks or is she being dramatic? Explain your view.

8. How does Fitzgerald create a sense of mystery and anticipation at the close of Chapter 1?

The **GREAT GATSBY** Chapter 2 Name: _____

1. What is “the valley of ashes?” (26) Describe the scene in plain language.
2. According to our narrator, Tom has always wanted Nick to like him. Why might someone like Tom Buchanan care if someone such as Nick Carraway liked him?
3. Myrtle Wilson’s appearance is unlike that of her “mildly handsome” yet “anemic” husband. How is Myrtle seemingly attractive while being unattractive?
4. Describe Myrtle’s personality and values. Use details from Chapter 2 in your response.

5. Tom and Myrtle admit to despising their respective spouses. Myrtle’s sister suggests that they run away and get married. What do you think is stopping them?
6. Based on his tone, what does Nick think of the guests visiting Tom and Myrtle’s apartment? (Refer to textual evidence.) What do you think of them?
7. Why do you think Tom Buchanan reacts so violently to Myrtle saying his wife’s name? What do you imagine is the nature of his objection?
8. To some experts, the end of Chapter 2 implies that Nick and Mr. McKee slept together. What do you think? Why does Fitzgerald make this section ambiguous (unclear)?

The **GREAT GATSBY** Chapter 3 Name: _____

1. Which details stand out to you in the descriptions of Gatsby's parties? What impression of the parties does Fitzgerald create generally?
2. Find two examples of figurative language in Chapter 3. (Metaphors, similes, and idioms are plentiful.) Interpret the meaning of each.
3. Why do you think "Owl Eyes" makes such a big deal over Jay Gatsby's personal library? (Hint: David Belasco was a celebrated theatrical producer and set designer.)
4. Nick notes that Gatsby's "elaborate formality of speech just missed being absurd" and that Gatsby "was picking his words with care" in casual conversations. What does this imply?

5. Review the section describing the car crash at the end of Jay Gatsby's epic party (54-55). Is this just meant to be humorous or is it more meaningful? Explain.
6. How does Fitzgerald make Gatsby seem both unremarkable and extraordinary?
7. What mood(s) does Fitzgerald establish in describing Nick's life in New York City away from West Egg and Long Island?
8. What are your initial thoughts on Nick Carraway? Do you like him? Would you trust him?

The **GREAT GATSBY** Chapter 4 Name: _____

1. What do you think draws such a wide variety of people to Gatsby's house every weekend?

2. The narration informs us that some of Gatsby's guests will come to bad ends. What details are provided? What is the intended effect of providing these details?

3. Why are the people in the novel so fascinated by the mystery surrounding Gatsby's past? What does this say about human nature in general?

4. What clues indicate that Gatsby's "God's truth" about his life history may be fabricated? Why would Gatsby care if Nick Carraway believes his professed life's story?

5. Identify the odd aspects of Wolfshiem's behavior. What inferences might we form?

6. A linguist might interpret the name "Wolfshiem." The German / Norwegian root "heim" (not an exact match) means home or world. What might be the meaning behind this?

7. Why does Fitzgerald include lyrics from the 1921 jazz hit "Sheik of Araby" in Chapter 4? What purpose might this inclusion serve?

8. Which part of Chapter 4 is a structural element known as flashback? Re-read the section. What are some of the effects of this particular flashback?

The **GREAT GATSBY** Chapter 5 Name: _____

1. What is strange about Gatsby's behavior at the start of Ch. 5? Why is he acting this way?
2. Describe Gatsby's convoluted (overly complex) plan for reuniting with Daisy. What might be the reasons behind him taking this approach?
3. Gatsby has gone to a great deal of trouble to orchestrate his reunion with Daisy. Why is he so miserable and awkward when the moment finally arrives?
4. What does the narrator mean by saying, "Americans, while occasionally willing to be serfs, have always been obstinate about being peasantry"? (88) Do you agree?

5. Throughout *The Great Gatsby*, Fitzgerald gives great attention to Daisy's unusual voice. What impression does he create? (See the very end of Chapter 5.)
6. What does Nick mean when he narrates, "I was going to ask to see the rubies when the phone rang and Gatsby took up the receiver"? (93)
7. Why does Daisy react so insanely to Gatsby's shirts? What is going on here?
8. Fitzgerald creates vivid imagery, descriptions that enable the reader to imagine with their senses. Identify and explain two examples of imagery from the novel so far.

The **GREAT GATSBY** Chapter 6 Name: _____

1. Describe Gatsby's true origins. Did the reality match your expectations? Explain.
2. Do you find the arrangement between Jay Gatsby and James Cody believable as described by Nick? Why or why not?
3. Would James Gatz have become Jay Gatsby without the influence of Dan Cody? Explain.
4. "The lady" invites Gatsby to her dinner party; everyone is shocked when he takes her seriously. What is going on here? What is the unspoken message?

5. How does Daisy's presence diminish Gatsby's party for Nick? Have you ever experienced a change in perspective like this?
6. Why do Daisy and Tom find Gatsby's party so distasteful?
7. Why does Gatsby insist on introducing Tom as "the polo player?" Why does Tom object to this epithet (descriptive phrase)? What does this friction reveal about the two men?
8. Nick and Gatsby disagree about recapturing the past. What is your view?

The **GREAT GATSBY** Chapter 7 Name: _____

1. Nick says that Gatsby's "career as Trimalchio was over." (120) Why does Gatsby end his partying lifestyle so completely and so suddenly?
2. Daisy's daughter pops into Chapter 7 to say hello even though she plays no role in the plot. Why does Fitzgerald include the daughter at all?
3. In Chapter 7 as in Chapter 2, Fitzgerald gives inordinate attention to a random billboard for an optometrist (Dr. T.J. Eckleburg). What could possibly be the meaning of this emphasis?
4. Tom and Gatsby battle for Daisy's love in the hotel parlor. Who wins? Explain your view.

5. Why does Gatsby continually call people "old sport?" Why does Tom make this an issue?
6. What details indicate that Gatsby's personality has a darker side?
7. What clues in Chapter 7 hint that something terrible will happen? What is the overall effect of Fitzgerald's foreshadowing in the novel?
8. Chapter 7 ends with Gatsby in the bushes and Tom and Daisy talking over cold chicken. Nick does not know what they are saying. What do you make of this ambiguous ending?

The **GREAT GATSBY** Chapter 8 Name: _____

1. In Chapter 8 Gatsby reveals the truth he has worked for years to conceal. Why does Gatsby suddenly decide to tell Nick Carraway the truth about his past?
2. Nick explains that Gatsby “might have despised himself” for dating Daisy. What does he mean? What was despicable about Gatsby’s behavior?
3. Why does Gatsby refuse to accept that Daisy ever loved Tom Buchanan?
4. Of Gatsby Nick says, “...I disapproved of him from beginning to end.” Yet, he is glad he told Gatsby, “You’re worth the whole damn bunch put together.” (164) What can we make of this?

5. Why does Mr. Wilson conclude that the driver of the car that killed Myrtle was her lover?
6. Toward the end of Chapter 8, there is some mystery about how Wilson came to find Gatsby. What do you think happened in those missing hours?
7. Chapter 8 includes some great figurative language. Find and explain three examples.
8. What foreshadowing does Fitzgerald include to suggest that tragedy is imminent?

The **GREAT GATSBY** Chapter 9 Name: _____

1. Do you think Daisy knew of Gatsby's death before she left town with Tom? Explain.
2. Nick does not really care about Daisy, Tom, or Jordan. Why does he care about Gatsby?
3. Why doesn't anyone want to come to Gatsby's funeral? Why is Nick so concerned that people show up for the ceremony?
4. Why does Nick suddenly lose interest in Jordan Baker? What changed?

5. Nick chooses not to tell Tom the truth about the driver of the car that killed Myrtle. Why?
6. Why do you think people who have "old money" are sometimes prejudiced against those with "new money?" After all, wealth is something that they have in common.
7. In *The Great Gatsby*, color is more than color (especially green, white, gray, and yellow). How does Fitzgerald use color in the novel?
8. Many consider *The Great Gatsby* "the great American novel." What do you think inspires some to hold this high opinion of Fitzgerald's work?

Note: These prompts can serve in various modes, but they have been organized with collaborative groups or in mind.

- Assign each group one prompt from each of the three levels. Each group responds to two questions and one quote (3 responses total). You might allow students to pick their own items (one from each level).
- To close the activity, have the groups share their responses with the class so that all topics have been explored.

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