

CHAPTER I

Vocabulary: Match each word on the left with its definition on the right. Then use the numbered words to fill in the blanks in the sentences below.

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|------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. feigned | a. scornful, haughty |
| 2. levity | b. nearness |
| 3. proximity | c. improvising |
| 4. supercilious | d. pretended |
| 5. fractiousness | e. lack of seriousness |
| 6. extemporizing | f. unruliness, rebelliousness |
| 7. peremptorily | g. hint |
| 8. intimation | h. expressing urgency or command |

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- Not expecting to win the award, he had to resort to _____ when called upon to speak.
- The soldiers of the dictator _____ signaled the group to disperse.
- We _____ sleep when we thought we heard intruders in the house.
- Her gruff manner conveyed an impression of _____.
- The _____ waiter made us feel uncomfortable during the entire meal.
- A funeral is no place for _____.
- His body language gave the _____ that he did not want to be disturbed.
- The _____ of the beach made the property valuable.

Questions:

- What part of Chapter I serves as an introduction to the novel? Why do you think Fitzgerald included this introduction?
- Nick said, "I came East, permanently, I thought, in the spring of twenty-two." Why did Nick go East? Why do you think the Buchanans went East?

Chapter I (cont.)

3. Describe the relationship between Daisy and Tom. Do you think they were suited to one another? Explain your answer.
4. What revealing announcement did Jordan make to Nick about Tom? Do you find this information consistent with his character? Why or why not?
5. Explain the irony in the following statement Daisy made in reference to Jordan: "I think the home influence will be very good for her."
6. At this point in the novel, what is your impression of Gatsby? How did the author want you to feel about Gatsby?

Questions for Discussion:

1. Of the characters you have met so far, which do you find most likable? Which do you find least likable? Why?
2. Nick describes Gatsby as having an "extraordinary gift for home." Discuss what this might mean. Do you think it is a positive or negative attribute? Why?

Literary Device: Point of View

Point of view is the voice telling the story. The author may choose to narrate the story from a third-person point of view. In this case, an omniscient ("all-knowing") narrator impersonally relates everything about the story. On the other hand, the author might have one of the characters be the narrative voice. In this instance, a first-person narrator tells the story through his or her eyes.

Who is telling the story?

Do you think this person is a good choice for the narrator? Why or why not?

Chapter I (cont.)

Literary Element: Characterization

The first chapter provided a great deal of information about some of the main characters in the novel. F. Scott Fitzgerald used the adjectives “arrogant,” “gruff” and “sturdy” in descriptions of Tom Buchanan. These descriptive words encapsulated the man’s appearance and character. Use the chart below to do the same for other characters in the book. You can use words directly from the novel or words of your own.

Characters	Adjectives		
Tom	arrogant	gruff	sturdy
Daisy			
Jordan			
Nick			

Writing Activity:

Choose someone you know and encapsulate his or her appearance and character in three adjectives.

Character	Adjectives		

Now incorporate these adjectives into a character sketch of that person.

CHAPTER II

Vocabulary: Draw a line from each word on the left to its definition on the right. Then use the numbered words to fill in the blanks in the sentences below.

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|------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. languid | a. continuing without interruption |
| 2. incessant | b. making or having a harsh sound |
| 3. hauteur | c. arrogance, haughty manner |
| 4. strident | d. indefinite, vague |
| 5. contiguous | e. inactive, sluggish |
| 6. oculist | f. touching, in contact |
| 7. indeterminate | g. eye doctor |

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1. Consult a(n) _____ if you think you need glasses.
2. The _____ of the newcomer repelled those in the room.
3. The ballplayers felt _____ due to the extreme heat.
4. We refused to purchase land for our new home if it was _____ to commercial property.
5. Her anger was reflected by her _____ voice.
6. At first the sounds from the bell tower pleased us, but the _____ clamor finally gave us a headache.
7. The flavor of the stew was enhanced by a(n) _____ spice, which was a carefully guarded secret of the chef.

Questions:

1. Describe the "valley of ashes." What effect do you think living in such an area might have on a person?
2. Who was Mr. Wilson and what was he like? In what way did he seem suited to live in the "valley of ashes"?
3. Describe Myrtle. In what way was she in complete contrast to her surroundings?
4. Why do you think Tom chose Myrtle as his mistress? Do you think Tom would ever marry Myrtle? Explain.

Chapter II (cont.)

5. Commenting upon the party in Manhattan, Nick said, "I was within and without, simultaneously enchanted and repelled by the inexhaustible variety of life." What did he mean?
6. Why did Tom break Myrtle's nose? What did this reveal about Tom?

Question for Discussion:

Fitzgerald described the billboard depicting the eyes of Doctor T.J. Eckleburg as brooding "over the solemn dumping ground." Why do you think the author chose to place this fantastic billboard in the "valley of ashes"?

Literary Device: Simile

A simile is a comparison between two unlike objects, using the words "like" or "as."
For example:

This is the valley of ashes — a fantastic farm where ashes grow like wheat into ridges and hills and grotesque gardens . . .

What is being compared?

In what way does this comparison aid the description?

Writing Activity:

Imagine that you are Myrtle. Write a diary entry that describes the events and your reactions to what occurred in Chapter II.

CHAPTER III

Vocabulary: Synonyms are words with similar meanings. Draw a line from each word in column A to its synonym in column B. Then use the words in column A to fill in the blanks in the sentences below.

<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>
1. permeate	a. uniformity
2. convivial	b. obese
3. corpulent	c. festive
4. innuendo	d. insinuation
5. homogeneity	e. extravagance
6. prodigality	f. spread
7. subterfuges	g. evasions

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1. _____ people have a shorter life expectancy than those who are slim.
2. The tempting aromas of the bakery _____ the surrounding area.
3. Everyone was in a(n) _____ mood as the holiday approached.
4. His _____ created an atmosphere of distrust among the workers.
5. Wearing similar clothes and hairstyles, the students at the Junior Class dance presented an appearance of _____.
6. The little boy's mother saw through his _____ and punished him for breaking the vase.
7. The _____ of my friend's gift was entirely unwarranted, making me worry that I could never afford to repay him in a similar way.

Questions:

1. Why do you think the author provided the reader with rumors rather than facts about Gatsby?
2. What was Nick's impression of Gatsby after their meeting at the party?
3. Describe the ways in which Gatsby was different from his guests.
4. Why do you think the author included the description of the automobile accident?

Chapter III (cont.)

5. What did the conversation with Nick about rotten drivers reveal about Jordan's personality?
6. Why is it important that the reader accept Nick's statement, "I am one of the few honest people that I have ever known"?

Questions for Discussion:

1. Why do you think Gatsby chose Jordan as a confidante? What might be the subject of his "simply amazing" confidence?
2. Would you enjoy attending one of Gatsby's parties? Why or why not?

Literary Elements: Setting and Atmosphere

The setting is the time and place in which events occur. The author often used the setting to affect the atmosphere, or mood, of the story.

What was the setting at the beginning of Chapter III?

Find three descriptions of this setting that helped to create the lively atmosphere at the beginning of the party.

In what way did the atmosphere change as the party progressed?

Chapter III (cont.)**Writing Activity: .**

Through the use of sensory words, Fitzgerald allowed the reader to capture the mood of Gatsby's party. In the chart below, write examples of language from this chapter that evoked the senses of smell, sight, hearing, touch and taste.

Gatsby's Party	
Sight	
Hearing	
Touch	
Taste	
Smell	

Use sensory images to write a description of an event in your life. You can describe a party, a sporting event, a picnic, a vacation or any other event that stands out in your mind.

CHAPTER IV

Vocabulary: Use the context of each sentence to help you determine the meaning of each underlined word. Then check your description with a dictionary definition.

1. The sporadic rainfall caused the officials to halt the tennis tournament several times during the day.

Your definition _____

Dictionary definition _____

2. The accountant was punctilious in making sure that my tax return adhered to the present tax laws.

Your definition _____

Dictionary definition _____

3. The rat was placed at the entrance of a miniature labyrinth through which he had to wend his way in order to get the cheese.

Your definition _____

Dictionary definition _____

4. The young girl found the man's frequent stares so disconcerting that she complained to her parents.

Your definition _____

Dictionary definition _____

5. My house plant luxuriated in its new pot after I transplanted it and gave it water.

Your definition _____

Dictionary definition _____

6. The professor was so given to abstraction that he often forgot the subject of his lecture.

Your definition _____

Dictionary definition _____

7. The juxtaposition of the two cars at the automobile show allowed for an easy comparison of their designs.

Your definition _____

Dictionary definition _____

8. When the boy bit into the succulent peach, the juice dripped down his chin.

Your definition _____

Dictionary definition _____

Chapter IV (cont.)

Questions:

1. Fitzgerald began Chapter IV with a lengthy list of Gatsby's party guests. Why do you think he devoted so much space to this list of names?
2. How was Gatsby's car a reflection of his personality?
3. Why did Gatsby tell Nick something about his past? What was Nick's reaction?
4. Why do you think the author included a character like Meyer Wolfsheim in the book?
5. What was Daisy's state of mind right before her wedding? How did she act toward Tom right after the honeymoon? What did this reveal about Daisy?
6. Why did Gatsby want Daisy to see his house?

Questions for Discussion:

Now that he has learned all this new information about Gatsby, do you think Nick's feelings about him have changed? Have your feelings about Gatsby changed? Explain.

Literary Device: Flashback

A flashback is an effective literary device in which a scene or series of scenes show events that happened at an earlier time. The flashback is inserted into a current situation. At what point in Chapter IV did the flashback begin? What purpose did it serve?

Writing Activity:

After discovering that Gatsby bought the house in West Egg just so he could be close to Daisy, Nick said, "He came alive to me, delivered suddenly from the womb of his purposeless splendor." Describe in your own words what he meant by this.

CHAPTER V

Vocabulary: Synonyms are words with similar meanings. Use the context to select the synonym for the underlined words in each sentence.

1. I felt harrowed after spending two hours caught in traffic.
a. distressed b. tired c. bored d. elated
2. The warranty is useless since the corporation is defunct.
a. alive b. dead c. prosperous d. expanding
3. As a result of his abortive attempt to climb the tree, Tommy was rushed to the hospital.
a. successful b. brave c. unsuccessful d. odd
4. The villain's demoniac behavior exemplified all that is evil.
a. childish b. silly c. weird d. fiendish
5. The restaurant manager refused to admit the disheveled stranger.
a. affluent b. stylish c. popular d. untidy
6. The nebulous statement caused confusion among the listeners.
a. lengthy b. unclear c. flowery d. distant

Questions:

1. How did Gatsby behave prior to his meeting with Daisy? Why was his choice of clothing for his meeting with her significant? What did this indicate about his feelings?
2. Why did Nick think Gatsby offered him some extra work? How did Nick react? What did this reveal about Gatsby? About Nick?
3. How did Gatsby feel as he was showing Daisy his house? How do you think Daisy felt? What was the significance of the pile of shirts?
4. What did Nick mean when he wondered about Gatsby whether the "colossal significance of that light had now vanished forever"?
5. What conclusions might be drawn from the many phone calls Gatsby received?

Chapter V (cont.)

Literary Element: Theme

A theme in a novel is a central idea or message that is carried throughout the book. One important theme in this novel is the difference between the pursuit of a dream and the realization of it. How does the following passage illustrate this theme? Find other sections of the chapter that embody the theme of dream versus reality.

There must have been moments even that afternoon when Daisy tumbled short of his dreams — not through her own fault, but because of the colossal vitality of his illusion.

Literary Device: Symbolism

A symbol in literature is an object that represents an idea or a set of ideas. What do you think the defunct mantelpiece clock symbolized?

Writing Activity:

The reader does not know what is actually said between Daisy and Gatsby after Nick leaves them alone in his house. Write the dialogue that you imagine actually occurred between the two characters.

CHAPTER VI

Vocabulary: Draw a line from each word on the left to its definition on the right. Then use the numbered words to fill in the blanks in the sentences below.

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| 1. euphemism | a. intended to cause delay |
| 2. dilatory | b. slyly treacherous |
| 3. ramifications | c. attractive in a vulgar way |
| 4. meretricious | d. pompous, inflated |
| 5. insidious | e. consequences |
| 6. ineffable | f. too great to be described in words |
| 7. turgid | g. mild expression in place of one that is unpleasantly direct or harsh |
| 8. lethargic | h. sluggish, dull |

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- The extreme heat made everyone feel _____.
- The team's _____ tactics extended the game for an extra hour.
- The _____ effect of air pollution on peoples' health is often not known for years.
- Consider the _____ of your action before you sign the contract.
- In the Victorian era, the _____ "in a family way" was used instead of the word "pregnant."
- No one was impressed by the politician's _____ prose and flashy clothing.
- He felt _____ sadness after the death of his father.
- The woman's _____ jewelry identified her as a person of wealth, but little taste.

Questions:

- How did Gatsby's story differ from the one he had described to Nick? Why do you think the author revealed the transformation of James Gatz into Jay Gatsby at this point in the novel?
- Who was Dan Cody, and what was his influence upon Gatsby? What did his lifestyle represent?

Chapter VI (cont.)

3. Why do you think Tom and his friends stopped at Gatsby's house for a drink? What does this visit reveal about Tom and about Gatsby?
4. What reason could Gatsby have for telling Tom that he knows Daisy?
5. Why did Daisy and Tom find Gatsby's party so unpleasant? Why did Gatsby also become uncomfortable at his own party?
6. What was Gatsby's criterion for measuring the success of his party?

Questions for Discussion:

1. When Nick told Gatsby that you cannot repeat the past, Gatsby responded, "Why of course you can!" Do you agree with Nick or Gatsby? Explain.
2. Before Gatsby first kissed Daisy, he saw an imaginary ladder that led to a secret place above the trees where "he could suck on the pap of life." But Gatsby knew that he had to climb the ladder alone. Instead, he kissed Daisy and "forever wed his unutterable visions to her perishable breath." What did the imaginary ladder represent? Why do you think that kissing Daisy precluded his climbing the imaginary ladder? Do you think he made the right choice? Explain.

Writing Activity:

Once again consider the theme of the difference between dreams and reality. Write about a personal disillusionment — a time when you were disappointed with something that you had imagined to be wonderful.

Prediction:

How do you think Daisy's reaction to Gatsby's party will affect their relationship in the future? Explain why you feel this way.

CHAPTER VII

Vocabulary: Choose a word from the Word Box to fill in the blank in each sentence below.

WORD BOX	
disquieting	expostulations
incredulous	magnanimous
portentous	presumptuous
truculent	vicariously

1. The child had a(n) _____ look on his face when the doctor said that the injection would not hurt.
2. After the lights went out, I found the silence in the house _____.
3. Dark clouds are _____ omens of impending storms.
4. I travelled to France _____ when I saw your slides and read your journal.
5. An honorary degree was given to the _____ donor of the college's new library.
6. The actress found the reporter's questions about her personal life to be _____.
7. In spite of my _____, my friend insisted on giving me his overcoat to wear as we sat in the cold, windy stadium.
8. The fighter's knees shook when he saw the _____ expression on his opponent's face.

Questions:

1. In what ways was the opening scene in the Buchanans' house reminiscent of the opening scene in Chapter I? Why do you think the author created this parallel?
2. What did Tom mean by his apparently pointless remark, "You can buy anything at a drugstore nowadays"?
3. Compare George Wilson and Tom. What did each man learn about his wife and what was each man's reaction to this information?
4. Why was it so important to Gatsby that Daisy admit she never loved Tom? Did Daisy really know whom she loved? Explain.

Chapter VII (cont.)

5. What was the significance of Nick's thirtieth birthday?
6. At the end of this chapter, Nick left Gatsby standing near Daisy's house "watching over nothing." What did this suggest about Gatsby and his dream?

Questions for Discussion:

1. What do you think Tom and Daisy were saying to each other in the kitchen? Do you think that Tom knew that Daisy was driving the "death car" at that time? Explain.
2. If you could use just one word to describe Gatsby, would that word be *fool* or *romantic*? Defend your choice.

Literary Element: Plot

The plot of a novel is the series of events that occur during the course of the story. The conflict — the central problem — is explained and developed in the rising action. The plot builds to a climax, the point of the reader's highest interest and greatest emotional involvement in the story. After the climax, the reader usually knows how the conflict will be resolved. The falling action of the novel consists of the events leading to the resolution, the story's final outcome.

What is the central conflict in the novel?

When does the climax occur in Chapter VII?

How do you think the conflict will be resolved? Support your answer with proof from the novel.

Writing Activity:

In a few paragraphs describe how you would end the novel. Be sure to answer the following questions: What happens to Gatsby and to George Wilson? Does Daisy stay with Tom? Does she admit that she was driving the car that killed Myrtle? Does Nick continue his relationship with Jordan?

CHAPTER VIII

Vocabulary: Circle the synonyms for the underlined words in each word group. Then write an original sentence for each of the underlined words.

- | | | | | |
|------------------------|---------------|--------------|------------|------------|
| 1. <u>garrulous</u> | loquacious | retiring | stout | talkative |
| 2. <u>fortuitously</u> | intentionally | accidentally | luckily | happily |
| 3. <u>amorphous</u> | shapeless | formless | angular | structural |
| 4. <u>corroborate</u> | question | forget | verify | confirm |
| 5. <u>redolent</u> | fragrant | noisy | aromatic | scenic |
| 6. <u>ravenously</u> | joyfully | hungrily | listlessly | greedily |

Questions:

1. How did the author achieve a somber mood on the first page of Chapter VIII?
2. What did the coming of fall portend? How were the seasons of the year important to the construction of this book? Explain.
3. Nick told Gatsby, "You're worth the whole damn bunch put together." Why did he pay Gatsby this compliment? In what way did this statement show a change in Nick from the beginning of the novel?
4. What did Doctor T.J. Eckleburg represent to Wilson? What did this say about his mental state?
5. How do you think Wilson knew that the yellow car belonged to Gatsby?

Question for Discussion:

At the beginning of the novel, Nick said, "Gatsby turned out all right at the end; it was what preyed on Gatsby, what foul dust floated in the wake of his dreams that temporarily closed out my interest in the abortive sorrows and short-winded elations of men." Now that you have completed most of the novel, how would you interpret that statement?

Chapter VIII (cont.)

Literary Devices:

- I. *Personification* — A figure of speech in which an inanimate object is endowed with human qualities. For example:

The track curved and now it was going away from the sun, which, as it sank lower, seemed to spread itself in benediction over the vanishing city where she had drawn her breath.

What object is personified?

Why do you think the author used this literary device?

- II. *Irony* — An event or series of events that turn out to be the opposite of what was expected. What was ironic about Gatsby's life and death?
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Writing Activity:

A eulogy is a speech or writing in praise of a person, usually in honor of a deceased person. Write a eulogy for Gatsby.

CHAPTER IX

Vocabulary: Draw a line from each word on the left to its definition on the right. Then use the numbered words to fill in the blanks in the sentences below.

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|-----------------|---|
| 1. surmise | a. accidental, added extrinsically |
| 2. commensurate | b. helped to satisfy dishonorable ambitions |
| 3. adventitious | c. endless |
| 4. provincial | d. narrow, confined to a small locality |
| 5. interminable | e. guess |
| 6. pandered | f. equal in measure or extent |

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1. His _____ outlook provided amusement for his sophisticated city friends.
2. The ceremony was so boring it seemed _____.
3. Having _____ to the candidates' wishes during the campaign, Bob was disappointed that he did not get a job after the election.
4. The cool air and humidity provide English women with their _____ good complexions.
5. If you see dark clouds over the bay, it is safe to _____ that rain will follow shortly.
6. The reward offered is _____ with the deed to be performed.

Questions:

1. Why did Nick take full responsibility for Gatsby's funeral?
2. What was the significance of Klipspringer's telephone conversation with Nick?
3. In what way was the schedule Henry Gatz showed Nick consistent with the character of the adult Gatsby?
4. Who attended Gatsby's funeral? How do you think "Owl-eyes" found out about the funeral?
5. Why did Nick return to the West? What type of person are we led to believe would survive in the East?
6. What was the purpose of Nick's final meeting with Jordan?
7. Why did Nick refer to Tom and Daisy as "careless people"?

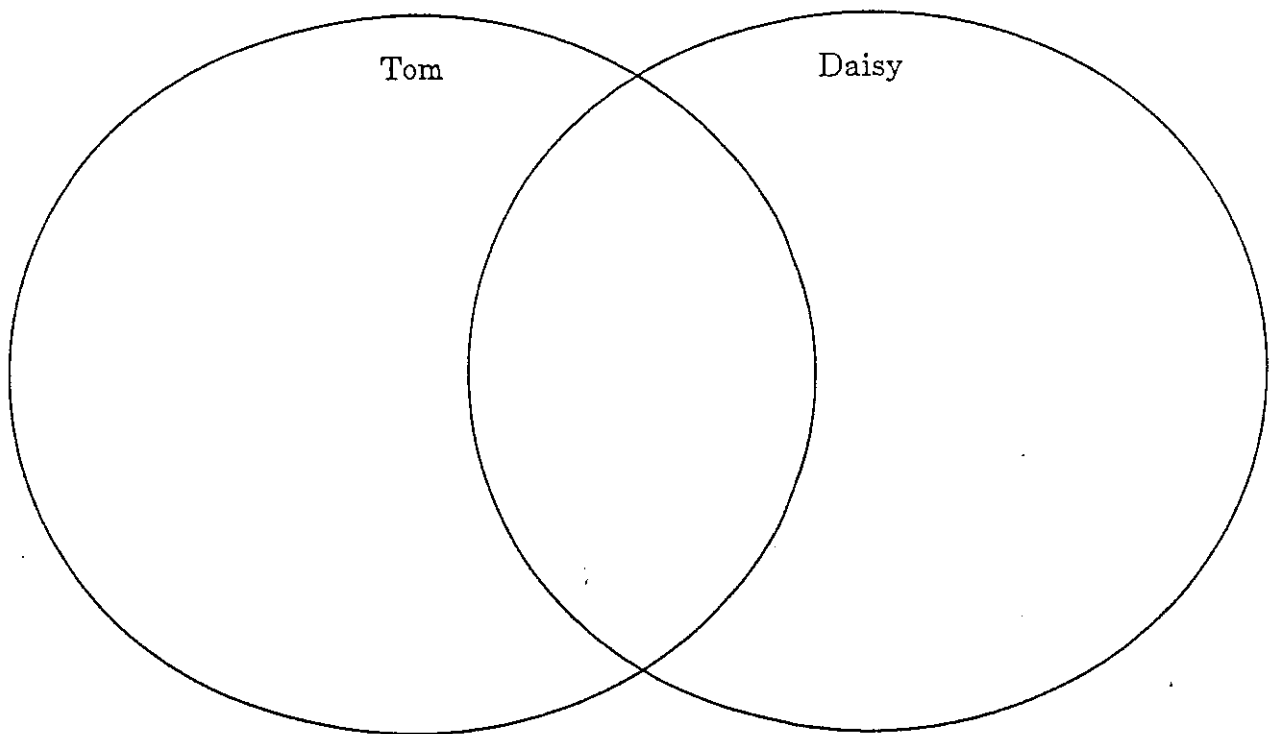
Chapter IX (cont.)

Questions for Discussion:

Who do you think was most responsible for Gatsby's death? Do you think his death was a tragedy? Why do you think the author had Daisy and Tom receive no punishment for their acts of homicide and adultery?

Literary Element: Characterization

At the beginning of the novel, it seemed that Tom and Daisy were not suited for each other; however, by the end of the book the reader could more readily see the reason why they stayed together. Use the Venn Diagram below to show the similarities and differences between these two characters.



Writing Activity:

There were two movie versions of *The Great Gatsby*. Suppose that you were in charge of casting a new film version of the novel. In a report to the director, indicate who you would choose to play the major characters and why. Would you make any changes from the book to the film? Explain.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Gatsby is a bootlegger. In many ways he is vulgar and pretentious. Yet, the author skillfully makes him the object of our sympathy. How has this been accomplished? What do you think Fitzgerald meant in his title when he suggested that Gatsby was “great”?
2. Locate and read a short story by Fitzgerald entitled “Absolution” found in *The Stories of F. Scott Fitzgerald*. This story contains information about the childhood of a Gatsby-like character. In fact, Fitzgerald had originally wanted to include the information in *The Great Gatsby*. After reading the story, discuss whether or not this information should have been included in the novel.
3. The “flapper” era has been judged by some people as the age of the emancipated woman. With bobbed hair and short skirts, women were no longer restricted to their former roles. Consider the main female characters in this novel — Daisy Buchanan and Jordan Baker. In what ways did they flaunt tradition and exercise independence? Did Fitzgerald want the reader to judge their emancipation as real or illusory? Explain.
4. The success of this book is largely due to the use of the modified first-person narrator. Nick functions both as a part of the action and as an objective commentator. Explain why this is such an effective device.
5. Many critics feel that this book is autobiographical to a great extent. Read about Fitzgerald’s life and that of his wife Zelda. See if you can find parallels between their lives and situations in the novel.
6. One of the main themes of this novel is how illusion is mistaken for reality. Illustrate how this is true in the various party scenes, in the empty gestures and speeches of the main characters and in the basic fabric of Jay Gatsby’s life.
7. A symbol in a novel is a concrete object that represents an entire cluster of ideas. What do you think the eyes of Dr. T. J. Eckleburg symbolized? What other objects functioned symbolically in this novel?
8. In many parts of this novel, Fitzgerald contrived the weather to reflect and reinforce the mood of his characters. Skim through the book to find examples of places where the weather reflected the moment.
9. In this novel the false morality of self-interest superseded Judeo-Christian morality. Describe the illegal or immoral acts of the characters in this book. Did the characters have any sense of guilt for their actions? Why or why not?
10. Until the stock market crash of 1929 and the subsequent Great Depression of the 1930’s, the American Dream was alive and well. It was widely believed that an enterprising young person, from whatever station in life he came, could rise by his own initiative to a life of wealth and accomplishment. How did Fitzgerald’s story of Jay Gatsby foreshadow the Great Depression and the death of the American Dream?
11. Do you think this book had any heroes or villains? If so, who might they be and what made them heroic or villainous. If not, what might Fitzgerald be saying about heroism and villainy in the modern world?