

The Great Gatsby – Study Guide

Part 1: Pre-Reading – please complete this section BEFORE you read the novel!

A. Context: In order to better understand a book's purpose, it is often helpful to have some understanding of the author's perspective/historical influences. Do a little background research in these two areas and record SIGNIFICANT information below.

1. Author Biography:

I. _____

II. _____

III. _____

IV. _____

V. _____

2. Social Context of the 1920's:

I. _____

II. _____

III. _____

IV. _____

V. _____

B. Now that you've finished researching the context of *The Great Gatsby*, complete the **FIRST COLUMN** of discussion questions below. Then, after you've read the novel, re-evaluate the questions and respond in the final column.

Discussion Question	Pre-Reading Response	Post-Reading Response
1. From the title alone, what are your thoughts about the novel's themes and plot?		
2. What is the American Dream? Does the Dream change from era to era?		
3. Does a first-person narrator influence the novel's structure, integrity, credibility, and reader response?		
4. Do you find it difficult to empathize with characters who are empty, shallow, and/or completely selfish? Why or why not?		
5. Discuss a time when you felt like an outsider and tried to come to terms with this feeling, either by concentrating on another person or by turning your thoughts inward.		

Part 2: Reading – complete this section as you read the novel!

A. Character Chart – identify pertinent information about the following characters:

1. Nick Carraway	
2. Jay Gatsby	
3. Daisy Buchanan	
4. Tom Buchanan	
5. Jordan Baker	
6. Myrtle Wilson	
7. George Wilson	
8. Meyer Wolfsheim	

B. Chapter Questions – respond to the following questions in complete sentences

Chapter 1

1. How does the narrator describe Gatsby?

2. From where did the narrator come and why?

3. Describe the narrator's house.

4. Describe the Buchanan's house.
5. How does Nick know Daisy and Tom?
6. What is your impression of Tom in Chapter 1?
7. What kind of person is Daisy?
8. What did Miss Baker tell Nick about Tom?
9. When asked about her daughter, what does Daisy say?
10. How is Gatsby introduced into the novel?

Chapter 2

1. What is the "valley of ashes"?
2. What are the "eyes of Dr. T. J. Eckleburg"?
3. Who did Tom take Nick to meet?
4. What did Mrs. Wilson buy while she was out with Tom and Nick?

5. Where did they go? What was at 158th Street?

6. Identify Catherine and Mr. & Mrs. McKee.

7. What does Mr. McKee tell Nick about Gatsby?

8. What reason did Myrtle give for marrying George Wilson?

9. What did Tom do to Myrtle when she mentioned Daisy's name?

Chapter 3

1. Describe Gatsby's wealth. List some of the things that represent wealth.

2. What kind of people come to Gatsby's parties?

3. Why did Nick Carraway go to the party?

4. How does Nick meet Gatsby?

5. What are some of the stories about Gatsby?

6. Is Gatsby a "phony"?

7. Describe Nick's relationship with Jordan.

Chapter 4

1. Who is Klipspringer?

2. What does Gatsby tell Nick about himself?

3. What "matter" did Gatsby have Jordan Baker discuss with Nick?

4. What does Mr. Wolfshiem tell Nick about Gatsby?

5. What does Jordan tell Nick about Daisy, Gatsby and Tom?

Chapter 5

1. Describe the meeting between Gatsby and Daisy. Why was he so nervous?

2. How long did it take Gatsby to make the money to buy the mansion?

3. Why did Gatsby want Daisy to see the house and his clothes?

4. What had the green light on the dock meant to Gatsby?

5. What had Gatsby turned Daisy into in his own mind?

Chapter 6

1. What is Gatsby's real history? Where is he from, and what is his name?
2. What did Dan Cody do for Gatsby?
3. What is Daisy's opinion of Gatsby's party? How does this affect him?
4. What does Gatsby want from Daisy?

Chapter 7

1. What was Gatsby's reaction to Daisy's child?
2. What did Wilson do to Myrtle and what was his reason for doing this?
3. Why do the five drive into the city on such a hot afternoon?
4. What does Gatsby think about Daisy's relationship with Tom?
5. What is Daisy's reaction to both men?
6. What happens on the way home from New York?
7. Describe how the following people react to Myrtle's death:
 - Wilson:

- Tom:
- Nick:
- Gatsby:

8. What is the true relationship between Daisy and Tom?

9. What happens between Nick and Jordan Baker?

10. What does Nick say about people like Daisy and Tom?

Chapter 8

1. What does Gatsby tell Nick about his past? Is it true?

2. What does Michaelis believe caused Myrtle to run?

3. Why did she run?

4. Why does Wilson believe that Gatsby killed Myrtle?

5. What does Wilson do?

Chapter 9

1. Why couldn't Nick get anyone to come to Gatsby's funeral?

2. Who is Henry C. Gatz?

3. What is the book Henry Gatz shows Nick? Why is it important to the novel?

Part 3: Post-Reading – complete this section after having FULLY read the novel!

A. Explain the meaning of the following symbols within *The Great Gatsby*:

1. The green light: _____

2. Gatsby's house: _____

3. The Eyes of Dr. TJ Eckleburg: _____

4. West Egg / East Egg: _____

5. The Valley of Ashes: _____

B. Explain the following allusions within *The Great Gatsby*. First, explain their literal meaning. Then, explain what their inclusion adds to your understanding of the text.

Allusion	Meaning	Connection to Text
1. The Rise of the Coloured Empires		

2. Midas, Morgan, Maecenas		
3. Belasco		
4. Katspaugh		
5. 1919 World Series		
6. Kant		
7. Platonic conception		
8. Trimalchio		
9. Clay's <i>Economics</i>		
10. Castle Rackrent		

C. Identify three themes that you've identified in *The Great Gatsby*

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

D. Go back to the Pre-Reading section of the packet and complete the Post-Reading Response column of the Discussion Questions chart

THE END!