

GUIDANCE FOR SUMMER READING

Some Study Questions for *The Great Gatsby*

Junior Composition Honors

THROUGHOUT THE SUMMER, YOU'RE RESPONSIBLE FOR CHECKING RESOURCES AND UPDATES AT: www.greenvalleyhs.org/library

PRE-READING

1. Year after year, this novel is among the most popular at GVHS. What makes a book, several decades old, so popular?
2. What were some important cultural values in the 1920's? Why these values?
3. How important is having money to one's happiness?
4. How important is romantic love to one's happiness?
5. What are the key words in Thomas D'Invilliers' epigram (on title page)
6. How would you describe the "American dream"? Do you think it still exists in 2011? Why or why not?

CHAPTER 1

1. Who is the narrator? What kind of person does he seem to be? Is he honest? Is he a reliable narrator?
2. This chapter introduces some important characters. How does Nick react to each of them?

CHAPTER 2

1. Consider the "valley of ashes," where it's located and what it's like. How is fire important as a metaphor?
2. What kind of people are George and Myrtle Wilson? What kind of relationship do they seem to have?
3. What is their relationship to their environment?

CHAPTER 3

1. Is Nick an objective observer, does he make judgments about people, or both?
2. What is Nick's perception of Gatsby both when he meets him and after he has met him?
3. What does the party reveal about the guests and about Gatsby?

CHAPTER 4

1. Why have so many rumors been told about Gatsby? Why are these rumors important to Gatsby's characterization?
2. How truthful does Gatsby seem when we hear him talk? Why?
3. What is the significance of Meyer Wolfsheim's name, his manner, and his role in the story?
4. What impression do we have of Daisy at this point? Why?

CHAPTER 5

1. Why is Gatsby so good to Nick?
2. What role does the weather play?
3. What role do colors play?

CHAPTER 6

1. Why does Fitzgerald wait until now to tell the story of Jay Gatz?
2. What does this chapter tell us about the relationship between Gatsby and Tom Buchanan?
3. What is a good example of how Gatsby measures success?
4. What is some good evidence that Gatsby is a romantic idealist?

CHAPTER 7

1. In what way has the relationship between Gatsby and Daisy changed?
2. Pay special attention to interactions between Gatsby, Daisy, and Tom. What is revealed about how their relationships have changed and how they're changing?
3. Compare these two relationships: Gatsby and Daisy, Tom Buchanan and George Wilson, Gatsby and Tom.
4. Why does Nick mention his birthday? What's the significance of his age?
5. Who knows what about the car and driver when Myrtle is killed?
6. What other events and interactions could this tragedy set up? Make some predictions.

CHAPTER 8

1. How is time and season important?
2. How is Dan Cody significant?
3. Compare Nick's opinion of Gatsby at the beginning and end of the novel.
4. How is T. J. Eckleberg significant?

CHAPTER 9

1. What does Nick do for the dead Gatsby? Why?
2. Why does Fitzgerald wait until now to show Gatsby's daily schedule?
3. At the end, what is Nick's opinion of Daisy and Tom?

POST-READING

1. Which characters wind up being sympathetic?
2. Which characters wind up being unsympathetic?
3. What is Fitzgerald's view of the "American dream"?
4. In Thomas D'Invilliers' epigram, has your opinion of key words changed?
5. What can we learn from this novel in understanding and living in our present difficult times?
6. After watching a movie version of *The Great Gatsby*, how does it compare to the novel?
7. Having read the novel, what might be some viable thesis statements?

Adapted from:
www.teachervision.fen.com

Many other resources exist online which provide plot summaries and analysis. Use these appropriately. Remember that *there is never a substitute for your own personal, analytical reading.*

RESPONSE TO SUMMER READING

Reading Journal for *The Great Gatsby*

Junior Composition Honors

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1. Obtain a copy of this book at a local library or bookstore.
2. Your journal is due at the beginning of class on Tuesday, August 30, 2011.
3. Journal Description:
As you read the book, you are to complete journal entries. Entries should be well thought out, with relevant and detailed explanations, and must demonstrate a deeper understanding of what you read. Each entry should be about a paragraph in length. All entries must be mechanically correct, HAND WRITTEN, and LEGIBLE.
4. Required Entries: 25 ENTRIES
5. On the reverse side of this sheet, there are questions for pre-reading, chapter questions, and post-reading. Your journal should include responses based on the questions provided. Think of these questions as guides for your reading.
6. You must complete 2 entries for each section of the book (nine chapters, pre-reading, and post-reading). This will total 22 entries. Select the remaining 3 entries from any section; however, you may want to pay special attention to chapter 7.
7. Each journal entry should include:
 - a. Date you read
 - b. Chapter you read
 - c. Pages you read
 - d. Handwritten Response
8. Sample Journal Entry:

DATE READ	CHAPTER	PAGE NOS.	HANDWRITTEN RESPONSE TO READING
<i>June 6, 2011</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1-15</i>	<i>O'Brien chooses to end the first section of the novel with this sentence. He provides excellent visual details of what each soldier in Vietnam must physically carry day-to-day, making you feel the physical weight of simple survival. When combining the emotional weight of loved ones at home, fear of death, and responsibility for other fighting men, you begin to understand what soldiers in Vietnam dealt with every day. This quote sums up the confusion the men feel about the reasons they are fighting and how they cling to the only certainty—things they have to carry—in a confusing world where normal rules are suspended.</i>