



THE GREAT GATSBY READING GUIDE

CH. 1-4



I will be randomly collecting and/or checking your progress--be prepared to show your answers to me or turn it in on any given day. Also be prepared to orally answer/discuss any of these questions. Keep up with the questions! *Please note – if you read ahead, DO NOT give away any key plot points!*

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. Discuss the background and family history of Nick Carraway, and tell why he has come to the East. What does he mean when he says, “I’m inclined to reserve all judgments?”
4. Identify Daisy and Tom Buchanan. How does Nick know them?
5. Identify Jordan Baker.
6. What are your initial impressions of the Buchanans and Miss Baker? Why?
7. What is the significance of the phone call Tom receives? Which character explains the significance of the phone call to Nick?
8. What does Daisy mean when she says that she hopes her little girl will be a fool because “that’s the best thing a girl can be in this world, a beautiful little fool?”
9. When does Nick first see Gatsby? What does he observe Gatsby doing?

Two of the novel’s major themes are introduced in this chapter. As you read, pay attention to which characters and situations illustrate the themes.

- *the carelessness, irresponsibility, and corruption of the very rich*
- *the futility of trying to recapture the past*

Chapter 2

1. Describe the “valley of ashes” (the wasteland) between West Egg and New York City.
2. Contrast the green light at the end of Chapter 1 and the gray images in the Valley of ashes in Chapter 2. How is Fitzgerald using colors to build/support the themes of his novel?
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?
6. How is Myrtle’s “dream world” apartment different from her real life? What is her life like with George?
7. What further information does this chapter reveal about Gatsby?
8. Identify and describe Catherine. What does Catherine tell Nick about Daisy’s relationship with Tom? Why does this surprise Nick?
9. What fight takes place between Tom and Myrtle near the end of the chapter?

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 is the significance of the conversation that Nick and Jordan have with him in the library?
4. What rumor has been in circulation about Gatsby?
5. How does Nick finally meet Gatsby? How is Gatsby different from what Nick expected?
6. What did Nick say took up most of his time that summer? How does he feel in New York City?
7. What does Nick remember about Jordan Baker? What is his opinion of an attitude toward her?
8. Refer back to the themes provided in the chapter one questions. What evidence of Fitzgerald's major themes do we find in chapter three?

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? Does his opinion clarify or confuse your own assessment of Gatsby? Explain.
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?

The Great Gatsby Chapter 1-4 Review

On a separate sheet of paper, please choose **one** significant quotation from each chapter so far and write it on the left side of the page (with the page number). On the right side of the paper, write your reactions to the quote. Tell why it is significant – to the story, to you as a reader, etc. Consider themes, symbolism, tone, setting, characterization, and more as possible things to look for when picking and analyzing quotes. Each answer in the right side column should be at least three complete sentences.