***The Great Gatsby***

* **These questions will be discussed in class, and names may be drawn randomly to contribute to whole class discussion, so EACH person must be prepared for ANY question/answer.**
* **TEXT support is ALWAYS important.**
* **Each section is also subject to an in-class quiz.**

**Discussion Questions Chapter 1**

1. What impression do you have of the narrator, Nick Carraway, from his narration and actions?
2. What do you learn about Tom Buchanan from his dress, mannerisms, dialogue, house, and actions?
3. What do you learn about Daisy Buchanan from her dress, dialogue, and body language?

**Discussion Questions Chapter 2**

1. In this chapter Fitzgerald writes about the Valley of Ashes. He also mentions dust and smoke (at the party). All three of these reappear numerous times throughout the novel. What could they symbolize?
2. A billboard with the eyes of Dr. T. J. Eckleburg is also an important symbol in this chapter. Describe the billboard. What do you think these eyes may represent? What would you think of if you looked up and saw this
3. How does Tom treat people in this chapter?
4. What does Tom’s treatment of other people show about HIS character?
5. How do you know that Tom respects Daisy more than Myrtle? (What does he do that shows this? Why?)
6. How would you describe the nature of the party at Tom’s apartment?
7. Catherine says Tom won’t marry Myrtle because Daisy is Catholic and doesn’t believe in divorce. Nick knows that is not true because Daisy is not Catholic. Who do you think started this lie and why?
8. Why might Tom not want to divorce Daisy?
9. Why did Myrtle marry George if she didn’t love him?

**Discussion Questions Chapter 3**

1. How is the party in Chapter 2 different from the party in Chapter 3? How is it similar?
2. Jordan and Nick run into a man in the library. What is this man so excited about? (p. 46)
3. What else does he notice?
4. Why might Gatsby have a huge library full of books he hasn’t read?
5. Why were most of the women fighting with their husbands by the end of the party?
6. What is your impression of Jay Gatsby? Give page numbers and specific support/examples.
7. Look back at the first paragraph of Chapter 3. This paragraph hints at one of the major themes of this novel. What is it and how does it hint to it?
8. What is Nick’s cardinal virtue? What is ironic about this?

**Discussion Questions Chapter 4**

1. List the details that Gatsby tells Nick about Gatsby’s life.
2. Gatsby is not telling the truth about his life. What are some parts of his story that might lead to suspicion?
3. What is your impression of the kind of person Mr. Wolfsheim is?
4. What does Jordan Baker reveal about Gatsby?
5. Explain what happened with their relationship after Gatsby and Daisy met.

**Discussion Questions Chapter 5**

1. Think of a time when you dreamed of getting something (an object, an award, a job, even a boyfriend/girlfriend). How can the attainment of the goal be less satisfying than the pursuit of the goal? Is it worth it in the end?
2. Gatsby finally met with Daisy, yet was afraid to talk to her at first. Why?
3. Speculate why Gatsby, now that he is with Daisy, is described as “running down like an over-wound clock.”
4. Daisy cries into a pile of Gatsby’s shirts during a tour of his house. Why is she crying?

**Discussion Questions** **Chapter 6**

1. More of Gatsby’s past is revealed in this chapter. It is effective that the truth is revealed after we have seen Gatsby’s present wealthy lifestyle, for it shows how Gatsby came to live in such a glamorous illusion. What truths do you learn about Gatsby in this chapter?
2. Compare Jay Gatsby to the American dream.
3. What does Gatsby not realize is happening? How does this relate to the fact that Gatsby is “new money”?
4. Does Daisy approve of Gatsby’s party? Why or why not?
5. What does Gatsby want Daisy to do?
6. What is the significance of Gatsby telling Nick about his and Daisy’s first kiss?

**Discussion Questions Chapter 7**

1. List the ways in which the opening scene at the Buchanan’s home is practically the same as it was in Chapter 1.
2. Why would Fitzgerald write such similar scenes? What is the point?
3. List ways that Daisy acts carelessly in this chapter.
4. When Daisy and Tom’s daughter Pammy visits with the adults, how does Gatsby react?
5. Daisy compares Gatsby to an advertisement of a man. Think of what the qualities of an advertisement are and then explain why Daisy thinks of Gatsby this way.
6. When the group is in New York at the Plaza Hotel, what is ironic about the music that filters up to them from the ballroom downstairs?
7. What happens when Daisy’s affair with Gatsby is brought to light?
8. How does Gatsby’s dream die?
9. Why is it appropriate that Nick’s turning 30 coincides with the end of Gatsby’s dream?
10. Gatsby tells Nick how Myrtle was run over. “It all happened in a minute, but it seemed to me that she wanted to speak with us, thought we were somebody she knew.” Why would Myrtle want to talk to them? Did she know who Daisy was? Did Daisy know who she was? Keep in mind that Nick, Tom, and Jordan had stopped by the garage earlier that day driving the same yellow car.
11. What makes Gatsby admirable at the end of this chapter?

**Discussion Questions Chapter 8**

1. Notice the foghorn and the kind of dreams Nick is having in the first paragraph of Chapter 8. What kind of mood do the two create for Chapter 8? (Remember mood is the feeling or emotional atmosphere of the writing.)
2. Gatsby tells Nick he left Daisy’s house at four in the morning after she turned off the light. What could turning off the light symbolize?
3. Gatsby reveals the truth of his and Daisy’s earlier relationship. He says he feels guilty because he rekindled their relationship under false pretenses. What does he mean by this?

*“But he didn’t despise himself and it didn’t turn out as he had imagined. He had intended, probably, to take what he could and go – but now he found that he had committed himself to the following of a grail. He knew that Daisy was extraordinary, but he didn’t realize just how extraordinary a ‘nice’ girl could be. She vanished into her house, into her rich, full life, leaving Gatsby – nothing. He felt married to her, that was all.”*

1. What does Fitzgerald mean by “the following of a grail?”
2. What does Fitzgerald mean by “He felt married to her, that was all?”
3. Why didn’t Daisy wait for Gatsby when he went overseas for the war?
4. George Wilson has no church, no God, no friends, “There wasn’t enough of him for his wife.” Explain what that quote means and why where George lives (the Valley of Ashes) is so appropriate for him.
5. How does George find out whose car hit Myrtle?
6. Wilson explains to Michaelis what he and Myrtle were talking about before she ran out. What was he saying to her?
7. What phone call is Gatsby waiting for?
8. Why does Fitzgerald describe George as an “ashen” figure right before he kills Gatsby?

**Discussion Questions Chapter 9**

1. Catherine lies to police saying Myrtle loved Wilson and never cheated on him. Nick says this shows character. How? What is the flaw in this?
2. Compare and contrast the image Mr. Gatz has of Gatsby to the image we as readers see.
3. Contrast the number of people at Gatsby’s parties to the number of people who attend his funeral. Who went to the funeral? What does this say about the people from his parties?
4. Why did Nick leave the East and move back to the Midwest?
5. Why do you think Daisy didn’t tell Tom that she was really the one driving the car that day?
6. Would you have told your husband? What are the pros and cons of telling or not telling?
7. A direct comparison is made between Gatsby and the settlers of this country – put it in your own words.

*Gatsby represents the changing society. The American dream has changed and is corrupting America like it did Gatsby. Wealth and his desire for a great love left him a criminal. The values and morals of Americans were changing during the roaring twenties. (Speakeasies, flappers, Wall Street, etc.)*

1. The nation’s early idealism (coming to America, the land of opportunity and freedom) is destroyed by its involvement in materialism. Compare this theme to the characters in the novel.