

The great gatsby chapter questions:

[Literature](#), [American Literature](#)



The Great Gatsby Chapter Questions: Pre-Reading Questions: 1. Why are we still reading a book written in the 1920's? What gives a book its longevity?

Because it holds some sort of high stature in literary society. A book that has lasted this long obviously contains within it a certain outlook or opinion

regarding factors of life during a period of time that is not easily accessible

through other forms. 2. How was the 1920's a reaction to WW1? Most of the

events of the 1920's were directly related to the economic, political and

social costs or effects of global war. 3. Some people think that having money

leads to happiness. Do you agree? Why or why not? What are the

advantages or disadvantages of being wealthy. I do not agree but I'd rather

cry sitting inside my Ferrari because having wealth entails or brings with it a

certain degree of power over ones fellows and enables one to enjoy higher

standards of living. This however does not necessarily result in happiness. 4.

What is the " American Dream"? Where did it originate, and how has it

changed over the centuries? The American Dream originally referred to the

5. Have you ever wanted to relive a moment from your past, to redo it?

Describe the situation. How and why would you change the past? No, life

goes on. Chapter 1 Questions: 1. Notice how many times Fitzgerald uses the

words hope, or dream. Why does he do this? He is highlighting his characters

aspirations to better things. 2. Nick starts the novel by relaying his father's

advice " Whenever you feel like criticizing anyone, just remember that all the people in this world haven't had the advantages that you've had. " List

Nick's advantages. Does he reserve judgement in the novel? Nick is from old

money and has had the opportunity to experience humanity at its worst

during the Great War, as well as sharing the ear of intellectual greatness

during his time at Yale. Nick does his best to treat everyone he meets unreservedly although, due to his role as narrator, he does draw conclusions about people's actions. However, he keeps said conclusions between himself and the reader, a novel act.

3. Pay attention to time. What is the day and year during the first scene at Daisy's house?
4. Describe Nick. What facts do you know about him, and what do you infer about him? What kind of a narrator do you think he will be? Nick so far seems to be intelligent and collected, leading me to believe he will flow cleanly through the mud that the plot might throw at him. He should make for an interesting narrator.
5. What images does the author use to describe Jordan Baker? What does it mean? He describes her with a raised chin, as if she were balancing something on it which was quite likely to fall. I believe he uses this description to indicate
6. How does Nick react to Jordan? He is stunned by her apparent self-sufficiency
7. What does Tom's behavior reveal about his character? Tom comes off as arrogantly self-satisfied, fooling himself in the belief of his pseudo-intellectuality. He is virulently racist and cares only for himself.
8. Why does Fitzgerald keep focusing the quality of Daisy's voice? Because it highlights her character. She draws attention to herself in order to distract her thoughts from the situation at hand.
9. What is Fitzgerald's message about elite society that is apparent in Tom's actions? (Commenting on values held by super rich) Fitzgerald is highlighting the poverty of wealth. This is an underlying theme throughout the novel. He is trying to show the reader that the certainty of status that wealth brings is a fallacy held only by those who entertain such thoughts.
10. Why does Daisy believe it is better for a woman to be ignorant? Daisy feels this way as a result of her experiences. In order

to protect herself from her husband's infidelity, she believes it is better for a woman to be ignorant, " a beautiful little fool". 11. How does Nick describe himself at the beginning of the novel? He describes himself as non-judgmental, and therefore privy to the secret grieves and unsought confidence of many different people. He is the type of person who others naturally attach to and whom they feel secure in sharing things with. 12. How does Nick describe Tom Buchanan? Nick describes Tom as arrogantly dominant, physically powerful and possessing a quarrelsome nature by virtue of his pseudo-intellectuality. 13. Who is Jordan Baker? Jordan Baker is a friend of Daisy. She is a professional golfer and knows Mr. Gatsby from his lavish parties. 14. What is Gatsby doing when Nick first sees him? He is standing on his lawn, looking towards the green light that indicates the position of the Buchanan's dock. 15. Describe the ambiguity in Nick's initial descriptions of Gatsby. Nick is foreshadowing the plots following of Gatsby's exploit. The ambiguity is necessary in order to reveal just enough to tempt us forward without ruining the story. 16. How does the tone of Nick's description of Tom reveal Nick's feelings about Tom? Nick's tone reveals that he doesn't feel too highly of Tom and can see through the facade of masculinity he promotes in his actions. 17. How would you describe Daisy's state of mind during dinner? What does she say that helps reveal her inner conflicts? She invites Tom into a conversation about her terrible history. She is obviously troubled and suffering from the strains of her crippled marriage, as she remarks that the best thing a girl could be is a beautiful little fool. This highlights her emotions towards her current situation. 18. Nick thinks that, given the state of their marriage, Daisy should leave Tom, but it is clear

to him that she has no intention of doing so. What indication is there that Tom and Daisy are closely linked despite their marital difficulties? When Nick meets Myrtle and she throws a party Tom hits her in the face because she keeps on saying Daisy's name. He did this because he still cares for Daisy. At the same party Catherine says that Tom and Myrtle cannot be together because Daisy is Catholic. Daisy is not really Catholic, Tom only told Myrtle that so he wouldn't have to leave Daisy. Daisy also continues to stay married to Tom and says she loves him at the conflict in the hotel suite between Gatsby and Tom.

19. What indications are there that the green light will have a powerful emotional significance to Gatsby? He is trembling as he stretches his arms out towards it, embracing it in a spiritual fashion that highlights its importance, or rather the importance of its geographic position.

Chapter 2 Questions:

1. Describe the "Valley of Ashes" where George and Myrtle live. What aspects of the setting imply that it is intended to have a symbolic meaning as well as a literal one? A swampland that was being filled in with garbage and ashes typified by greyness and filth in contrast to West and East Egg. A journey through the "slums", from rich West Egg to prosperous New York. Further highlight elitist values and society. Represents social and moral decay from the pursuit of wealth. Excessive materialism and consumerism. He describes it as a place where ashes grow like wheat, obviously implying it in a symbolic sense as it would be impossible in a literal sense.

2. Describe Mr. Wilson and Myrtle. Do they seem to fit into the setting? How does Myrtle's physical appearance reflect her character? Mr. Wilson is described as spiritless and anaemic, lacking in substance much like the Valley of Ashes. Myrtle is faintly stout and sensuous, projecting her sexuality. This highlights

the fact that she is willing to put out in order to gain status. 3. What more have you learned about Nick in this chapter? Is he similar or different than the people he spends his time with? Nick is seemingly different to his acquaintances yet our understanding of him is flawed due to his position as narrator of the novel. 4. Describe the violent act Tom committed against Myrtle. What does this reveal about him? How does this exemplify Fitzgerald's description of Tom in Chapter One? This reveals that he desires to keep his lives separate and is angered when this does not occur because it highlights his lack of control over things. This is an exemplification of Tom's arrogant self-confidence and haughtiness. 5. What does Myrtle gain with her relationship with Tom? Myrtle gains the pleasure of wealth, even though what she sees as wealth is rather petty, highlighting the poverty she suffers in the valley of ashes. 6. How does Nick meet Tom's mistress? Nick meets Tom's mistress at her husband's garage when he goes out for lunch with Tom. 7. How does Myrtle react to Tom's arrival? She orders her husband around, expressing her superiority, and licks her lips. This highlights her belief of control over the situation. She licks her lips because she looks forward to the fruits of Tom's arrival. 8. Describe George Wilson. How does he react to Tom's arrival? His eyes glisten hopefully, as the presence of Tom brings with it the hope of further prosperity. 9. How does Myrtle behave as the party progresses? She was putting on a show of exaggeration, unnaturally expressing herself. She clearly enjoys playing hostess and does so in a confident manner. 10. Compare the setting of the party in this chapter with the setting of the party in Chapter One. What party in Chapter One? Chapter 3 Questions: 1. What is the effect on the reader of the

repetition of the word "And"? It is to overwhelm the reader in regards to the amount of preparation put into Gatsby's parties and the meticulous care taken in arranging them. 2. Describe the two ways in which Nick differs from the other guests at Gatsby's party. He seems relatively interested in the host of the party and does not engage in the foul rumors or "romantic speculation" that are spread about him. 3. What does Nick think of Gatsby when he first meets him? He describes him as an elegant young rough-neck who picked his words with care. Nick felt reassured by Gatsby. 4. Describe the events and atmosphere of the party. The party is an elaborately planned sham of drinking. It is a grand show, a play to entertain the eyes of whoever cared to watch. 5. What does the owl-eyed man in the library find extraordinary about Gatsby's library? That it contains real books. 6. What does Nick learn about Jordan Baker after he has spent some time with her? That she is incredibly dishonest and careless. 7. Why does Fitzgerald describe the party (in the passage beginning "By seven o'clock the orchestra has arrived") in the present tense? Because he wishes to highlight the fact that the party is carried out in a particular fashion, that it is planned and that the plan flows through in a similar way every night a party is thrown. 8. How does Nick characterize the guests at Gatsby's party? How does Nick feel about most of these people? What description do we get of life during the Jazz Age? He characterizes them as attendees at an amusement park. He feels that their entire purpose is nothing but fulfillment of desire and immediate pleasure. This indicated to us that the Jazz Age was an age of "letting go", where traditional values and inhibitions were removed and people engaged in a "free-for-all". These were the teenage years of human

history. 9. Describe the ambiguity in Gatsby's character that strikes Nick. Nick sees Gatsby as an in-between, stuck between his façade of wealth and formality, and the reality of his nature as a "young rough-neck". Gatsby is unsure of where he is, only aware of where he wants to be. 10. Describe two incidents involving automobiles in this chapter. What role do automobiles seem to play in the novel so far? The first incident is the accident where the drunk crashes his automobile, shearing off one of its wheels. The second is Jordan's reckless driving. Automobiles seem to represent the dangers that carelessness bring. When living to fulfill immediate pleasure, there is only a small gap between fulfillment and eternal suffering. It further represents the removal of traditional inhibitions in the pursuit of immediate pleasure. Chapter Four Questions: 1. What does Gatsby tell Nick about himself? Gatsby tells Nick that he lived like a young rajah in all the capitals of Europe. 2. What accomplishments of Meyer Wolfsheimer's does Gatsby describe to Nick? How does Nick react? He outlines Meyer's fixing of the World Series in 1919. Nick is shocked about the extreme dishonesty of Gatsby's acquaintances. 3. According to Jordan, what did Daisy do on her wedding day? Why? Daisy got stupidly drunk, threw her pearls in the bin after receiving a letter from Gatsby. 4. Why does Gatsby want to have tea with Daisy in Nick's house? Why doesn't Gatsby ask Nick for this favor himself? Because he wants Daisy to see his house. He doesn't ask himself because he is insecure. 5. What does Tom do when he and Daisy return from their honeymoon? He has an affair with a chambermaid from the Santa Barbara Hotel. 6. Aside from the improbability of his story, what other evidence is there that Gatsby is lying when he tells Nick about his

background? His tone as he addresses the topic of his education at Oxford highlights a sense of bother in regards to its truthfulness. This establishes Nick's doubt in regards to him as he is lead to believe that Gatsby may have a sinister side to him after all. 7. What does Gatsby's friendships with Meyer Wolfsheim imply about his own background? Meyer Wolfsheim, being of a criminal background on the order of grand fraud and racketeering, reflects back upon Gatsby, adding to the mystery in regards to his newfound wealth which he defends as "inherited wealth". Gatsby associates with shady criminals, and this fact tarnishes his relationship with Nick. 8. How does Daisy behave after Gatsby goes overseas? What does her behavior show about her feelings for Gatsby? She stopped "playing around with the soldiers", indicating a shift in her lifestyle due to her altercation or meetings with Gatsby. This indicates he had a definite affect on her feelings and she truly felt something towards him. 9. After Jordan tells Nick the story of Gatsby and Daisy, Nick says that Gatsby "came alive to me, delivered suddenly from the womb of his purposeless splendor." How does the metaphor of birth help explain what Gatsby's behavior had meant to Nick up to then? The mystery surrounding Gatsby and his wealth caused many people to think of him as an enigma, almost as if he was nothing more than a fantastic story, not a person at all. The metaphor of birth explains that with the removal of this mystery, Nick can now see the full extent of Gatsby's purpose and the reasons behind his way of life. 10. With Jordan in his arms, Nick thinks of a phrase: "There are only the pursued, the pursuing, the busy and the tired." How do you think this phrase reflects on the events of the novel so far? Do you think that Gatsby would agree with the phrase? The

phrase is a reflection of the novel's themes in regards to the American Dream, which can be summarized as the pursuit of happiness. It puts all the events in to the perspective that they all occurred out of someone's desire or seeking of the bounties of happiness. I believe Gatsby would agree with the phrase but would pose a question in regards to which of the categories he fits in to.

Chapter 5 Questions:

1. What does Gatsby offer Nick in return for Nick's cooperation in inviting Daisy to his house? He offers Nick an opportunity to make a large sum of money.
2. What is the meeting between Gatsby and Daisy like initially? The meeting is initially one suffering a great awkwardness as can be seen in Gatsby's nature. His façade begins to crumble as the object of his dreams nears him. He bumbles embarrassingly, causing Nick to also suffer in the awkwardness of the moment.
3. How are Daisy and Gatsby different when Nick returns to the house after a half an hour? Every vestige of embarrassment was gone. Gatsby was now glowing, filling the room with a radiating joy that had brought Daisy to tears.
4. What are Gatsby's feelings by the end of the chapter? Gatsby suffers disappointment. Due to the colossal vitality of his illusion regarding Daisy, he has built her up to something she falls far short of, leaving him underwhelmed.
5. What does Gatsby reply when Nick asks him how he makes his money? Why does Nick find that significant? He replies that it was his affair, and he does so in an affronting manner. This is significant as it re-instills in Nick a sense of suspicion regarding Gatsby's nature.
6. What is Gatsby's dialogue like in this chapter? What does it tell us about Gatsby? Gatsby's dialogue loses its aristocratic appeal and reveals Gatsby for who he really is. It also has a secretive and magnanimous side to it, reflecting his

uncertainty towards the events about to occur between him and Daisy. This all highlights to the reader that Gatsby is not the suave, sophisticated man he sells himself to be and is another factor in his crumbling façade.

7. Why do you think Daisy sobs when Gatsby shows her his shirts? Daisy sobs because she is now cognizant of what could have been had she waited for Gatsby to return those many years ago. Had she been patient enough, everything she now finds around her could have been hers as well.

8. What is the weather like in this chapter? How does it reflect the emotional climate of Gatsby and Daisy? The weather is terrible just before and during the start of Gatsby and Daisy's reunion but fines up towards the end. The weather is a metaphor of the emotions that are shared between Gatsby and Daisy. At the start, both are embarrassed, nervous and unsure and as they become more joyous so to does the weather.

9. In this chapter, Gatsby's dream seems to be fulfilled. What indications are there though that reality cannot satisfy his dream? When Nick recounts the afternoon that Gatsby and Daisy are reunited after almost five years, he mentions how Gatsby is "consumed with wonder at her presence." Nick speculates, however, that "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. It had gone beyond her, beyond everything . . . no amount of fire or freshness can challenge what a man will store up in his ghostly heart." For Gatsby, Nick suspects, the illusion and the pursuit of Daisy has been more powerful than the actual woman. She has been something distant to dream about and strive for, like the elusive green light at the end of the Buchanan's dock.

Chapter 6 Questions: 1. When does James Gatz change his name?

Why? He had changed his name when he was seventeen. Nick begins the story of Gatsby's past by saying that Gatsby "sprang from his Platonic conception of himself," which refers to that his ideal form. That is, the Platonic form of an object is the perfect form of that object. Therefore, Nick is suggesting that Gatsby has modeled himself on an idealized version of "Jay Gatsby": he is striving to be the man he envisions in his fondest dreams of himself. Gatsby is thus the novel's representative of the American Dream, and the story of his youth borrows on one of that dream's oldest myths: that of the self-made man. In changing his name from James Gatz to Jay Gatsby, he attempts to remake himself on his own terms; Gatsby wishes to be reborn as the aristocrat he feels himself to be.

2. What is Daisy's response to the party according to Nick? According to Nick, except for the half hour she had been alone with Gatsby, she wasn't having a good time at the party. She was appalled by West Egg and its raw vigour.

3. What does Gatsby tell Nick he wants Daisy to do? He wants nothing less of Daisy than that she should go to Tom and say; "I never loved you".

4. What would you say Nick means when he says that "Jay Gatsby sprang from his Platonic conception of himself?" Nick is stating that Jay Gatsby was born from James Gatz ideal or ultimate perception of who he wanted to be. Denial of his identity, his roots are direct rejections of his reality. He worked towards attaining his ideal self. Explains his obsession with self-improvement from a young age.

5. How is the comparison of Gatsby with Christ ironic? It is extremely ironic because it highlights that nothing is more important to Gatsby than the fulfillment of his ultimate desires and dreams, which hold a place to him as important as "God's Work", as well as that Christ was "crucified" fulfilling the objectives of

such work. It is ironic because Gatsby also dies as a result of his intense passion to fulfill his dreams. This is foreshadowing his death. 6. What does Gatsby's response to the dinner invitation tell us about his social sensitivity? What connection does this have with his love of Daisy? Gatsby believes himself to be of sufficient stature to be a part of such an important social event, although this is far from the case. He is not of the same social status as these people, and Daisy, to afford such connections with them. His money therefore, is insufficient to fulfill his dreams alone. 7. What is Gatsby's view of the past? Gatsby unrealistically believes that he can repeat his past with Daisy. He wants to recover the absoluteness of his platonic conception of himself that Daisy had completed for him those many years ago. 8. What is Gatsby giving up when he kissed Daisy? Why? Gatsby attempts to transcend materialism and superficiality of the 1940's American jazz age with a Romantic love, transcendent of reality and the social deterioration of values. In turn, when Gatsby kisses Daisy, their love becomes a reality and therefore loses its transcendent qualities. Once their love becomes part of reality, it is temporal and must meet mortality and loses its timeless characteristics. It will no longer add up to Gatsby's illusions of her. Chapter 7 Questions: 1. Why does Gatsby stop giving parties? Gatsby had stopped giving parties after Daisy had disapproved of the one she attended with Tom 2. When does Tom first realize that Daisy loves Gatsby? Tom realises that Daisy loves Gatsby during the luncheon when they meet eyes and exchange a few words. 3. Why is Myrtle Wilson upset when she sees Tom and Jordan? Because she is jealous of Jordan, mistaking her for another one of Tom's mistresses. 4. Why does George Wilson lock Myrtle in the bedroom? He had

just discovered certain details regarding Myrtle's affair with Tom. 5. How does Gatsby characterize Daisy's voice? What do you think he means by this? He states that her voice is full of money. Nick's monologue description of the passage echoes his description of East Egg, indicating that it means Daisy belongs to the white palaces, the status and pompadour of East Egg. Her superficiality is ultimately unattainable to someone of Gatsby's stature.

6. Why does Gatsby lose Daisy during the confrontation at the Plaza? Could he have done anything to win her, do you think? If he could have, why doesn't he? In the climactic Chapter 7 after Gatsby "plays his cards," thinking that he can get Daisy to deny having loved Tom and go with him, the argument in the New York hotel room takes another turn as Tom uncovers Gatsby's source of wealth: he is a bootlegger. As Gatsby attempts to defend himself, but only the "dead dream fought on as the afternoon slipped away." Daisy loses her courage to stand up to Tom and Gatsby is defeated.

7. Why does Tom insist that Daisy go home with Gatsby? What do you think this tells us about Tom's character and his relationship with Daisy? In his victorious statement, Tom further insults both Gatsby and Daisy, making them go in the yellow car on a most uncomfortable ride. Even in this scene the car is a "death car," for Daisy and Gatsby's infatuation has certainly been killed by Tom. This highlights Tom's arrogant superiority and his manipulative ways over others, including his wife.

4. What indications are there at the end of the chapter that Tom and Daisy are going to stay together despite his philandering and her love for Gatsby? Tom and Daisy would never leave each other because that is not something people of their social standing do; divorce is not an East Egg custom. Tom has just

found out about the death of his mistress and is undoubtedly distressed. Daisy is confused and used to being bullied by Tom. Even though she told him off at the hotel earlier in the chapter, it is obvious that she will stay with him. Gatsby has been a happy diversion, but his past and his garishness won't fit into her idea of high society. Nick can even see this, and he tries to pull Gatsby away from the Buchanan's yard. But Gatsby, much as he was earlier drawn to the green light at the end of the dock, cannot leave the idol of his love. Now there is no light, though, as Daisy does not give Gatsby the signal he was hoping for. Gatsby ignores this, and the quiet conversation the couple is having, seemingly already mending their broken relationship, is only for one night. The pathetic nature of Gatsby's waiting helps set the tone for the end of the chapter, leaving little doubt with the reader that Daisy will never leave Tom. The desperation in Gatsby's voice and actions gives the reader another moment to root for him but only because he is the underdog who is destined to fail. 5. At the end of the chapter, Gatsby is standing alone, looking out at Daisy's house. How is this different from other similar moments? In previous incidents, Gatsby surveys Daisy's house out of a longing to meet her and as a result of the romantic possibilities he entertains in his illusions. Now he watches over Daisy's house over nothing, incognizant of the fact that his dreams have just been smashed to pieces.