

THE GREAT GATSBY CHAPTER QUESTIONS

Chapter I

1. How does Nick describe himself at the beginning of the book?
2. Why has Nick come to the East?
3. How does Nick describe Tom Buchanan?
4. Who is Jordan Baker? What does Nick find appealing about her?
5. How does Daisy react to the phone calls from Tom's woman in New York??
6. What is Gatsby doing when Nick first sees him?
7. Notice how many times Fitzgerald uses the words hope, or dream. Why does he do this?
8. 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." Does he reserve judgment in the novel?
9. Pay attention to time. What is the day and year during the first scene at Daisy' s house?
10. 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?
11. What image does the author use to describe Jordan Baker? What does it mean?
12. How does Nick react to Jordan?
13. What does Tom' s behavior reveal about his character?

Chapter II

1. How does Nick meet Tom's mistress?
2. How does Myrtle react to Tom's arrival?
3. Describe George Wilson. How does he react to Tom's arrival?
4. How does Myrtle behave as the party progresses?
5. Why, according to Catherine, has Tom not left Daisy to marry Myrtle?

6. Why did Tom break Myrtle's nose? How is this consistent with the author's description of him in Chapter I? Judging by his treatment of Myrtle and his wife Daisy, what seems to be Tom's attitude toward women?
7. Describe the "valley of ashes." What does it look like and what does it represent?
8. Describe Mr. Wilson and Myrtle. Do they seem to fit into the setting?
9. What more have you learned about Nick in this chapter? Is he similar or different than the people he spends his time with?

Chapter III

1. Why does Gatsby throw huge, expensive parties for people he does not even know?
2. Describe the two ways in which Nick differs from the other guests at the party?
3. What does the owl-eyed man find extraordinary about the books in Gatsby's library?
4. Why does the owl-eyed man describe Gatsby as a real Belasco?
5. What is the significance of the owl eyed man?
6. What does the reaction of the drivers of the wrecked automobile suggest about the values of Gatsby's guests?
7. What does Nick learn about Jordan after he's spent some time with her?
8. What is the significance of Jordan's lies?
9. Pay attention to Nick's judgments. What do they reveal about his character that he does this (especially in relation to his opening comments)?
10. Describe Gatsby the first time Nick sees him.
11. What rumors have been told about Gatsby? Why does Fitzgerald reveal rumors rather than fact?
12. What does Nick think of Gatsby after meeting him?
13. How is Gatsby different from his guests?
14. Why does Nick choose to share his thoughts and feelings with Jordan?
15. Nick thinks he's one of the few honest people he knows, why? Do you think he is honest?

Chapter IV

1. What does Gatsby tell Nick about himself?
2. What accomplishment of Meyer Wolfshein's does Gatsby describe to Nick? How does Nick react?
3. According to Jordan, what did Daisy do on her wedding day? Why? What does this reveal about Daisy?
4. Why does Gatsby want to have tea with Daisy in Nick's house? Why doesn't Gatsby ask Nick for this favor himself? Why did Gatsby want Daisy to see his house?
5. What does Tom do when he and Daisy return from their honeymoon?
6. What does Gatsby's friendship with Meyer Wolfshein imply about his own background?
7. List all of the rumors told about Gatsby.
8. Why does Fitzgerald list all of Gatsby's party guests?
9. Why does Gatsby tell Nick about his life? Do you believe Gatsby? Does Nick?
10. What role does Meyer Wolfsheim play in the novel? Why is there so much focus on his nose and what does this tell you about Fitzgerald's politics?
11. Nick says, "There are only the pursued, the pursuing, the busy and the tired." What does Nick mean? How does each character in the novel fit into this schema?

Chapter V

1. What does Gatsby offer Nick in return for Nick's cooperation in inviting Daisy to his house?
2. What is the meeting between Gatsby and Daisy like initially?
3. How are Daisy and Gatsby different when Nick returns to the house after a half an hour?
4. What are Gatsby's feelings by the end of the chapter?
5. What does Gatsby reply when Nick asks him how he makes his money? Why does Nick find that significant?
6. Why do you think Daisy sobs when Gatsby shows her his shirts?
7. What is the weather like in this chapter? How does it reflect the emotional climate of Gatsby and Daisy?

8. In this chapter, Gatsby's dream seems to be fulfilled. What indications are there that reality cannot satisfy his dream?

9. Why does Gatsby deliver so many goods and services to Nick's house?

10. Describe the effect of rain on the plot.

11. Why does Gatsby offer Nick work? How does Nick feel about this?

12. Explain the significance of the green light.

13. Why does Gatsby get so many phone calls? What does this say about him?

Chapter VI

1. When does James Gatz change his name? Why?

2. What is Daisy's real response to the party, according to Nick?

3. What does Gatsby tell Nick he wants Daisy to do?

4. Plato held that reality was an imperfect reflection of an ideal, permanent realm. With this in mind, what would you say Nick means when he says, "Jay Gatsby sprang from his Platonic conception of himself?"

5. What is ironic about Dan Cody?

6. What parallel is suggested by the fact that Gatsby never gets the inheritance bequeathed to him by Cody?

7. How truthful was Gatsby when he relayed the story of his life to Nick? Why does Fitzgerald tell the story of Jay Gatz now?

8. Describe the meeting of Tom and Gatsby. What does this meeting reveal about them?

9. Why did Daisy and Tom find Gatsby's party loathsome?

10. How did Gatsby measure the success of his party?

11. When Nick told Gatsby that "you can't repeat the past", Gatsby replied, "Why of course you can!" Do you agree with Nick or Gatsby?

Chapter VII

1. Why does Gatsby stop giving parties?

2. When does Tom first realize that Daisy loves Tom?
3. Why is Myrtle Wilson upset when she sees Tom and Jordan?
4. Why does Gatsby view Daisy's child with surprise?
5. Why does Gatsby object to letting Tom drive his car?
6. What ironic situation is occurring on the drive to town?
7. What is the significance of "blocks" Biloxi?
8. Why is Nick pleased with Gatsby's honesty about Oxford?
9. What has increased Tom's hatred of Gatsby?
10. Why does Tom refer to the liaison between Daisy and Gatsby in terms of intermarriage?
11. Why does Tom's defense of family life amuse Nick?
12. What is the significance of Nick's thirtieth birthday?
13. Why does Tom insist that Daisy and Gatsby drive home together?
14. Why does Nick change his feelings toward Jordan?
15. What is Nick's attitude toward Gatsby?
16. Why are Tom and Daisy reconciled?
17. Who is Trimachio? Explain how this describes Gatsby.
18. Describe Daisy and Gatsby's new relationship.
19. Compare George Wilson and Tom. What did each man learn about his wife and how did they each react?
20. If Daisy says she's never loved Tom, is there someone whom she thinks she loves?
21. Describe the fight between Gatsby and Tom. What do these men think of each other? How are they similar and how are they different?
22. What do you think Tom and Daisy were saying to each other in the kitchen? Do you think that Tom knew Daisy was driving the "death car"? Why, why not?
23. At this point, how would you end the novel?

Chapter VIII

1. How does Fitzgerald achieve a melancholic mood in the beginning of this chapter?
2. How are seasons used in constructing this novel?
3. Who is Dan Cody and what is his significance in Gatsby' s life?
4. How does Nick' s statement "You' re worth the whole bunch put together" show a change in Nick? .. from the beginning of the novel?
5. How does T. J. Eckleberg affect Mr. Wilson?

Chapter IX

1. What is the significance of Nick's taking charge of Gatsby's funeral arrangements?
2. Why do Tom and Daisy leave?
3. How does Nick react to the phone call revealing Gatsby's criminal activities?
4. What is the significance of Mr. Gatz's arrival?
5. What is the irony of Mr. Gatz's admiration of the house?
6. What two emotions are pulling Mr. Gatz?
7. What is the irony of Mr. Gatz's comment about James J. Hill?
8. Why did Nick take care of Gatsby' s funeral?
9. How was Jay Gatz' s childhood schedule consistent with the adult Gatsby' s behavior?
10. Who attended Gatsby' s funeral? How and why is this significant?
11. What is the purpose of Nick' s last meeting with Jordan?
12. Why does Nick call Tom and Daisy "careless people"?