

Choose one of the topics below and write a short essay (minimum 3 pages, typed, double-spaced, Times New Roman font, 12 point). Complete Draft: June 30th / Final Draft: July 21st

1. **Character Analysis:** Discuss one of the following characters in *The Great Gatsby*: Nick Carraway, Daisy Buchanan, Tom Buchanan, Jordan Baker, Myrtle Wilson or George Wilson. (a) Identify one or more important character traits or tendencies (*intelligent, conservative, tends to ... , always ...*) and discuss them using references to the English text to support your view. (b) Is the character static or dynamic, round or flat? In other words, does the character change through the story? Explain with details from the English text. Finally, (c) in your conclusion, briefly discuss the importance of the character to the novel. How is the character important to the story? Is the character associated with particular ideas, social trends or themes? For example, does George Wilson represent the fate of unsuccessful working-class Americans in the 1920s?
2. **New York in the 1920s:** Discuss Fitzgerald's image of New York in the 1920s. Include Nick's impressions of the city, of the parties in NYC and West Egg, and of other locations in the novel. What kind of world does Fitzgerald show us? You might also discuss aspects of the modern world in the novel: telephones, automobiles, magazines and advertising. What effects do these things have on people's sensibilities?
3. **Gatsby's Ideal Love:** Discuss Gatsby's love for Daisy. Explain his extravagant plan to win her back. What is his wish for their future? Do you think his love for Daisy is true? What do you think motivates him to pursue her?
4. **Gatsby, Success and the American Dream:** Jay Gatsby is a representative of "new money"; and his wealth has likely been earned through illegal activities. Do you share Nick's view that Gatsby is an admirable man? What qualities of Gatsby make him "great"? Discuss with examples from the English text.
5. **Women in *The Great Gatsby*:** In a letter to his publisher, Fitzgerald wrote that he thought *The Great Gatsby* to be a novel for men. Despite Fitzgerald's opinion, doesn't the novel express much about the situation of women in the 1920s? Discuss women in the novel with reference to the English text. You may also include background research.
6. **Murakami and Fitzgerald:** Haruki Murakami has written that *The Great Gatsby* is one of his favorite novels, and he has called Fitzgerald "a writer for myself." He has also stated that Japanese people should read *Gatsby* because they will recognize and perhaps learn from the story. Investigate the relationship between Murakami, Fitzgerald and *The Great Gatsby* drawing on English and Japanese sources.
7. **Music in *The Great Gatsby*:** Fitzgerald's novel includes numerous references to music, including the lyrics of popular songs. What role do these songs play in the novel? Discuss two or more songs in the context of the scenes in which they appear as well as the theme of the novel as whole. Does music play a similar role in Jack Clayton's 1974 adaptation or in Baz Luhrman's 2013 version?
8. **Cars in *The Great Gatsby*:** Modern life as the experience of movement, restlessness and danger is frequently associated with automobiles in Fitzgerald's writing. Write about the automobile as a symbol of modern life in the novel.
9. **Gatsby and Race:** Some critics have suggested that Gatsby's tragedy lies in the fact that he is "not quite white." Discuss Gatsby's status as an outsider in terms of race and class in the novel. You might discuss this theme in connection with historical background and Fitzgerald's views on ethnic minorities as well as the image of "ethnic" characters in the novel.

Essay Requirements:

- (a) A title that announces the main point of your essay
- (b) An introductory paragraph that chooses textual, critical, biographical or historical details to help introduce your topic and main idea
- (c) A thesis statement: One sentence at the end of the introduction that states the main idea of the essay
- (d) Four or more body paragraphs (including background information) that support your thesis statement. Your points should be written as topic sentences, at the beginning of each body paragraph. The topic sentences are supported by evidence from the English text, from critical sources, from biographical sources or from historical sources.
- (e) A conclusion that repeats the thesis statement and summarizes the main points and may give a more general view of the topic.
- (f) A list of Works Cited (MLA style), including the English text of *The Great Gatsby* and other print and internet sources.

About Research and Research Sources:

- (1) Your sources include (a) the English text of the novel (b) books and essays available in the Common Room and also from the Chukyo library (in English or Japanese) (c) online sources: web-sites, magazines, reference works, etc. For topic 6 above, your sources may also include Murakami's translation, his books *My Lost City*, *The F. Scott Fitzgerald Book 1 and 2*, and the 1987 novel *Norwegian Wood*--all in the Common Room.
- (2) You can use opinions, critical views and background information from print and online sources as support for your opinion / argument. But you must quote and cite the sources in your essay. Copying information without citation is **plagiarism**. (This includes copying background information from encyclopedias.) **Copied (plagiarized) essays will receive a grade of 0.**