



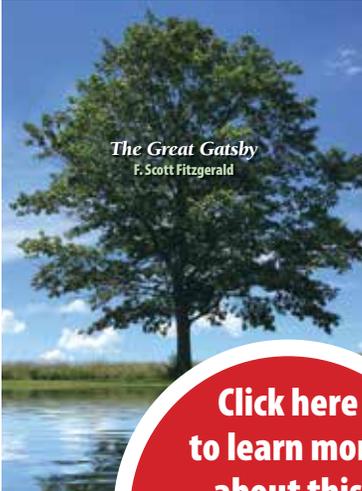
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# Sample

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## Response Journal

Reflections: A Student Response Journal



*The Great Gatsby*  
F. Scott Fitzgerald



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**F. Scott Fitzgerald**



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## *Response Journal*

### **To The Student**

Although we may read a novel, play, or work of non-fiction for enjoyment, each time we read one, we are building and practicing important basic reading skills. In our ever-more complex society, in which reading has become more and more crucial for success, this, in itself, is an important reason to spend time reading for enjoyment.

Some readers however, are able to go beyond basic reading techniques and are able to practice higher thinking skills by reflecting on what they have read and how what they read affects them. It is this act of reflection—that is, stopping to think about what you are reading—that this journal is attempting to encourage.

To aid you, we have included writing prompts for each section; however, if you find something that you wish to respond to in the book more compelling than our prompts, you should write about that. We hope you enjoy reading this book and that the act of responding to what you have read increases this enjoyment.

After you read the indicated sections, choose the questions to which you will respond. Keep in mind that there are no right or wrong answers to these prompts, and there is no one direction in which you must go.

## **Chapter 1**

1. Nick, the narrator of the novel, characterizes himself as open minded, “inclined to reserve all judgements” about people. As a result, he explains, people tend to trust him and share their secrets with him. This is how he got to know Gatsby, “the man who gives his name to this book.”

Tell about a time a person has opened up to you and shared secrets of his or her life.

2. Nick describes Gatsby on the second page of the book. He is only mentioned in connection with his “colossal” mansion and then by Jordan Baker. At the end of the chapter, Gatsby is standing alone in the darkness. Re-read these sections and share your impression of Gatsby.
3. Nick tells the reader that he was restless when he returned to the Middle West after serving in World War I. He explains that he decided “to go east and learn the bond business. Everybody I knew was in the bond business, so I supposed it could support one more single man.” What is your opinion of Nick’s decision?

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14. Critics of American society often claim Americans are too materialistic. In our society, people are often judged by their clothing. In this novel, for instance, Myrtle thought George was a gentleman until she found out he had borrowed the suit that he got married in. Then, she decided “ ‘he wasn’t fit to lick my shoe.’ ” What first impresses her about Tom is “ ‘had on a dress suit and patent leather shoes, and I couldn’t keep my eyes off him.’ ” Write a short commentary on your viewpoint about American materialism and concern for the way a person dresses. Do clothes make the man?
15. From the description of Myrtle’s apartment to the scene of bloody towels after Tom breaks Myrtle’s nose, the reader is presented with a series of shocking images and conversations. Which one is more striking to you? How can you account for its impact on you? Specifically, what does it remind you of, make you think about, or feel?
16. What in this chapter seems *least* believable to you?

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22. What do you find most disturbing about Gatsby's party?
23. All three chapters have involved a social event or gathering. What connections stand out to you among the chapters in terms of the behavior, attitudes, values, and intentions of the characters?
24. At the end of the chapter, Nick gives the reader an update on his "romantic affairs." What do you expect to happen between Nick and Jordan? Do you think Nick should get involved with Jordan? Why or why not?

## **Chapter 4**

25. Gatsby tells Nick details of his past. Do you believe Gatsby?
26. Fitzgerald presents the reader with another bizarre image, the character of Meyer Wolfsheim. Consider the details of his appearance, his behavior and topics of discussion, and his "illegal" activities. What ideas does he suggest to you?
27. If you had been Daisy, would you have waited for Gatsby? Fitzgerald seems to be contrasting Daisy and Gatsby's love; after Gatsby went overseas, it wasn't long before Daisy was married to Tom. However, Gatsby's devotion to Daisy has lasted.

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36. Gatsby tried to create his own identity by trying to work his way through college, leaving home, and joining up with Dan Cody. What have you done to try to become the person you want to be?
37. Do you think Daisy should stay married to Tom? Why or why not?
38. Gatsby gets upset when Nick tells him that the past cannot be repeated. Gatsby then tells Nick he wants Daisy to tell Tom she never loved him. Gatsby wants Daisy to return to her parents' house, and marry him "just as if it were five years ago." What in your past would you like to relive?
39. What part of your past would you change?

## **Chapter 7**

40. If you had been Gatsby, would you have stopped having parties?
41. Do you believe Daisy has romantic feelings for Gatsby? Do you think she loves him?