

***The Great Gatsby* Socratic Seminar Questions**

1. What “contrasts and contradictions” did you notice in *The Great Gatsby*? Why might the characters have done that? Provide evidence to support your response.
2. There are many “contrasts and contradictions” throughout *The Great Gatsby*. Thinking about all of them together, what do all of these “contrasts and contradictions” tell us about the characters in the book? What do they tell us about Nick as a narrator? Provide evidence to support your response.
3. What “words of the wiser” did you notice in *The Great Gatsby*? What were the life lessons, and how might they impact the characters? Provide evidence to support your response.
4. What “again and agains” did you notice in *The Great Gatsby*? Why might those words, phrases, or situations keep happening? Provide evidence to support your response.
5. What “aha moments” did you notice in *The Great Gatsby*? How might those realizations change things? Provide evidence to support your response.
6. What “memory moments” did you notice in *The Great Gatsby*? Why might those memories be important? Provide evidence to support your response.
7. What “tough questions” did you notice in *The Great Gatsby*? What did those questions make you wonder about? Provide evidence to support your response.
8. What predictions did you make while reading *The Great Gatsby*? What information from the text led you to make those predictions? Did they come true? Provide evidence to support your response.
9. Based on what has happened in *The Great Gatsby*, in what ways are money and happiness related? In what ways are they not related? Provide evidence to support your response.
10. The amount of money and the kind of money a person has matters in the world of *The Great Gatsby*. What does this fact tell us about people and their beliefs about money, social status, and other people? Provide evidence to support your response.
11. In *The Great Gatsby*, the wealthy characters carelessly hurt the poor (or the not-as-wealthy) characters. In what ways is this true? What might this mean about F. Scott Fitzgerald’s attitude toward wealthy people? Provide evidence to support your response.
12. Is there any symbolic meaning behind the ways in which different characters die in *The Great Gatsby*? Why or why not? Provide evidence to support your response.
13. In what ways are Daisy’s and Myrtle’s lives similar? In what ways are they different? Provide evidence to support your response.
14. In *The Great Gatsby*, in what ways does having money make the characters better off than those without money? In what ways does having money not actually matter? Provide evidence to support your response.
15. Colors are mentioned throughout the story in relation to certain characters and places. In what ways do those colors impact readers’ understanding of those characters and places? Provide evidence to support your response.
16. How might the characters in *The Great Gatsby* define the American Dream? What does it seem that all of them want? How do they go about obtaining what they want, and does it work out for them? Provide evidence to support your response.
17. F. Scott Fitzgerald used Gatsby as a symbol for his own views on the American Dream. Considering what happens in chapters eight and nine, what message do you think Fitzgerald was trying to send readers through *The Great Gatsby*?
18. At the beginning of the novel, Nick said that Gatsby possessed “an extraordinary gift for hope” (2). Based on what happens to Gatsby in the end, do you believe this hopefulness was ultimately helpful to Gatsby or hurtful? Provide evidence to support your answer.
19. Do the characters in *The Great Gatsby* wallow in their pasts, live in the present, or focus on their futures? Provide evidence to support your response.
20. At the end of the book, Nick says, “So we beat on, boats against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past” (180). What does this mean about how the past impacts the characters in *The Great Gatsby* and people in general? Provide evidence to support your answer.
21. To what extent does love seem to play a role in *The Great Gatsby*? Are the relationships in the text based on love or on something else? Provide evidence to support your response.

22. Being in love with the idea of someone isn't the same as being in love with that person. Which relationships in *The Great Gatsby* are based on the idea of someone instead of actual love? How do you know this? Provide evidence to support your response.
23. Do you think Daisy would have been happier in life if she had married Gatsby instead of Tom? Why or why not? Provide evidence to support your response.
24. Nick Carraway cares so much about others that he forgets to care about himself. How do we know this? What message do you think *The Great Gatsby* sends about caring more about others than we do about ourselves? Provide evidence to support your response.
25. To what extent do the characters in *The Great Gatsby* care about what other people think of them? How does this influence those characters' actions? Provide evidence to support your response.
26. Are there any characters in *The Great Gatsby* who deserve readers' sympathy? Why or why not? Provide evidence to support your response.
27. What message do you think *The Great Gatsby* sends about honesty? How is this message revealed? Provide evidence to support your answer.
28. Wilson claims that "You may fool me, but you can't fool God!" (159). In what ways do the characters try to fool one another? Do they succeed? Provide evidence to support your response.
29. Nick claims that he is both "within and without" (35). What parts of *The Great Gatsby* might be examples of this? Provide evidence to support your response.
30. The book is called *The Great Gatsby*, but is Gatsby really "great?" Why or why not? Provide evidence to support your response.
31. Question roulette! Choose a question you or your group wrote when you had the Questioner role for the Fab Four. Ask the question, give your own answer, and ask what the others in the circle think. (x10)