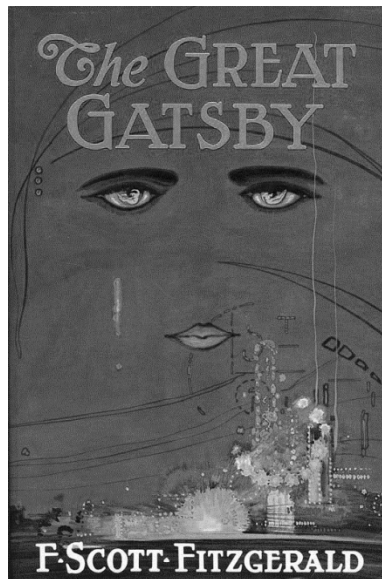# The Great Gatsby
# by
# F. Scott Fitzgerald



# Literary Analysis Essay

English III/US History
Spring 2015

Name:_____     Period:_____

# *The Great Gatsby* Literary Analysis Essay        **English III/US History**

As we finish up *The Great Gatsby*, you are going to delve into the story a bit more deeply, choosing one aspect of the novel to focus on. Be mindful that, for this assignment, you will be formulating your own question and argument, and elaborate on that argument in a five+ paragraph essay, using quotations from the book and your analysis to make your point.

**Requirements**:
- 3-4 double-spaced, typed pages (12 point font, Times New Roman)
- Parenthetical citations (page number only) for your quotations from *The Great Gatsby*
- Adequate number of textual references (at least one per body paragraph)
- Careful editing and revision

**Topic Choices**:

Formulate a thesis statement based around one of the following ideas/statements and its connection to *The Great Gatsby*:

THEME - Argue for (or against) one of the following statements about theme and the novel.

- *The Great Gatsby* exemplifies the decline of America & the "American Dream" as we know it.
- *The Great Gatsby* exemplifies the lack of substance in the upper class.
- *The Great Gatsby* shows the reader how a "false reality" causes problems/complications
- *The Great Gatsby* shows the reader how carelessness for others' feelings/emotions creates problems/complications.
- Choose another theme – show us how Fitzgerald disseminated that theme in the novel. See Mrs. Martin for approval.

CHARACTERS – Argue for (or against) one of the following statements about a character/characters and the novel.

- The female characters in the novel (Daisy, Myrtle, Jordan) are at odds with society's expectations of them.
- In the novel, the characters' pasts have the biggest effect on their present and future.
- In *The Great Gatsby*, characters are static (they don't change), rather than dynamic (emerging at the end, undergoing a significant change).
- Nick is a reliable narrator for the story of *The Great Gatsby*.
- Tom Buchanan and George Wilson are more similar than they are different.
- Choose another character/relationship in the novel to analyze. See Mrs. Martin for approval.

MISCELLANEOUS – Answer one of the following questions.

- Examine how Fitzgerald uses sight, eyes, and blindness. What is he telling us about "seeing" and "not seeing"?
- After his hard work, why does Fitzgerald suddenly stop Gatsby from having his dream come true just when it seems it will? What is Fitzgerald trying to tell us about American society and/or human nature?

- How are the consequences of one's actions treated by Fitzgerald? Which characters endure consequences for their actions? Which ones don't? What is Fitzgerald trying to tell us about society and/or human nature?
- Choose another topic to explore. See Mrs. Martin for approval.

**Pre-Writing/Draft Grading**:
- Finding Evidence worksheet/activity: 10 points
- Q&A/thesis formulation: 5 points
- Outline: 15 points
- Rough Draft: 15 points
- Peer editing on Google Docs: 15 points
    - TOTAL: 70 points

**Final Draft Grading**:
- Thesis statement/argument throughout essay: 30 points
- Embedded text references with citations (quoting/paraphrasing): 20 points
- Organization: 15 points
- Mechanics: 15 points
    - TOTAL: 80 points

**Google Docs**

You will need to have access to your MCPS Google account to complete this assignment (and to share your paper for peer editing).
- Login to Google: YourSchoolComputerLogin@student.mcpsmt.org
- Password: YourSchoolComputerPassword

**Turnitin.com**

You will also be required to submit your paper to Turnitin.com (final draft only)
- Class ID: 11278602
- Password: spartans

**One more note**

Please see me at any point (in class, before school, after school, or at lunch) to get extra help on this assignment. This is a MAJOR grade for second semester. Take it seriously! Put the effort in! Get help if you need it! I'm here to help you succeed – that's my job. ☺

# Finding Evidence

In order to determine what your guiding question (and subsequent argument) should be, you will need to start by examining the text to find instances of your topic.

Complete the table on the next page, writing down **at least five** phrases, passages, or sentences from the book.

● Try to use the entire book – don't limit your quotations to only a couple of chapters.

| LEFT COLUMN | RIGHT COLUMN |
|---|---|
| Record a notable direct quote from the text. You'll need to put forth effort into choosing your quotes—not all sentences in a text lend themselves to complex discussion.<br><br>Finally, end each quote with the page number. | Next, write a response in which you respond to the passage that you noted. The response must be A MINIMUM OF THREE SENTENCES, BUT IT CAN ALSO BE LONGER.<br><br>Your responses need to reflect ideas, insights, questions, personal reflections, or connections that indicate deeper thoughts (a.k.a.: depth) regarding the text. |

| Quote (page number) | Commentary |
|---|---|

| | |
|---|---|
| Remember – your thesis statement needs to **persuade your audience** to see the book the way you see it! Think about being **argumentative** (like a lawyer) and **convincing** me (using the evidence you have found) that your point of view is the right point of view! | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |

# Q&A: Inquiry and thesis statement

- Use one of the topics listed on the assignment page (1) to decide what your question should be.

- *Example: Is the novel a realistic reflection of the 1920s?*

- **Your** initial question (inquiry):

- Now, answer your own question (just don't say "I think" or "I believe" – make it strong!).
  - The Great Gastby *isn't a realistic representation of history.*

  - **Your** answer:

- Now, turn your answer into a thesis statement. Think about it this way – you should have a subject (the topic you're exploring) and an argument (what you believe about it). Make sure your thesis is ONE sentence ONLY. If you can, try also to point to a BIG IDEA (ahem, THEME) with your thesis.
  - The Great Gatsby *is not a realistic representation of the 1920s, thus demonstrating that the characters in the novel aren't reflective of the values of the time period.*

  - **Your** thesis:

# Quoting and Paraphrasing

**EMBEDDED QUOTES:** Introduce the passage with a sentence or a phrase and blend it into your own writing so that it flows smoothly together and makes sense.

The mercy killing of Candy's dog serves to isolate Candy even further. After allowing Carlson to take the dog outside to kill it, Candy refuses to join in the card game with the other men. He then physically distances himself from the others by lying down on his bunk. After

they hear Carlson shoot the dog, Candy retreats even more when "he rolled slowly over and faced the wall and lay silent" (49).

Note: The quoted material is integrated into the sentence. The citation (page number) comes after the quoted material but immediately BEFORE the period.

**PARAPHRASED CITATIONS**: This type of citation is used if you just tell what the writer said in your own words.

The mercy killing of Candy's dog also serves to isolate Candy from the other men. After allowing Carlson to take the dog outside to kill it, Candy refuses to join in the card game with the other men. He then physically distances himself from the others by lying down on his bunk. After they hear Carlson shoot the dog, Candy retreats even further by saying nothing. Instead he rolls over on his bed facing away from the other ranch workers (49). Candy's reaction to the loss of his only friend is silent and detached. His physical reaction, turning away from the other men in the bunkhouse, further emphasizes his loneliness. It is even greater now that his dog is gone. Without his dog, Candy is alone on the ranch and in the world.

# Remember – you should have a mix of quoting and paraphrasing in your paper!

## Analysis Outline

**Introduction:**

Opener: _____

_____

Bridge (includes title and author):

_____

_____

Thesis Statement: _____

_____

**Body Paragraph #1:**

Topic Sentence (relates to thesis): _____

_____

_____

Evidence (with citation): _____

_____

_____

Analysis: _____

_____

Evidence (with citation): _____

_____

_____

Analysis: _____

_____

**Body Paragraph #2:**

Topic Sentence (relates to thesis): _____

_____

_____

Evidence (with citation): _____

_____

_____

Analysis: _____

_____

Evidence (with citation): _____

_____

_____

Analysis: _____

_____

**Body Paragraph #3:**

Topic Sentence (relates to thesis): _____

_____

_____

Evidence (with citation): _____

_____

_____

Analysis: _____

_____

Evidence (with citation): _____

_____

_____

Analysis: _____

_____

**Body Paragraph #4:**

Topic Sentence (relates to thesis): _____

_____

_____

Evidence (with citation): _____

_____

_____

Analysis: _____

_____

Evidence (with citation): _____

_____

_____

Analysis: _____

_____

**Body Paragraph #5:**

Topic Sentence (relates to thesis): _____

_____

_____

Evidence (with citation): _____

_____

_____

Analysis: _____

_____

Evidence (with citation): _____

_____

_____

Analysis: _____

_____


## {Add body paragraphs if necessary}

**Conclusion:**

Relate back to opener: _____

_____

Thesis Statement: (restated in different words):_____

_____

General ending statement – why do we care?

_____

_____