

The Great Gatsby Timed Writing Prompts

1. In retrospect, the reader often discovers that the first chapter of a book introduces some of the major themes of the work. Analyze how the first chapter of *The Great Gatsby* sets forth the major themes of the book.
2. Lewis Lapham wrote “Money means so many things to [Americans]- spiritual as well as temporal- that we are at a loss to know how to hold its majesty at bay.” Discuss the truth of this statement in relation to *The Great Gatsby*.
3. Poet T.S. Eliot, a contemporary of Fitzgerald, believed that modern society lacked a vital sense of community & a spiritual center. Discuss the truth of this idea in relation to *The Great Gatsby*.
4. Plays and novels often use contrasting places to represent opposed forces or ideas that are central to the meaning of the work. Write an essay about two contrasting places in *The Great Gatsby*, explaining how the places differ, what each place represents, & how their contrast contributes to the meaning of the work.
5. In many texts, a character has a misconception of him or herself or his/her world. Destroying or perpetuating this illusion contributes to a central theme of the text. Write an essay in which you consider what Jay Gatsby’s illusion is, how it differs from the reality that is presented in the text, and how the destruction or perpetuation of the illusion illuminates a theme of the text.