1. We see all the action of The Great Gatsby from the perspective of one character whose narration seems to be shaped by his own values and temperament. What is Nick Carraway like, what does he value, and how do his character and his values matter to our understanding of the action of the novel?
2. Early in the novel, Nick says of Gatsby that he “turned out all right at the end” (p.2) Later,

however, after he tells Gatsby “You’re worth the whole damn bunch put together” (154) he

abruptly calls this “the only compliment I ever gave him because I disapproved of him from

beginning to end.” What does this curiously ambivalent admiration for Gatsby tell us about Nick,

and especially about his relation to Gatsby’s “incorruptible dream?”

1. One of the concluding images of The Great Gatsby is Nick’s description of “the old island here

that flowered once for Dutch sailors’ eyes---a fresh, green breast of the new world.” (180). This

imagery reminds us of the predominance in the novel of fantasies insistently associated with men. What is the place for Daisy, and for the novel’s female characters generally, in such fantasies? Are the dreams of the women in the novel consistent with those fantasies, or do we encounter any points of resistance?

1. The introduction of Myrtle and George Wilson underscores the importance of social class in

the novel. How does their presence sharpen Fitzgerald’s characterization of the rich, and what

might the resulting contrasts suggest about the role of class in shaping social experience in The

Great Gatsby?

1. At the end of Chapter Five, Nick makes much of the power of Daisy’s voice over Gatsby: “I

think that voice held him most, with its fluctuating, feverish warmth, because it couldn’t be overdreamed—that voice was a deathless song” (p.96). Later on, Gatsby observes that “Her voice is full of money,” and Nick develops the point: “That was it, I’d never understood before. It was full of money—that was the inexhaustible charm that rose and fell in it, the jingle of it, the cymbals’ song of it.” Is it possible for characters in Gatsby’s world to disentangle different kinds of value: In particular, do the social conventions and self-understandings of the main characters allow them to disentangle the material value associated with economic wealth, the value attributed to a human object of desire, the aesthetic value of a beautiful object, and the moral values by which one assesses a person’s character? Why, if it all, does this matter?

1. At Gatsby’s funeral, Nick remembers “without resentment, that Daisy hadn’t sent a message

or a flower” [174]. Should Nick’s attitude surprise us, and how might it illuminate the world that

Gatsby, Nick, and Daisy inhabited, and the value of Gatsby’s “incorruptible dream” (154)?