

"The Great Gatsby" Possible Essay Questions

Choose a novel with a central character you consider to be heroic.

Show how the heroic qualities are revealed and discuss how this portrayal of the character enhances your understanding of the text as a whole.

Choose a novel in which the setting in time and/or place is a significant feature.

Show how the writer's use of setting contributes to your understanding of character and theme.

Choose a novel which deals with true love, unrequited love or love betrayed.

Discuss the writer's exploration of the theme and show to what extent it conveys a powerful message about the nature of love.

Choose a novel which features a relationship between two characters which is confrontational or corrosive.

Describe how the relationship is portrayed and discuss to what extent the nature of the relationship influences your understanding of the text as a whole.

Choose a novel in which a character experiences a moment of revelation.

Describe briefly what is revealed and discuss its significance to your understanding of character and/or theme.

Choose a novel in which a character seeks to escape from the constraints of his or her environment or situation.

Explain why the character feels the need to escape and show how his or her response to the situation illuminates a central concern of the text.

Choose a novel which explores loss or futility or failure.

Discuss how the writer explores one of these ideas in a way you find effective.

Choose a novel in which a main character refuses to accept advice or to conform to expectations.

Explain the circumstances of the refusal and discuss its importance to your understanding of the character in the novel as a whole.

Choose a novel in which a central character is flawed but remains an admirable figure.

Show how the writer makes you aware of these aspects of personality and discuss how this feature of characterisation enhances your appreciation of the text as a whole.

Choose a novel in which friendship or love is put to the test.

Explain briefly how this situation arises and go on to discuss how the outcome of the test leads you to a greater understanding of the central concerns of the text.

Choose a novel in which the narrative point of view is a significant feature in your appreciation of the text.

Show how the writer's use of this feature enhances your understanding of the central concerns of the text.

Choose a novel in which a character is influenced by a particular location or setting.

Explain how the character is influenced by the location or setting and discuss how this enhances your understanding of the text as a whole.

Choose a novel in which there is an act of kindness or of compassion.

Explain briefly the nature of the act and discuss its importance to your understanding of the text as a whole.

Choose a novel in which the death of a central character clarifies an important theme in the text.

Show how this theme is explored in the novel as a whole and discuss how the death of the character clarifies this theme.

Choose a novel in which a character reaches a crisis point.

Explain briefly how this point is reached and go on to discuss how the character's response to the situation extends your understanding of him/her.

Choose a novel in which one of the main characters is not in harmony with his/her society.

Describe the character's situation and go on to discuss how it adds to your understanding of a central concern of the text.

Choose a novel in which a confrontation between two characters is of central importance in the text.

Explain the circumstances of the confrontation and discuss its importance to your understanding of the novel as a whole.

Choose a novel which is set during a period of social or political change.

Discuss how important the writer's evocation of the period is to your appreciation of the text as a whole.