

The Great Gatsby Essay Test

Honors English III: Due Saturday, May 30th

This quarter we studied a classic piece of literature, *The Great Gatsby*. As a culminating assessment of your understanding of both the story and the time period, you will write an essay utilizing quotes from your novel as evidence of your points.

Your essay should be a minimum of 3 pages, typed and double-spaced, excluding the Works Cited page. Be sure to formulate a clear thesis statement that you will support with details and quotations from the text/ references to the film. Also, incorporate logical and smooth transitions, directive topic sentences, literary analysis, and high-level vocabulary.

You have three options for this essay:

1. Is Nick a reliable or trustworthy narrator? How does his point of view affect the story? You should take an argumentative approach in your answer and use examples from either the novel or the film to support your decision.
2. Analyze how effectively Baz Luhrmann dramatizes the main themes, character development, and key scenes from the novel. While there were some changes to the film, was it an overall effective adaptation of the novel? Don't simply say, "Yes it was because I liked the movie." You should take an argumentative approach in your answer and use examples to support whether an effective replication of the novel was achieved or not achieved.
3. Choose two literary devices (symbol, motif, characterization, imagery, or diction) and explain how they point to and expand upon one of the novel's two main themes:
 1. The corrupting influence of wealth
 2. The futility of trying to recapture the past.

** You can use examples from both the film and the novel, however the majority of the examples should be from the novel.

Essay Timeline

Saturday, May 23 rd	First paragraph/ header due via email (Note: completion of this is part of the rubric.) I will respond with a comment noting if your essay is good to go or if anything needs to be re-worded.
Saturday, May 30 th	Final essay emailed by 5pm

MLA Format for Papers Checklist

Printing & Typing

1. Times New Roman or Arial Font **Only**
2. 12 point font
3. **A minimum of 1,000 typed words and a maximum of 1,300 words** (not including the header or works cited page/ roughly 3-4 pages)

Margins & Spacing

1. One inch margins throughout the entire paper
2. Indent the first word of a paragraph
3. The essay should be double spaced, BUT your header should be single-spaced.

Header

1. Your header is on the left side of the first page
2. Your word count is included.
3. Your last name and page number is in the top right corner of each page.

Writing Structure

1. Clear thesis statement

2. Topic sentence in each paragraph

- Links directly to thesis
- Contains sophisticated transitions

3. Concise and unique vocabulary

- Avoid “things” “a lot” and other vague words
- Use words accurately in context—words should enhance your meaning, not distract from it

4. Exact quotes/passages from the text and film (as applicable)

- Correctly blended (part of your own sentence)
- Guideline—one- two quotes per idea/point
 - Example—if you have 3 main points in your essay, then you would need 6 quotes

Essay Rubric

	Outstanding	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Approaching Expectations	Unacceptable
Introduction/ Conclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Introduction grabs attention and provides meaningful context to a persuasive argument o Conclusion effectively restates the argument, but fresh language and meaningful insight leaves reader wanting more <p style="text-align: center;">10 9</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Introduction sparks some interest and effectively introduces reasonable argument o Conclusion restates arguments, but uses new language and shows understanding of the big picture <p style="text-align: center;">8 7 6</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Introduction provides context for the argument but is obvious and/or basic o Conclusion restates arguments, but recycles previous statements verbatim <p style="text-align: center;">5</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Introduction or conclusion does not flow with the argument of the paper o Introduction or conclusion contains blanket or vague statements; needs development to be effective <p style="text-align: center;">4 3 2</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o No introduction and/or conclusion <p style="text-align: center;">1 0</p>
Thesis	Argument is clearly articulated and persuasive, contains an original facts. <p style="text-align: center;">5</p>	Thesis presents reasonable facts, argument is clear and focused <p style="text-align: center;">4</p>	Thesis is a plausible argument; contains a legitimate fact, but somewhat broad/ basic <p style="text-align: center;">3</p>	Thesis demonstrates misunderstanding of the topic <p style="text-align: center;">2</p>	Thesis not evident; thesis is a fact or plot summary; thesis not in correct position <p style="text-align: center;">1 0</p>
Topic Sentences and Transitions	Topic sentences contribute to the highly persuasive nature of the argument <p style="text-align: center;">10 9</p>	Topic sentences articulate precise argument; logically linked to thesis <p style="text-align: center;">8 7 6</p>	Topic sentences are present and make an argument connected to the thesis; however, ideas are obvious and basic <p style="text-align: center;">5</p>	Topic sentences are not linked to the thesis Topic sentences show misunderstanding or prompt or text <p style="text-align: center;">4 3 2</p>	Topic sentences not evident o Topic sentences are facts or summaries <p style="text-align: center;">1 0</p>
Evidence	You have chosen, for the most part, the best evidence to support your point o Evidence is highly persuasive and effective in supporting your argument <p style="text-align: center;">10 9</p>	Your evidence is believable and convincing and supports your argument <p style="text-align: center;">8 7 6</p>	Evidence is present, but superficial <p style="text-align: center;">5</p>	Evidence chosen does not support thesis/topic sentences o Textual evidence is irrelevant <p style="text-align: center;">4 3 2</p>	Little or no evidence; <p style="text-align: center;">1 0</p>
Focus & Content	Sharp, distinct focus; substantial, specific, and/or illustrative content; sophisticated, mature ideas are particularly well developed and supported by research. <p style="text-align: center;">10 9</p>	Clear focus; specific, illustrative, and balanced content reasonably supported by research and quote citations. <p style="text-align: center;">8 7 6</p>	Adequate focus, but unbalanced content; more analysis needed as well as sources for research and topic expansion. <p style="text-align: center;">5</p>	Essay contains too much research information without analysis or commentary; essay is not effectively balanced of research and student analysis. <p style="text-align: center;">4 3 2</p>	Absence of focus and relevant content; content doesn't “fit” thesis nor does it have research to support. <p style="text-align: center;">1 0</p>

Analysis	Creative/original ideas and insights; extensive commentary, refreshing; goes beyond obvious and basic commentary 10 9	Analysis is believable and convincing, a few assertions may lack specific examples, but assertions are clearly connected to the argument 8 7 6	Analysis supports your argument, but ideas are obvious and basic 5	Ideas lack development; misunderstanding of prompt or text; illogical argument; 4 3 2	Analysis not present simply plot summary o Analysis does not address the prompt 1 0
Style, Citations, Vocabulary & Sentence Structure	Sophisticated vocabulary; sentence variety; quotations are smoothly blended with citations readily used. 10 9	Effectively blends direct quotation with explanatory words and phrases to introduce the quotation and facilitate narrative flow; still attempting advanced vocabulary 8 7 6	Blends quoted material smoothly; but sentence structure lack variety-basic and obvious; attempts to incorporate more advanced vocabulary 5	Problems with sentence clarity, redundancy; some quotes stand alone; some vague sentences; little use of class vocabulary or sentence variety or citations. 4 3 2	Serious problems with coherence and sentence clarity; most sentences need revision; most quotes stand alone and lack introduction/connection to the paper 1 0
Mechanics and Usage X2	Perfect! (or 1 or 2 minor errors) 10 9	Effective punctuation and MLA; close to perfect 8 7 6	Minor problems with coherence, grammar, spelling, punctuation, but does not interfere with the understanding of paper 5	Several distracting problems with spelling, grammar, punctuation, coherence; citations incorrect 4 3 2	Major spelling, grammar, punctuation errors; distracts from understanding; citations non existent 1 0
MLA: In-Text Citations	All sources are accurately documented in the proper MLA format (all quotes and paraphrased facts). Balance of sources with no over-reliance of one source; sources cited more than once 10 9	Almost all sources are documented, but a few are not in the desired format. Sources are decently balanced. 8 7 6	most sources are documented, but many are not in the desired format and there is a large reliance on certain sources over others. 5	Several sources lack proper documentation and are used more than others. 4 3 2	Sources are not accurately documented, and MLA format is not followed properly 1 0
1st Paragraph Submission	Header and first paragraph were emailed on time. Strong thoughts presented and high level of thought is setting the student up for a successful essay. 5	Header and first paragraph were emailed on time. Sophisticated ideas were shared with minor adjustments needed before proceeding with the rest of the essay. 4	Header and first paragraph were emailed on time. Ideas appeared thought out, but minor areas are needed for expansion and/ or a more developed thesis statement. 4	Header and first paragraph were emailed on time. Possible proofreading and/ or revising needed to expand on ideas presented. 2	Header and first paragraph need adjustments. Writing appears to be rushed to meet deadline and/ or just not as developed, as they should be. 1 0

Total: _____ / 100