**The Great Gatsby Research 2017**

**Theme Analysis Essay Requirements**

The theme of a work of literature is the comment the author makes about his or her subject matter, a revelation about the behavior of human beings or the conduct of society; an insight into the human condition. It is the insight we gain from thinking about what we have read. The theme of a literary work is the message about life the author communicates through his or her work of literature. At times, the author’s theme may not confirm or agree with your own beliefs, but even then, if it is skillfully written, the work will still have a theme that illuminates some aspects of true human experience.

**Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Theme:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Writing your Essay**

You will research the theme within the history of the 1920s, provide at least three examples from the novel to illustrate the theme, and explore what experts, or Literary Critics, have to say about the theme within *The Great Gatsby*. **You will need at least three facts per body paragraph, so nine facts all together.**

* Remember, you must lead into and/or introduce the quote; it cannot stand alone as a sentence. Your commentary connecting the quote to theme is essential. You need to effectively show how the quote helps to prove your point.
* **Introduction**
  + Describe in general, how the author expresses the theme, i.e. by using characterization, symbolism, setting or conflicts, etc.
  + What aspects of the author’s personal life are relevant to this story?
  + What was the author’s purpose in writing the novel?
  + Summarize the novel **as it relates to theme.**
  + State the theme you conclude from the book (thesis)
* **Body Paragraph One**-Write one paragraph to explain the theme within history. To describe the historical context, you will need to include the following information:
  + Why did Fitzgerald want to write about the theme?
  + The theme is important to the reader’s interpretation/understanding/ appreciation of *The Great Gatsby* because…
  + Fitzgerald felt it was important to write about this theme because…
* **Body Paragraph Two**-Write one paragraph to explain how the author expresses the theme in his novel. To describe each example, you need to include the following information:
  + What textual evidence represents the theme? (quotes from half sheets)
  + How do the characters reveal the theme?
  + What is the consequence of his/her actions?
  + What questions does the theme raise about human nature?
  + The theme is best seen through the actions of...when he/she…
  + The consequences of the theme helps the reader understand...

**Answers to Guided Theme Questions:**

* **Body Paragraph Three**-Write one paragraph to explain how literary critics viewed the theme in the novel. To describe each example, you need to include the following information:
  + What do experts say about the theme in *The Great Gatsby?*
  + Does the story reveal/contradict the prevailing values of the time in which it was written?
* **Conclusion**
  + Restate your theme in different words
  + Relate the theme to the current society.
    - The theme is seen in modern society through...
  + How has it changed over time?
  + Compare the theme to other pieces of literature you have read.
  + How does the story reflect the American Dream?