

***The Great Gatsby* F. Scott Fitzgerald**

***The Natural* Bernard Malamud**

### **Summer Reading Guides**

**English III Honors Mrs. Case**

Our reading of Fitzgerald's 1925 masterpiece will serve as the foundation of our study of American Literature. The themes we uncover will permeate the literary selections of the course and will demonstrate the relevance of the novel nearly 100 years later. A few caveats:

**READ THE BOOK!** If you have the chance to watch any of the film versions of the novel do so with the understanding that this is not a replacement for reading the book.

Read the book's introduction and the biography of Fitzgerald. The information will prepare you for the setting.

Complete the novel and the items below **for the first day of class**. Responses to the items below should be typed using MLA format.

Be prepared for a short test on the novel, using the reading guide as your study tool.

Be prepared to refer back to the novel throughout the course.

#### **Reading Guide Questions:**

A. Identify each of the characters listed and explain his or her relevance to the plot.

1. Nick Carraway
2. Jay Gatsby
3. Tom Buchanan
4. Daisy Buchanan
5. Jordan Baker
6. Myrtle Wilson
7. George Wilson
8. Dan Cody
9. Meyer Wolfshiem
10. Henry C. Gatz

B. Identify each of the following items and explain its relevance to the novel.

1. East Egg
2. West Egg
3. The valley of ashes
4. The billboard of Dr. T.J. Eckleburg
5. The light at the end of Daisy's pier

C. The American Dream is a theme we will explore in our course. Compose a paragraph to explain your conception of the American Dream and the way that this novel does or does not convey the theme.

**Our reading of Malamud's 1952 novel set in the world of baseball will complement our reading of *The Great Gatsby* during our study of American Literature.**

A few caveats:

**READ THE BOOK!** If you have the chance to watch any of the film versions of the novel do so with the understanding that this is not a replacement for reading the book.

Read the book's introduction and the biography of Malamud.

Complete the novel and the items below **for the first day of class**. Responses to the items below should be typed using MLA format, in complete sentences, on a separate sheet of paper.

Be prepared to refer back to the novel throughout the course.

Write your responses in your own words. Do not copy from online sources. Make a good first impression by putting forth your best effort.

**Reading Guide Questions:**

- A. Identify each of the characters listed and explain his or her relevance to the plot:
  1. Roy Hobbs
  2. Max Mercy
  3. Pop Fisher
  4. Harriet Bird
  5. Memo Paris
  6. Iris Lemon
  7. Judge Goodwill Banner
  8. The Whammer
  9. Bump Baily
  10. Wonderboy
  
- B. In Greek literature we learn that a character's tragic flaw is *hubris*, or his arrogance, which leads to his downfall. In what ways does Roy's hubris contribute to his problems?
  
- C. Malamud draws inspiration from stories of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table in this novel. Do some research and explain the relationship between this story and the stories of the Wasteland and the Fisher King.

I look forward to exploring American Literature with you this year!