The Great Gatsby—Test over Chapters 1-3
(with thanks to Jennifer Troy)

1. Which of the following is NOT one of Fitzgerald’s narrative strategies in Chapter 1?
   A. contrasting the attitudes of the experienced and inexperienced narrator
   B. using metaphoric language to convey the narrator’s attitude toward the main character
   C. using connotative language and imagery to suggest a contrast between “old money” and “new money” in the novel
   D. using connotative language and imagery to emphasize the personal similarities between Daisy and her husband Tom

2. Which of the following statements cannot be made about the narrator’s comment, “Among the broken fragments of the last five minutes at table I remember the candles being lit again, pointlessly, and I was conscious of wanting to look squarely at everyone and yet to avoid all eyes?”
   A. Connotative language and imagery underscore the nature of Tom and Daisy’s marriage.
   B. The narrator is reacting to a startling truth just revealed about Tom Buchanan’s wealth.
   C. The imagery and the detail of the candle being lit again pointlessly correspond to the nature of the conversation at the table.
   D. The comment reveals Nick’s uncomfortable reaction to Miss Baker’s news.

3. Nick’s comment about Tom that “something was making him nibble at the edge of stale ideas as if his sturdy physical egotism no longer nourished his peremptory heart” suggests that
   A. Tom’s physical strength is diminishing.
   B. Tom eagerly pursues knowledge.
   C. Tom has lost his ability to love.
   D. Tom is not completely satisfied.

4. “This is a valley of ashes—a fantastic farm where ashes grow like wheat into ridges and hills and grotesque gardens”—
   A. contains paradoxical imagery
   B. describes a location in West Egg
   C. describes a location in New York City
   D. explains the death of Doctor T.J. Eckleburg

5. The symbolic eyes described in chapter 2 are actually
   A. painted eyes on an advertisement for a travel agency
   B. a picture of God brooding over the human race
   C. an old billboard ad for an eye doctor
   D. the openings of two pipes left on an abandoned construction project
6. At Mrs. Wilson’s New York apartment, an elevator boy goes for milk and biscuits, “one of which decomposed apathetically in the saucer of milk all afternoon.” What is the best explanation for Fitzgerald’s inclusion of this detail?  
A. to give a sense of Myrtle’s personality and character  
B. to symbolize Nick’s indifference to the fact that Tom has a mistress  
C. to combine with other details which show that Mrs. Wilson is a poor housekeeper  
D. to complement the sense of moral laxness and indifference which Nick senses in the people around him

7. “Yet high over the city our line of yellow windows must have contributed their share of human secrecy to the casual watcher in the darkening streets, and I was with him too, looking up and wondering. I was within and without, simultaneously enchanted and repelled by the inexhaustible variety of life.”  
Which of the following statements is NOT true about this quote?  
A. It contains a paradox similar to Nick’s explanation of his attitude to Gatsby in the first chapter.  
B. It calls attention to Fitzgerald’s narrative strategy of point of view.  
C. It follows Nick’s mysterious encounter with Gatsby and Nick’s fascination with the secret details of Gatsby’s past.  
D. It contains the language devices of personification, antithesis, imagery, and connotation.

8. Which of the following does NOT occur in Nick’s account of the conclusion and aftermath of Myrtle’s party?  
A. Tom Buchanan hits Myrtle for repeating Nick’s name.  
B. Jordan unexpectedly drops in to check on Tom’s whereabouts.  
C. Mr. McKee shows Nick his collection of photographs.  
D. Mr. McKee invites Nick to lunch.

Questions 9-12 apply to the following passage.

By seven o’clock the orchestra has arrived—no thin five piece affair but a whole pit full of oboes and trombones and saxophones and viols and cornets and piccolos and low and high drums. The last swimmers have come in from the beach now and are dressing upstairs; the cars from New York are parked five deep in the drive, and already the halls and salons and verandas are gaudy with primary colors and hair shorn in strange new ways and shawls beyond the dreams of Castile. The bar is in full swing and floating rounds of cocktails permeate the garden outside until the air is alive with chatter and laughter and casual innuendo and introductions forgotten on the spot and enthusiastic meetings between women who never knew each other’s names.

The lights grow brighter as the earth lurches away from the sun and now the orchestra is playing yellow cocktail music and the opera of voices pitches a key higher. Laughter is easier, minute by minute, spilled with prodigality, tipped out at a cheerful word. The groups change more swiftly, swell with new arrivals, dissolve and form in the same
breath—already there are wanderers, confident girls who weave here and there among the stouter and more stable, become for a sharp, joyous moment the center of a group and then excited with triumph glide on through the sea-change of faces and voices and color under the constantly changing light.

9. In the above passage, which of the following most accurately explains the relationship between syntax and meaning?
   A. The complex sentence structure, with many phrases and subordinate clauses embedded in the main clause, creates a sense of depth, thoughtfulness and ambiguity which permeates the party scene.
   B. The repetition of short, simple clauses creates a sense of tension, emphasizing the underlying separateness of the individuals who mingle at the party.
   C. Several periodic sentences create a sense of mystery and excitement.
   D. Sentences composed of strings of independent clauses and the use of polysyndeton create a flowing movement which characterizes the constant activity of the party.

10. Which of the following best describes the atmosphere created by this passage?
    A. mysterious, exotic, apprehensive
    B. triumphant, proud, amazing
    C. effervescent, lively, dazzling
    D. overwhelming, noisy, gaudy

11. Which of the following is NOT an assumption underlying Fitzgerald’s description in this passage?
    A. Anonymity underlies the social interactions.
    B. Alcohol leads to spontaneous, party behavior.
    C. Only the young and beautiful attend Gatsby’s parties.
    D. Gatsby spares no expense in providing music and drinks for his parties.

12. Which of the following does NOT characterize Fitzgerald’s diction in the passage?
    A. colorful imagery
    B. vivid action verbs
    C. many abstractions
    D. allusions (at least one)

13. From your understanding of the familiarity of Gatsby’s guests with each other, what does “erroneous” mean in the following sentence: “The orchestra leader varies his rhythm obligingly for her and there is a burst of chatter as the erroneous news goes around that she is Gilda Gray’s understudy from the ‘Follies.’”
    A. ambiguous
    B. misleading
    C. private
    D. exciting
14. Nick attends Gatsby’s party because
   A. he has been invited
   B. Daisy had asked him to check out Gatsby’s house
   C. he simply wandered over, attracted by the lights and music
   D. he planned to meet several of his acquaintances from his employment in the bond business.

15. Which of the following is NOT an inference Nick makes about the guests at Gatsby’s party?
   A. A number of young Englishmen appear to be trying to sell things.
   B. No one seems to know, or care, where the party’s host is.
   C. People behave as if at an amusement park, rather than someone’s home.
   D. Gatsby seems completely unaware of his guests and their activities.

16. Which is NOT an assumption which underlies Nick’s comment about Gatsby: “It was testimony to the romantic speculation he inspired that there were whispers about him from those who had found little that it was necessary to whisper about in the world.”
   A. There were constant rumors and conjectures about Gatsby’s past.
   B. The rumors about Gatsby’s past dealt mainly with his past loves.
   C. Gatsby gave little or no information about himself.
   D. Many of the people who gossiped about Gatsby lived a life of moral laxness.

17. The incident with Owl-Eyes in the library reveals that
   A. Gatsby’s books in his library are real, as is evidence that he has read them
   B. A few of Gatsby’s guests were on more familiar terms with him
   C. Party-goers from East Egg sought a more aristocratic view of Gatsby
   D. Gatsby spared no expense in impressing his guests.

18. “There was dancing now on the canvas in the garden, old men pushing young girls backward in eternal graceless circles, superior couples holding each other tortuously, fashionably and keeping in the corners—and a great number of single girls dancing individualistically or relieving the orchestra for a moment of the burden of the banjo or the traps. By midnight the hilarity had increased. A celebrated tenor had sung in Italian and a notorious contralto had sung in jazz and between the numbers people were doing ‘stunts’ all over the garden while happy vacuous bursts of laughter rose toward the summer sky.”

Which of the following comments most accurately describes Fitzgerald’s purpose in this passage?
   A. Positive connotative language creates the sense of a joyous, perfect, but fleeting moment in time.
   B. Several words with unpleasant connotations cast a negative feeling over the lively party description.
C. Repeated images of dancing and movement show the unfettered and graceful energy of people at a party which could go on forever.
D. Harsh imagery creates a strong sense of discomfort and disconnectedness.

19. An awkward moment occurs for Nick at the party when he
   A. momentarily forgets Jordan’s name
   B. is asked to identify his house in the neighborhood
   C. talks to a man about Gatsby without realizing that this man is Gatsby
   D. realizes that Gatsby must be misrepresenting his experience in the Seventh Infantry in France.

20. Which of the following is NOT an impression Nick has of Gatsby upon first meeting him?
   A. His smile reveals a strong understanding of, and sense of reassurance for, its recipient.
   B. His formal speech is elaborate and effortless.
   C. He seems very interested in Nick.
   D. He’s a little over thirty years old.

21. One final impression Nick has of Gatsby at his party is a sense of
   A. admiration
   B. Gatsby’s isolation
   C. envy
   D. Gatsby’s sense of satisfaction.

22. Nick’s final impression of the party itself is dominated by scenes of
   A. marital discord
   B. deep, meaningful conversation
   C. people jumping into the pool
   D. impromptu singing and dancing.

23. Owl-eyes appears again in Chapter 3 as
   A. a guest whom Gatsby invites to spend the night
   B. a drunken guest who accompanies Nick to his bungalow next door
   C. a passenger in a car whose wheel comes off
   D. one of the few clear-thinking guests as people begin to go home.

24. Nick’s comment about Jordan that she had begun “dealing in subterfuges when she was very young in order to keep that cool insolent smile turned to the world and yet satisfy the demands of her hard jaunty body” is made in response to his discovery that
   A. she is dishonest
   B. she dislikes Daisy and Tom
   C. she has kept Gatsby’s secret
   D. she is a careless driver.
25. Jordan likes Nick because
   A. he is careless like she is
   B. he has a relationship with someone else and therefore won’t get serious
   C. he is careful
   D. he is wealthy