

Name _____

Exploring the Setting of 'The Great Gatsby'

Short Answer Key

1. The setting of the Roaring Twenties in "The Great Gatsby" is significant because it reflects the cultural and social changes of the era. It captures the excitement, materialism, and decadence of the time, setting the stage for the characters' actions and their pursuit of the American Dream.
2. The Valley of Ashes represents the moral decay and disillusionment of the era. It serves as a stark contrast to the opulence of the Eggs and symbolizes the harsh reality lurking beneath the surface of the Jazz Age. The gray dust and soot emphasize the consequences of the characters' pursuit of pleasure and excess.
3. East Egg and West Egg symbolize the divide between old money and new money. East Egg is home to established wealthy families who inherited their wealth, while West Egg is inhabited by the nouveau riche who have recently acquired their wealth. This contrast highlights the social hierarchy and the tension between the two classes.
4. New York City serves as the epicenter of excitement in the novel, representing the allure of urban life during the 1920s. It is where characters engage in parties, affairs, and other indulgences, reflecting the era's pursuit of pleasure and excess. The city's vibrant nightlife influences the characters' actions and decisions.
5. Gatsby's mansion in West Egg symbolizes his success and his aspiration to be a part of the upper class. It represents the materialism and decadence of the era and reflects Gatsby's relentless pursuit of the American Dream. The mansion's grandeur and opulence underscore Gatsby's desire to win back the love of Daisy Buchanan and his belief in the possibility of reinventing oneself.

