*The Great Gatsby* Socratic Seminar Questions

1. How do we see the main characters in the book changing?
2. How are your opinions about specific characters changing?
3. Read the following quote: “Possibly it had occurred to him that the colossal significance of that light had now vanished forever. Compared to the great distance that had separated him from Daisy it had seemed very near to her, almost touching her. It had seemed as close as a star to the moon. Now it was again a green light on a dock. His count of enchanted objects had diminished by one.” (93). Why had the significance of the green light vanished? What does the green light symbolize and what is the significance of the green light to Gatsby and his relationship with Daisy? Now go beyond *The Great Gatsby*, what is your own personal “green light”?
4. Gatsby is a complicated man, with two sides to him. Describe the two sides and what this says about his character.
5. Comment on the title of the book *The Great Gatsby*. What does this title make you think about? Do you think Gatsby is truly worthy of the name “great”? Why do you think Fitzgerald might have chosen this title (using the limited information we have so far in the book)?
6. Gatsby shows Daisy his shirts from England and she cries into them saying, “They’re such beautiful shirts…I’ve never seen such-such beautiful shirts before.” Why do you think Daisy is crying here? What is this telling us about her character?
7. Read the following quote: “There must have been moments even that afternoon when Daisy tumbled short of his dreams-not through her own fault, but because of the colossal vitality of his illusion. It had gone beyond her, beyond everything. He had thrown himself into it with creative passion, adding to it all the time, decking it out with very bright feather that drifted his way. No amount of fire or freshness can challenge what a man will sore up in his ghostly heart” (95-96). What is Nick saying here? Put this quote into your own words. What is this quote telling us about Gatsby? What is this quote telling us about Daisy?
8. A theme in literature is a message about life, human nature or society. Look over your answers to the questions above, your character tracking sheet and other notes/assignments from the book: what are some possible themes you see so far in the book? (Remember we have already discussed and written about the American Dream, so you CANNOT mention this as a theme, go beyond this…what other messages may be suggested through the actions of characters, through the beliefs of characters, through the plot?)