**Spring 2020**

**UNI 123 Oral Presentation Questions**

**The Doll’s House (week 3)**

1. What are the different types and sources of social classes? How is the concept of class distinction depicted in “The Doll’s House”?
2. What is the psychology behind dominance? Discuss the meaning and/or the significance of recessive and dominant characters in the context of “The Doll’s House”.

**Once Upon a Time (week 4)**

1. What is a metaphor? Why are metaphors exploited in literature? Discuss the significance of the metaphor(s) used by Gordimer in “Once upon a Time”.
2. What does “otherization” mean in sociology? How is the fear of “the other” depicted in “Once upon a Time”? Discuss it from a sociocultural point of view.
3. What are the main characteristics of a fairy tale? Do you think “Once upon a Time” resembles a fairy tale? Why/why not?

**The Great Gatsby**

**Chapter 1 (week 6)**

1. What is the American Dream? How, where, when and why did it emerge/was it formulated?
2. What are different types of characters in literature? What is the significance of Nick Carraway in the first chapter?
3. What is the relationship between home and identity? Compare the homes of Nick, Gatsby, and the Buchanans. How does each home reflect the personality of its owner?
4. What is the relationship between space and characters in literature? Compare East Egg and West Egg by explaining their importance in the novel.
5. Discuss the portrayal of Daisy in *The Great Gatsby* in consideration of the following quote “ I hope she’ll be a fool - that’s the best thing a girl can be in this world, a beautiful little fool” (p.17)

**Chapter 2 (week 7)**

1. What is the importance of simile and metaphor in literature? Why does Fitzgerald describe the Valley of Ashes in such detail? What does the valley represent in the text?
2. What is your reading of the change in Myrtle’s behaviour at the apartment? What does her character symbolize? What does her character tell us about class and the nouveau riche?
3. What can we infer about Nick’s ethical code from chapters 1 and 2?
4. Considering the second chapter, to what extent can we say that American society is one that seeks pleasure/gratification? Give examples from the characters.

**Chapter 3 (week 8)**

1. What are different types of narrator in literature? What is your interpretation of Nick as a narrator in this chapter? What does chapter 3 tell us about the concepts of ‘seeing’ and ‘being seen’?
2. Why do people hold parties? What are the functions (social, economic, cultural etc.) of parties? What is the significance of the party in this chapter?

**Chapter 4 (week 9)**

1. Why is Gatsby so evasive about his past? What light does he shed upon people’s relationship to their own individual pasts?
2. Describe Fitzgerald’s use of colour and symbolism in the novel so far.
3. What is class? How is it depicted in the novel? What can we infer about Fitzgerald’s view of class and wealth from the novel so far?

**Chapter 5 (week 10)**

1. Why is it impossible to “recover the past”? Discuss the characters’ relationship with the past.
2. How and why do people become attached to inanimate objects? Why is the shirt of such significance in this chapter?
3. Discuss the concept of ‘social mobility’, both in the context of The Great Gatsby and in the real world and in your culture. Does social mobility truly exist or not? What are the mechanisms that allow and prevent social mobility?

**Chapter 6 (week 11)**

1. “He looked around him wildly, as if the past were lurking here in the shadow of the house, just out of reach of his hand.” What is your reading of this passage and what is its significance?
2. What are the parallels and significant differences between Jay Gatsby and Jamie Gatz? What is Gatsby’s opinion and relationship to Jamie Gatz?
3. Does Jay Gatsby live in the past, present or future? Why?

**Chapter 7 (week 12)**

1. What role does Wilson play in the novel, both as a character and as a symbol? What does his character tell us about (the failure of) the American Dream?
2. Is Gatsby’s love for Daisy healthy or unhealthy? What does the character of Daisy symbolize?
3. Discuss the concept of happiness in the context of The Great Gatsby. Is anybody in the novel “happy”? If so, who, and why? And if not, why are they “unhappy”?

**Chapter 8 (week 13)**

1. Discuss the way gender is portrayed/explored in The Great Gatsby. How are the female characters portrayed in the novel?
2. Nick compliments Gatsby towards the end of chapter 8. How does Nick feel about Gatsby?
3. Discuss the confrontation between Gatsby and Tom. Analyse the conversation between them in terms of the dynamics of power. Who has the upper hand, and why?
4. What is the significance of “the eyes of Doctor T.J. Eckleburg” in the final scene? What does it represent in the novel?

**Chapter 9 (week 14)**

1. Is Gatsby an existential hero? Why (not)?
2. What is irony? What is its function and significance? What are some examples of irony in the novel?
3. What effect have the events in the novel had on the various (surviving) characters?  
   To what extent the novel The Great Gatsby can be considered as a dystopian fiction?
4. Discuss the role of nemesis (poetic justice) as a literary device in *The Great Gatsby*.
5. Is *The* *Great Gatsby* written by Fitzgerald a fiction fed from a love story introducing American ideals or a satire criticizing American ideals?