

English 11 Academic
Mrs. Roberts
Final Theme
75 pts.

SPECS: This should be a multi-paragraph theme demanding an introduction to the general topic, 3 body paragraphs, and a conclusion. Your theme must use the play *Our Town*, the movie *Field of Dreams*, and EITHER of the novels *The Great Gatsby* or *A Lesson Before Dying*. Quoted material used as minor proofs is required in body paragraphs. Books will be available DURING CLASS for review and research. (Gatsby is online.)
Typed, double-spaced, required.

DIRECTIONS: You must choose one of the eight prompts below. ONLY 3 persons in each class may choose the same prompt. You will SIGN UP on a first come, first served basis ON WED, MAY 20.
Class time on Thursday 5/21, Friday 5/22, Tuesday 5/26, and Wednesday 5/27 (4 DAYS) will be provided to write the theme and consult w/ Mrs. Roberts.

DUE: AT TURNITIN on Wednesday, May 27 at end of your class period. Points off for late papers. (No printed copy needed.)

1. What elements or attitudes of the “American Dream” are illustrated in the play *Our Town*, the movie *Field of Dreams*, and the novels *The Great Gatsby* or *A Lesson Before Dying*?

Consider: What is the American Dream--freedom, love, land, fulfillment, satisfaction, etc?? Maybe you could google some concepts.

2. In what three areas of life are Jay Gatsby or Grant Wiggins and Ray Kinsella similar and/or different? Are they more different or similar?

Consider goals, dreams, attitudes, beliefs, standards, integrity, etc.

3. What statements about or attitudes toward materialism are shown in the play *Our Town*, the movie *Field of Dreams*, and the novel *The Great Gatsby* or *A Lesson Before Dying*?

Consider: What is materialism? How does one balance material needs and spiritual ideals? How important are the effects of material success in one’s life?

4. What statements about or attitudes toward spirituality are shown in the play *Our Town*, the movie *Field of Dreams*, and the novel *The Great Gatsby* or *A Lesson Before Dying*?

Consider the dead in *Our Town*, the ghosts in *FOD*, the “eyes” in *Gatsby*, the “Christ imagery” in *Lesson*. Consider the stage manager’s comments and those of George Wilson; and Sarah Crofut’s letter. Consider the characters of Terence Mann, Reverend Ambrose, and Jefferson.

5. Contrast the differing views of “repeating the past” presented in the play *Our Town*, the movie *Field of Dreams*, and the novel *The Great Gatsby* or *A Lesson Before Dying*. Consider Emily’s return to her twelfth birthday, Gatsby’s denial of the present, Ray’s attempt to assuage his guilt, Grant’s belief that nothing will change. Consider the characters of Matthew Antoine, Henri Pichot, Sam Guidry, Paul Bonin, Vivian Baptiste.

6. Contrast the “cosmic view” presented in *Our Town* with the view of life presented in the movie *Field of Dreams*, and the novel *The Great Gatsby* or *A Lesson Before Dying*. Consider elements in everyday life that connect us to a larger reality. Remember Sarah Crofut’s letter, the optometrist’s sign, and Ray’s field itself,

7. Discuss at least three different values that you see underlying the play *Our Town* as they are presented in the movie *Field of Dreams*, and the novel *The Great Gatsby* or *A Lesson Before Dying*. Consider values like family, love, loyalty, sacrifice, respect, simplicity, spirituality, (anti-)materialism, sincerity, honesty, or any others you can defend. (DON’T try to write about all of them. Choose carefully.)

8. Discuss the idea of redemption in the play *Our Town*, the movie *Field of Dreams*, and the novel *The Great Gatsby* or *A Lesson Before Dying*. Consider: What is “redemption?” How can a person be “redeemed” or “forgiven?” How is “redemption” achieved or not achieved for the characters Ray Kinsella, Grant Wiggins (OR Jefferson OR Jay Gatsby) and Simon Stimson?