

How Dialogue Reveals Aspects of a Character

What Is Dialogue?

Dialogue is spoken interaction between at least two characters who are communicating with one another, typically out loud. There are times when dialogue can take place between one character and their mind. When written, the dialogue must be a spoken conversation punctuated with quotation marks delineating the separate speakers.

Through the use of dialogue, authors add depth to their characters while depicting a sense of realism to the story, advancing the plot line, and intensifying the conflict.

Character Dialogue

Through dialogue, authors reveal various aspects of their characters' personalities. They typically accomplish this through the use of **subtext**, which is the underlying or implicit meaning that lies beneath the dialogue. Much like in real life, characters do not always present everything through the surface language of words. A story necessitates revealing character not only through what is on the surface but what is implied underneath. Strategies authors use to accomplish this include the following:

- **Conflict:** Through the author's use of language, they are able to highlight various character traits. By having one character utilize aggressive words, one using words suggesting timidity, and one using no words at all, the author is able to provide insight into any power dynamics that may exist.
- **Social Background:** The way in which characters speak can provide insight into their social standing within the world created by the author. They want their characters to accurately portray reality.
- **Duplicity:** When a character's words contradict their actions, the author is generally attempting to highlight their duplicitous nature. This technique tends to provide the reader with insight characters within the story may not have, which can increase the development of suspense.
- **Humor:** Dialogue which contrasts with the description of a character can also create a humorous effect, especially through the incorporation of sarcasm and innuendo.

> Subtext Example:

Within *The Great Gatsby*, F. Scott Fitzgerald utilizes subtext when Daisy, the titular character's love interest, pays a visit to Gatsby's mansion. This scene is the first time she has visited him since he amassed his wealth. Gatsby proceeds to show off his extravagant lifestyle through his extensive collection of shirts.

"I've got a man in England who buys me clothes. He sends over a selection of things at the beginning of each season, spring and fall."

He took out a pile of shirts and began throwing them one by one before us, shirts of sheer linen and thick silk and fine flannel which lost their folds as they fell and covered the table in many-colored disarray. While we admired, he brought more and the soft, rich heap mounted higher – shirts with stripes and scrolls and plaids in coral and apple green and lavender and faint orange and monograms of Indian blue. Suddenly with a strained sound Daisy bent her head into the shirts and began to cry stormily.

"They're such beautiful shirts," she sobbed, her voice muffled in the thick folds. "It makes me sad because I've never seen such – such beautiful shirts before."

Even though Daisy talks about the shirts as she cries, she is actually emotional because Gatsby finally has what she would call "proper wealth". However, she is now married to Tom. She may even be feeling guilty because she chose to marry Tom rather than Gatsby due to their previous economic divide. Even though the conversation is literally about shirts, the subtext behind her words and reaction reaches far deeper.



Importance of Dialogue in Stories

In the composition of a story, dialogue plays an essential component in allowing authors to advance the meaning of their work. While there are authors who excel at artfully literary fiction and craft descriptive passages, those who can effectively incorporate dialogue are able to provide another level of detail.

Authors such as Douglas Adams, Judy Blume, and John Steinbeck valued dialogue as a useful tool to enhance their work:

- **Douglas Adams:** Combines fantastical diction and imagery with humorous and sometimes baffling dialogue to develop a sense of whimsy in *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*.
- **Judy Blume:** Utilizes dialogue in stories such as *Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret* to develop her teenage characters so the young readers can relate with what is occurring in the plot.
- **John Steinbeck:** Captures the spirit of those trying to survive the Great Depression by employing dialect that would have been spoken by the everyman in *Of Mice and Men*.

Adams, Blume, and Steinbeck, among many other authors, knew the power dialogue had and utilized it to accomplish the following:

- **Characterization:** Authors develop their characters through the use of dialogue. While the content of a character's dialogue can help the reader understand them better, their diction (word choice) and syntax (sentence structure) can also showcase their traits. Ultimately, what they say and how they say it provides insight into their motivations and relevance within the text.
- **Intensifies Conflict:** Through the use of dialogue, authors increase the intensity of both internal and external conflicts. When adversarial characters interact with each other through the use of dialogue, the author increases the tension of the conflict by showcasing the characters' responses through their interactions with one another.
- **Creates Suspense:** Dialogue can play a dramatic role in the creation of suspense. While verbally interacting with others, characters can directly and indirectly develop tension. Verbal interactions rarely contain the entirety of a character's thoughts/beliefs; therefore, recognizing if, when, and why a character only provides a partial or vague response adds to increased suspense.
- **Advance Plot:** Incorporating dialogue is realistic and natural way to progress the plot and advance the characters toward the climax and resolution. Dialogue typically causes something to happen, ultimately transforming words into action.
- **Create Mood:** Authors utilize dialogue to define the atmosphere in a literary work. The way in which a character interacts with and responds to their surroundings has the ability to impact the story's mood. While the setting establishes the mood of a piece, the characters' dialogue can either enhance the feeling or contradict it depending on the author's purpose.

How to Write Dialogue

To accurately utilize dialogue within a text, the following rules should be followed:

Rule 1: Identify dialogue by placing quotation marks around the words meant to be spoken.

"Life is too important to be taken seriously."

- *Lady Windermere's Fan* by Oscar Wilde

Rule 2: Place speaker tags outside of quotation marks.

"But man is not made for defeat," he said.

- *Old Man and the Sea* by Ernest Hemingway

Rule 3: A new paragraph is needed when there is a shift in speaker.

"There's another little thing," he said uncertainly, and hesitated.

"Would you rather put it off for a few days?" I asked.

"Oh, it isn't about that. At least --" He fumbled with a series of beginnings. "Why, I thought -- why, look here, old sport, you don't make much money, do you?"

- *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald

Rule 4: Use single quotes if someone else is quoted within the dialogue.

"Ever'body's askin' that. 'What we comin' to?' Seems to me we don't never come to nothin'. Always on the way."

- *The Grapes of Wrath* by John Steinbeck

Rule 5: Use a lowercase letter if the speaker tag interrupts the dialogue. Use commas not periods to offset the speaker tag.

"Oh, you can't help that," said the Cat, "we're all mad here. I'm mad. You're mad."

- *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll

Rule 6: What is being said should be placed inside quotation marks.

"What is REAL?" asked the Rabbit one day, when they were lying side by side near the nursery fender, before Nana came to tidy the room.

- *The Velveteen Rabbit* by Margery Williams

Rule 7: Use an em dash to indicate if a speaker is interrupted by someone/something else.

"First of all," he said, "if you can learn a simple trick, Scout, you'll get along a lot better with all kinds of folks. You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view --"

"Sir?"

"--until you climb into his skin and walk around in it."

- *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee

Famous Lines from Books

"A Soldier's Home" by Ernest Hemingway

Hemingway made a career of having his characters say a great deal with very few words. His simplistic dialogue made his characters come to life in just a few lines. In "A Soldier's Home," Hemingway creates a poignant scene between a mother and her son, who recently returned from World War I.

"God has some work for everyone to do," his mother said. "There can't be no idle hands in His Kingdom."

"I'm not in His Kingdom," Krebs said.

"We are all of us in His Kingdom."

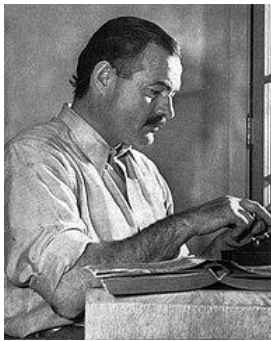
Krebs felt embarrassed and resentful as always.

"I've worried about you so much, Harold," his mother went on. "I know the temptations you must have been exposed to. I know how weak men are. I know what your own dear grandfather, my own father, told us about the Civil War and I have prayed for you. I pray for you all day long, Harold."

Krebs looked at the bacon fat hardening on the plate.

Although Krebs and his mother may have conflicting ideals, she is adamant about her beliefs, and when she pushes them onto her son, he becomes bitter and chooses not to say anything in response. Instead, he becomes silent rather than confrontational or argumentative. His mother is more expressive and proceeds to tell him about her worries and fears. Again, Krebs responds by staying silent. Hemmingway writes that Krebs "looked at the bacon fat hardening on his plate" as a way to show not tell of Krebs internal conflict (managing his bitterness and resentment) and the external conflict with the mother.

Through the use of the mother's dialogue, Hemmingway creates tension between what is being said and what is not being said. The simple act of a young man staring down at his plate reveals much about his opinion toward his mother's mindset, thereby intensifying the conflict and providing the reader with a better understanding of the protagonist.



A Thousand Splendid Suns by Khaled Hosseini

Hosseini's 'A Thousand Splendid Suns' is a novel set in Afghanistan that follows Mariam, the illegitimate child of a rich man and a servant, as she grows up in a tiny hut with her mother, who will not let her attend school:

"What's the sense in schooling a girl like you? It's like shining a spittoon."

She believes that the only lesson an Afghan woman needs to learn is how to endure. When Mariam asks, "Endure what?" to which her mother responds, "Oh, don't you fret about that. There won't be any shortage of things."

Within a few lines of dialogue, Hosseini presents the mother's bitter feelings about life and how resentful she is of her daughter. She believes life will be as miserable for Mariam as it has been for her, which adds depth to her background.

Hosseini also reveals Mariam's desire to go to school, since she has asked her mother about why she cannot go. Her mother wishes to keep Mariam at home with her and does not mind insulting her in the process. Since the mother's life has been full of enduring hardships as a servant cast out to raise her illegitimate child alone, she may think she is doing Mariam a favor by trying to harden her at a young age and developing a negative outlook on life.

Worksheet: How Dialogue Reveals Aspects of a Character

<https://study.com/academy/lesson/how-dialogue-reveals-aspects-of-a-character.html>

1. Subtext is...

- the underlying message of the story that has a moral or set of values communicated by the author to the reader.
- the explicit meaning that is said by the character(s) and/or the author to show exactly what they are thinking and feeling.
- the explicit meaning that states what characters are actually thinking and feeling in each scene.
- the underlying meaning that can refer to what characters are thinking.
- the underlying meaning that can refer to what characters are actually thinking and feeling, or to their motives or desires.

2. Powerful dialogue can reveal...

- a character's thoughts and feelings through his or her tone of voice and the way the words are spoken
- All of the answers listed
- what a character's motives or desires are based on what he or she says or avoids saying and it can reveal a character's background through his or her accent, use of slang, or mention of places or experiences
- how a character interacts with others based on his or her responses and how much or how often he or she speaks

3. In the novel *The Great Gatsby*, Daisy cries over Gatsby's beautiful clothes. What is the subtext of this scene?

- She's upset that Gatsby, her long lost love, has moved on to someone else.
- She's emotional because she is jealous of Gatsby's wealth and has mistakenly married a poor man when she could've married Gatsby.
- She feels guilty for being so materialistic, yet she loves Gatsby's fine clothes and is jealous of them.
- There is no subtext in this scene.
- She's emotional because Gatsby finally has what she and her family would call 'proper wealth', but she is now married to Tom.

4. In Hemingway's short story 'A Soldier's Home', Krebs has an uncomfortable conversation with his mother during breakfast. She talks to him about her beliefs and how she has worried about him and prayed for him while he was fighting in World War I. What is his response and what does it reveal about him?

- He responds by staring at his empty plate and contemplating a variety of angry things he could say to her, but instead he remains silent. This shows that he is vengeful and secretly full of anger and ill will.
- He responds by saying he doesn't believe in God and then sits in silence as she scolds him for being defiant.
- He responds by nodding his head in silence as he watches the bacon fat harden on his plate.
- He responds by watching the bacon fat harden on his plate. He stays silent and this shows how he obeys his mother's every wish.
- He responds by watching the bacon fat harden on his plate. He stays silent, which creates tension. He might be struggling with what to say to her since he's feeling resentful, though he isn't disrespectful towards her.

5. In the novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, what is Nana's motive for telling her daughter Mariam that all an Afghan girl needs to learn is how to endure? What does this reveal about Nana?

- She wants to prepare Mariam for the road ahead as a woman in Afghanistan. She thinks Mariam will have to deal with a lot of discrimination even though she didn't.
- She wants to keep Mariam's expectations and standards low even though she thinks life will be better for Mariam than it's been for her. This reveals how hopeful Nana is despite her own hardships endured.
- She wants to warn her daughter in case anything bad ever happens to her. This shows she's loving and protective.
- She wants to harden Mariam and have her negative outlook on life, which she probably thinks will prepare her. This reveals how bitter and resentful Nana is about life.
- She wants to scare her daughter and this reveals that she is full of ill will and trickery.

Worksheet: How Dialogue Reveals Aspects of a Character

<https://study.com/academy/lesson/how-dialogue-reveals-aspects-of-a-character.html>

1. Subtext is...

- the underlying message of the story that has a moral or set of values communicated by the author to the reader.
- the explicit meaning that is said by the character(s) and/or the author to show exactly what they are thinking and feeling.
- the explicit meaning that states what characters are actually thinking and feeling in each scene.
- the underlying meaning that can refer to what characters are thinking.
- the underlying meaning that can refer to what characters are actually thinking and feeling, or to their motives or desires.

2. Powerful dialogue can reveal...

- a character's thoughts and feelings through his or her tone of voice and the way the words are spoken
- what a character's motives or desires are based on what he or she says or avoids saying and it can reveal a character's background through his or her accent, use of slang, or mention of places or experiences
- All of the answers listed
- how a character interacts with others based on his or her responses and how much or how often he or she speaks

3. In the novel *The Great Gatsby*, Daisy cries over Gatsby's beautiful clothes. What is the subtext of this scene?

- She's upset that Gatsby, her long lost love, has moved on to someone else.
- She's emotional because she is jealous of Gatsby's wealth and has mistakenly married a poor man when she could've married Gatsby.
- She feels guilty for being so materialistic, yet she loves Gatsby's fine clothes and is jealous of them.
- There is no subtext in this scene.
- She's emotional because Gatsby finally has what she and her family would call 'proper wealth', but she is now married to Tom.

4. In Hemingway's short story 'A Soldier's Home', Krebs has an uncomfortable conversation with his mother during breakfast. She talks to him about her beliefs and how she has worried about him and prayed for him while he was fighting in World War I. What is his response and what does it reveal about him?

- He responds by staring at his empty plate and contemplating a variety of angry things he could say to her, but instead he remains silent. This shows that he is vengeful and secretly full of anger and ill will.
- He responds by saying he doesn't believe in God and then sits in silence as she scolds him for being defiant.
- He responds by nodding his head in silence as he watches the bacon fat harden on his plate.
- He responds by watching the bacon fat harden on his plate. He stays silent and this shows how he obeys his mother's every wish.
- He responds by watching the bacon fat harden on his plate. He stays silent, which creates tension. He might be struggling with what to say to her since he's feeling resentful, though he isn't disrespectful towards her.

5. In the novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, what is Nana's motive for telling her daughter Mariam that all an Afghan girl needs to learn is how to endure? What does this reveal about Nana?

- She wants to prepare Mariam for the road ahead as a woman in Afghanistan. She thinks Mariam will have to deal with a lot of discrimination even though she didn't.
- She wants to keep Mariam's expectations and standards low even though she thinks life will be better for Mariam than it's been for her. This reveals how hopeful Nana is despite her own hardships endured.
- She wants to warn her daughter in case anything bad ever happens to her. This shows she's loving and protective.
- She wants to harden Mariam and have her adopt a negative outlook on life, which she probably thinks will prepare her. This reveals how bitter and resentful Nana is about life.
- She wants to scare her daughter and this reveals that she is full of ill will and trickery.

Analyzing Character Introductions in Literature

<https://study.com/skill/learn/analyzing-character-introductions-in-literature-explanation.html>

Use the provided material to answer questions 1-5.

Read the following excerpt from "The Great Gatsby" by F. Scott Fitzgerald and then answer the questions below.

The only completely stationary object in the room was an enormous couch on which two young women were buoyed up as though upon an anchored balloon. They were both in white, and their dresses were rippling and fluttering as if they had just been blown back in after a short flight around the house. I must have stood for a few moments listening to the whip and snap of the curtains and the groan of a picture on the wall. Then there was a boom as Tom Buchanan shut the rear windows and the caught wind died out about the room, and the curtains and the rugs and the two young women ballooned slowly to the floor.

The younger of the two was a stranger to me. She was extended full length at her end of the divan, completely motionless, and with her chin raised a little, as if she were balancing something on it which was quite likely to fall. If she saw me out of the corner of her eyes she gave no hint of it—indeed, I was almost surprised into murmuring an apology for having disturbed her by coming in.

The other girl, Daisy, made an attempt to rise—she leaned slightly forward with a conscientious expression—then she laughed, an absurd, charming little laugh, and I laughed too and came forward into the room.

"I'm p-paralysed with happiness."

She laughed again, as if she said something very witty, and held my hand for a moment, looking up into my face, promising that there was no one in the world she so much wanted to see. That was a way she had. She hinted in a murmur that the surname of the balancing girl was Baker. (I've heard it said that Daisy's murmur was only to make people lean toward her; an irrelevant criticism that made it no less charming.)

1. What can the reader infer about Daisy based on her introduction in the text?

- Daisy has never met the narrator before.
- Daisy is significantly older than Ms. Baker.
- Daisy has met the narrator in the past and they have a good relationship.
- Daisy is annoyed that Tom shut the rear windows too loudly.

2. What can the reader infer about Ms. Baker based on her introduction in the text?

- Ms. Baker was relaxing when the narrator came into the room.
- Ms. Baker is a rude person.
- Ms. Baker is happy to see the narrator.
- Ms. Baker was balancing an object on her head.

3. What is the impact of introducing Daisy and Ms. Baker at the same time?

- The reader can understand how both characters have different personalities.
- The reader can understand that Ms. Baker and Daisy dislike each other.
- The reader can understand that they are sisters.
- The reader can understand that they are married.

4. What does the reader learn about Daisy's personality?

- Daisy is a single mother.
- Daisy is hard to please.
- Daisy is a rude person.
- Daisy is a charming person.

5. Why did the narrator feel the need to murmur an apology to Ms. Baker upon meeting her for the first time?

- The narrator felt that he disturbed Ms. Baker.
- The narrator interrupted a conversation between Ms. Baker and Daisy.
- The narrator frightened Ms. Baker when he shut the window.
- Ms. Baker was annoyed with the narrator when he entered the room.

Use the provided material to answer questions 6-10.

Read the following excerpt from "The Great Gatsby" by F. Scott Fitzgerald and then answer the questions below.

At a lull in the entertainment the man looked at me and smiled.

"Your face is familiar," he said politely. "Weren't you in the First Division during the war?"

"Why yes. I was in the Twenty-eighth Infantry."

We talked for a moment about some wet, grey little villages in France. Evidently he lived in this vicinity, for he told me that he had just bought a hydroplane, and was going to try it out in the morning.

"Want to go with me, old sport? Just near the shore along the Sound."

"What time?"

"Any time that suits you best."

It was on the tip of my tongue to ask his name when Jordan looked around and smiled.

"Much better." I turned again to my new acquaintance. "This is an unusual party for me. I haven't even seen the host. I live over there-" I waved my hand at the invisible hedge in the distance, "and this man Gatsby sent over his chauffeur with an invitation."

For a moment he looked at me as if he failed to understand.

"I'm Gatsby," he said suddenly.

"What!" I exclaimed. "Oh, I beg your pardon."

"I thought you knew, old sport. I'm afraid I'm not a very good host."

He smiled understandingly-much more than understandingly. It was one of those rare smiles with a quality of eternal reassurance in it, that you may come across four or five times in life. It faced-or seemed to face-the whole eternal world for an instant, and then concentrated on you with an irresistible prejudice in your favour. It understood you just so far as you wanted to be understood, believed in you as you would like to believe in yourself, and assured you that it had precisely the impression of you that, at your best, you hoped to convey. Precisely at that point it vanished-and I was looking at an elegant young roughneck, a year or two over thirty, whose elaborate formality of speech just missed being absurd. Some time before he introduced himself I'd got a strong impression that he was picking his words with care.

6. What does the reader learn about Gatsby from his introduction?

- Gatsby is polite and understanding.
- Gatsby was injured in the war.
- Gatsby is rude because he did not introduce himself to the narrator.
- Gatsby has known the narrator for a long time.

7. What is the impact of introducing Gatsby by having him engage in friendly conversation with the narrator?

- It enables the reader to learn that Gatsby has met the narrator before.
- It teaches the reader that Gatsby is in love with Jordan.
- It shows how unlikeable Gatsby is.
- It shows that the narrator is suspicious of Gatsby.

8. What can the reader infer about the future relationship between the narrator and Gatsby?

- Gatsby and the narrator will become rivals.
- The narrator will never see Gatsby again.
- Gatsby and the narrator will have a friendly relationship.
- Gatsby and the narrator dislike each other.

9. Which of the following pieces of textual evidence is an example of Gatsby's "elaborate formality of speech"?

- "Just near the shore along the Sound."
- "Your face is familiar."
- "'I'm Gatsby,' he said suddenly."
- "I thought you knew, old sport. I'm afraid I'm not a very good host."

10. Which piece of textual evidence demonstrates the narrator's perception of Gatsby?

- "For a moment he looked at me as if he failed to understand."
- "I was looking at an elegant young roughneck, a year or two over thirty, whose elaborate formality of speech just missed being absurd."
- "Evidently he lived in this vicinity, for he told me that he had just bought a hydroplane, and was going to try it out in the morning."
- "'Your face is familiar,' he said politely."

Analyzing Character Introductions in Literature

<https://study.com/skill/learn/analyzing-character-introductions-in-literature-explanation.html>

Use the provided material to answer questions 1-5.

Read the following excerpt from "The Great Gatsby" by F. Scott Fitzgerald and then answer the questions below.

The only completely stationary object in the room was an enormous couch on which two young women were buoyed up as though upon an anchored balloon. They were both in white, and their dresses were rippling and fluttering as if they had just been blown back in after a short flight around the house. I must have stood for a few moments listening to the whip and snap of the curtains and the groan of a picture on the wall. Then there was a boom as Tom Buchanan shut the rear windows and the caught wind died out about the room, and the curtains and the rugs and the two young women ballooned slowly to the floor.

The younger of the two was a stranger to me. She was extended full length at her end of the divan, completely motionless, and with her chin raised a little, as if she were balancing something on it which was quite likely to fall. If she saw me out of the corner of her eyes she gave no hint of it—indeed, I was almost surprised into murmuring an apology for having disturbed her by coming in.

The other girl, Daisy, made an attempt to rise—she leaned slightly forward with a conscientious expression—then she laughed, an absurd, charming little laugh, and I laughed too and came forward into the room.

"I'm p-paralysed with happiness."

She laughed again, as if she said something very witty, and held my hand for a moment, looking up into my face, promising that there was no one in the world she so much wanted to see. That was a way she had. She hinted in a murmur that the surname of the balancing girl was Baker. (I've heard it said that Daisy's murmur was only to make people lean toward her; an irrelevant criticism that made it no less charming.)

1. What can the reader infer about Daisy based on her introduction in the text?

- Daisy has never met the narrator before.
- Daisy has met the narrator in the past and they have a good relationship.
- Daisy is significantly older than Ms. Baker.
- Daisy is annoyed that Tom shut the rear windows too loudly.

2. What can the reader infer about Ms. Baker based on her introduction in the text?

- Ms. Baker was relaxing when the narrator came into the room.
- Ms. Baker is a rude person.
- Ms. Baker is happy to see the narrator.
- Ms. Baker was balancing an object on her head.

3. What is the impact of introducing Daisy and Ms. Baker at the same time?

- The reader can understand how both characters have different personalities.
- The reader can understand that Ms. Baker and Daisy dislike each other.
- The reader can understand that they are sisters.
- The reader can understand that they are married.

4. What does the reader learn about Daisy's personality?

- Daisy is a single mother.
- Daisy is hard to please.
- Daisy is a rude person.
- Daisy is a charming person.

5. Why did the narrator feel the need to murmur an apology to Ms. Baker upon meeting her for the first time?

- The narrator felt that he disturbed Ms. Baker.
- The narrator interrupted a conversation between Ms. Baker and Daisy.
- The narrator frightened Ms. Baker when he shut the window.
- Ms. Baker was annoyed with the narrator when he entered the room.

Use the provided material to answer questions 6-10.

Read the following excerpt from "The Great Gatsby" by F. Scott Fitzgerald and then answer the questions below.

At a lull in the entertainment the man looked at me and smiled.

"Your face is familiar," he said politely. "Weren't you in the First Division during the war?"

"Why yes. I was in the Twenty-eighth Infantry."

We talked for a moment about some wet, grey little villages in France. Evidently he lived in this vicinity, for he told me that he had just bought a hydroplane, and was going to try it out in the morning.

"Want to go with me, old sport? Just near the shore along the Sound."

"What time?"

"Any time that suits you best."

It was on the tip of my tongue to ask his name when Jordan looked around and smiled.

"Much better." I turned again to my new acquaintance. "This is an unusual party for me. I haven't even seen the host. I live over there-" I waved my hand at the invisible hedge in the distance, "and this man Gatsby sent over his chauffeur with an invitation."

For a moment he looked at me as if he failed to understand.

"I'm Gatsby," he said suddenly.

"What!" I exclaimed. "Oh, I beg your pardon."

"I thought you knew, old sport. I'm afraid I'm not a very good host."

He smiled understandingly-much more than understandingly. It was one of those rare smiles with a quality of eternal reassurance in it, that you may come across four or five times in life. It faced-or seemed to face-the whole eternal world for an instant, and then concentrated on you with an irresistible prejudice in your favour. It understood you just so far as you wanted to be understood, believed in you as you would like to believe in yourself, and assured you that it had precisely the impression of you that, at your best, you hoped to convey. Precisely at that point it vanished-and I was looking at an elegant young roughneck, a year or two over thirty, whose elaborate formality of speech just missed being absurd. Some time before he introduced himself I'd got a strong impression that he was picking his words with care.

6. What does the reader learn about Gatsby from his introduction?

- Gatsby is polite and understanding.
- Gatsby was injured in the war.
- Gatsby is rude because he did not introduce himself to the narrator.
- Gatsby has known the narrator for a long time.

7. What is the impact of introducing Gatsby by having him engage in friendly conversation with the narrator?

- It enables the reader to learn that Gatsby has met the narrator before.
- It shows how unlikeable Gatsby is.
- It teaches the reader that Gatsby is in love with Jordan.
- It shows that the narrator is suspicious of Gatsby.

8. What can the reader infer about the future relationship between the narrator and Gatsby?

- Gatsby and the narrator will become rivals.
- Gatsby and the narrator will have a friendly relationship.
- The narrator will never see Gatsby again.
- Gatsby and the narrator dislike each other.

9. Which of the following pieces of textual evidence is an example of Gatsby's "elaborate formality of speech"?

- "Just near the shore along the Sound."
- "'I'm Gatsby,' he said suddenly."
- "Your face is familiar."
- "I thought you knew, old sport. I'm afraid I'm not a very good host."

10. Which piece of textual evidence demonstrates the narrator's perception of Gatsby?

- "For a moment he looked at me as if he failed to understand."
- "Evidently he lived in this vicinity, for he told me that he had just bought a hydroplane, and was going to try it out in the morning."
- "I was looking at an elegant young roughneck, a year or two over thirty, whose elaborate formality of speech just missed being absurd."
- "'Your face is familiar,' he said politely."