I use a very basic one with my non-honors kids that might work for you.  In the introduction they must define what they think the American dream is, what Fitzgerald thinks it is, or what a major character thinks the dream is.  Then they select one of the major characters and defend their thesis of whether or not that character achieved, didn't achieve, or is on track to achieve the dream based on that character's thoughts, actions, dialogue (or failure to act or speak).

That last part is for Nick--boy, do I dislike Nick.

apenglishfiles@yahoogroups.com; on behalf of; Susan van Druten [bosvd@cpinternet.com](mailto:bosvd@cpinternet.com)

My favorite is to challenge them with a question about the end of the book - what is the dramatic purpose of  introducing a brand-new character, Gatz's father?  How do these scenes provide the resolution to the plot - that without them, the book would pack much less rhetorical punch, in fact the meaning of the book would be thoroughly diminished.

apenglishfiles@yahoogroups.com; on behalf of; Geoffrey Layton <layton.geoffrey@yahoo.com>