# The Great Gatsby

# Close Reading: Chapter Two

“This is a valley of ashes-a fantastic farm where ashes grow like wheat into ridges and

hills and grotesque gardens, where ashes take the forms of houses and chimneys and

rising smoke and finally, with a transcendent effort, of men who move dimly and already

crumbling through the powdery air. Occasionally a line of grey cars crawls along an

invisible track, gives out a ghastly creak and comes to rest, and immediately the ash-grey

men swarm up with leaden spades and stir up an impenetrable cloud which screens their

obscure operations from your sight” (23).

1. **Diction**: *Circle* all repeated words. Highlight words that seem significant to in terms of **tone** or **theme**. Be sure to check verbs and adjectives.

2. **Imagery**: *Underline* **imagery** and **figures of speech** (metaphor, simile, personification). Note any patterns or groupings of images.

3. **Syntax**: Describe the *syntax*, note sentence length, construction, patterns, punctuation,

and rhythms. Consider how the *syntax* contributes to **tone** and **theme**.

4. **Sound devices**: Use [**brackets**] to denote *alliteration*, *assonance*, *internal rhyme*,

*consonance*, and *onomatopoeia*.

5. **Tone**: Describe the *tone* of this passage using specific examples from the passage to

support your assertion.

6. **Theme**: What does the valley of ashes represent? Consider the name of the setting, and

the contrast of this setting to East/West Egg. Use evidence from the passage to

support your assertion.