

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

***Their Eyes Were Watching God: Chapters 1 and 2 Close-Reading Discussion Questions***

Use the text to answer the following questions:

- 1) Hurston begins the book with an extended metaphor. What are the dreams of men? How are they different from the dreams of women? Who doesn't get disappointed?
- 2) Using these gendered definitions of dreams, which characters in *Gatsby* fall under each definition?
- 3) Examine the way that Hurston develops the exposition of the novel. How does she establish the setting of the book? How are the characters of Janie Turner and Tea Cake introduced? Whose voices do you hear first?
- 4) Describe the town's attitude towards Janie. Describe her attitude towards the town. How does the communal dialogue help establish the town as a character?
- 5) On page 7, Janie tells Pheoby, "Unless you see de fur, a mink skin ain't no different from a coon hide." Based on context clues, what do you think this saying means?
- 6) Re-read the passage that begins with "If you so desire" and ends with "dis year and a half y'all ain't seen me" (6).
  - a. What is the meaning of this passage?
  - b. Use a direct quote to support your answer.

- 7) Re-read the three paragraphs that begin with “It was a spring afternoon” and end with “Waiting for the world to be made” (10-11).
  - a. What is going on in this passage?
  - b. This passage has some religious overtones. What examples of biblical language can you find? What might the meaning of these allusions be?
- 8) Based on the first chapter, what do you think some of the conflicts in the novel are going to be? What do you think the themes might be? Cite evidence from the text to support your predictions.
- 9) Hurston frequently uses personification in her descriptions of the natural world. Find one example of personification from the first chapter and write it below.
- 10) What is the significance of Nanny being described as looking “like the standing roots of some old tree that had been torn away by storm” (12)?
- 11) Based on the end of Chapter Two, why is Nanny worried about Janie? Look especially at the circumstances surrounding Leafy’s and Janie’s conceptions.