

Analytical Essay Outline Example

Introduction

- **Hook:** A brief note on how a single symbol can carry an entire character's hope.
- **Context:** Short explanation of Gatsby's fixation on Daisy and the world he wants.
- **Thesis:** The green light symbolizes Gatsby's idealized dream, his distance from reality, and the illusion that keeps his ambition alive.

Body Paragraph 1

- **Topic Sentence:** The green light represents Gatsby's idealized dream that never settles into reality.
- **Evidence:** Nick's description of Gatsby reaching toward the light across the bay.
- **Analysis:** Shows how the physical distance reinforces the emotional distance between Gatsby's vision and the truth.
- **Link:** Connects the unreachable dream to the thesis.

Body Paragraph 2

- **Topic Sentence:** The green light also reflects Gatsby's belief that his future can be shaped by desire.
- **Evidence:** The passage explaining Gatsby's confidence in "the orgastic future."
- **Analysis:** Demonstrates how his belief becomes a guiding force despite lacking real foundation.
- **Link:** Ties Gatsby's mindset to the broader theme of self-created illusions.

Body Paragraph 3

- **Topic Sentence:** Over time, the green light becomes a symbol of illusion rather than hope.
- **Evidence:** Nick's reflection at the end of the novel when the light loses its magic.
- **Analysis:** Shows how the fading symbolism mirrors Gatsby's collapse and the empty promise of his dream.
- **Link:** Connects the illusion back to the thesis and the novel's larger message.

Conclusion

- **Restated Thesis:** Gatsby's dream remains unreachable, shaped by desire and held together by illusion.
- **Summary of Points:** Recap of how each paragraph revealed a layer of meaning in the symbol.
- **Broader Significance:** Reflection on how powerful dreams can shift into illusions when they rely on fantasy rather than reality.