F. Scott Fitzgerald A&E Biography Quiz

1. When F. Scott Fitzgerald was just a teenager, he realized that he had a talent for writing. He decided to use this talent to write plays, which he produced at his school. What was his main motivation for creating these plays? (2 pts.)

2. Where did Fitzgerald attend college? (1 pt.)

3. After Fitzgerald was kicked out of college for failing grades, what did he decide to do next? What ended up disappointing him about this venture? (2 pts.)

4. What was the first name of Fitzgerald’s wife? (1 pt.)

5. What was the title of Fitzgerald’s first big commercially successful novel? Why was it so successful? (2 pts.)

6. Describe the Fitzgerals’ marriage (3 pts.):

7. Name Fitzgerald’s friend/drinking buddy who became his literary rival (1 pt.):

8. Why did Fitzgerald lose his audience (and, consequently, the flow of money into his bank account) in the mid-to-late 1930s? (2 pts.)

9. How did Fitzgerald’s wife die? (2 pts.)

10. What lesson can we learn from F. Scott Fitzgerald’s life? (3 pts.)
1. When F. Scott Fitzgerald was just a teenager, he realized that he had a talent for writing. He decided to use this talent to write plays, which he produced at his school. What was his main motivation for creating these plays? (2 pts.)
He wanted to be popular, so he wrote original plays and cast the popular kids, along with himself, into the main roles. Fitzgerald was consumed with the idea of fitting in and being well-regarded by his peers.

2. Where did Fitzgerald attend college? (1 pt.) Princeton University

3. After Fitzgerald was kicked out of college for failing grades, what did he decide to do next? What ended up disappointing him about this venture? (2 pts.)
He joined the U.S. Army, hoping that he could prove himself during the battles of World War I. Alas, the war ended before he was ever deployed. He was soon discharged from the military and was disappointed that his Army experience, just like college, had failed to meet his expectations. He then moved to New York to try to make some money in advertising.

4. What was the first name of Fitzgerald’s wife? (1 pt.) Zelda

5. What was the title of Fitzgerald’s first big commercially successful novel? Why was it so successful? (2 pts.)
The book was called This Side of Paradise. It was popular because it discussed the risque behaviors of rebellious young adults who were breaking social rules and expectations. Specifically, the book dealt with drinking and sex, two subjects that always help attract readers.

6. Describe the Fitzgeralds’ marriage (3 pts.): It was an alcohol-soaked roller coaster ride. F. Scott was madly in love with Zelda, who only agreed to marry him after he’d made some money in publishing. They were the king and the queen of the Jazz Age, hosting lavish parties and being on the cutting edge of fashion and trends. This lifestyle was expensive to maintain and F. Scott worked hard to continue with his writing so that the bills could be paid. Eventually, Zelda would slip into mental illness and F. Scott, though he would have an affair with another woman, still cared for Zelda and tried to ensure the best care possible for her. They never divorced.

7. Name Fitzgerald’s friend/drinking buddy who became his literary rival (1 pt.): Ernest Hemingway

8. Why did Fitzgerald lose his audience (and, consequently, the flow of money into his bank account) in the mid-to-late 1930s? (2 pts.)
During the Great Depression, people were financially in ruins and no longer cared to read about rich people and their manufactured dramas. Fitzgerald’s subject matter no longer fit the audience of book buyers.

9. How did Fitzgerald’s wife die? (2 pts.)
She was locked in a wing of an insane asylum when there was an electrical fire. She burned to death. Yikes!

10. What lesson can we learn from F. Scott Fitzgerald’s life? (3 pts.)
Answers will vary, but students will likely talk about the misery that comes from caring too much about reaching for popularity/wealth/a higher social class. Students might also talk about the fall that is inevitable after living so high. It’s almost like an alcohol-fueled party must be followed by the misery of the hangover. So it was for F. Scott and Zelda Fitzgerald.