**F. Scott Fitzgerald *The Great Gatsby* (1925)**

Suggested resources:

An online version of the text: <https://www.planetebook.com/free-ebooks/the-great-gatsby.pdf> (a downloadable pdf)

[www.shmoop.com](http://www.shmoop.com)

[www.yorknotes.com](http://www.yorknotes.com)

LitCharts study pack

Google Scholar and/ or JSTOR

eMag supplement articles

Some additional suggested reading:

F. Scott Fitzgerald *‘Tales of the Jazz Age’, ‘The Beautiful and Damned’, or ‘Tender is the Night’*

Dorothy Parker short stories

Ernest Hemingway *‘The Sun Also Rises’*

William Faulkner *‘The Sound and the Fury’*

Virginia Woolf ‘*Mrs Dalloway’*

T. S. Eliot *‘The Waste Land’*

Key foci: engagement with the text, its contexts and themes, key devices

Suggested activities (chapters 1 – 4):

1. Map out the associations that you have with *The Great Gatsby*, whether as a novel, a film, references that you may have heard.
2. Look up a few covers of the novel, including the original blue one. What do they suggest to you about the text?
3. Research the following contexts:
   1. The Roaring Twenties and the Jazz Age
   2. The Lost Generation
   3. The American Dream
   4. Prohibition in the 1920s and its consequences
   5. Fordist economy/ mass production, advertising and conspicuous consumption in the 1920s
   6. Immigration to the United States, migration within the United States
4. Using your research of the contexts, which types of characters and events do you expect to see in the novel?
5. Research the meaning of the names of the characters. What do they suggest to you?
6. Read Chapter 1 and focus on the characterisation of Nick Caraway. How does Fitzgerald present him? How is the narrator used as a framing device and to manipulate the reader response?
7. Read Chapter 1 and create some initial links with the following themes: class and status, wealth, gender, prejudice, image and (self)branding, The American Dream
   1. Continue adding to your table as you continue reading the novel.
8. Read Chapter 1 - 3 and map out Fitzgerald’s initial characterisation of Tom Buchanan, Daisy Buchanan, Jordan Baker, Myrtle Wilson, George Wilson, Jay Gatsby.
   1. As you continue reading, do your impressions stay the same, change, vary?
9. Read Chapter 1 – 4 and map out Fitzgerald’s use of the following techniques (you will be adding to them as you continue reading the novel):
   1. Colour patterning, e.g. white; light/ brightness, yellow and gold, the green light
   2. Cinematic techniques, e.g. tracking of the narrator on his visit to the Buchanans, zooming in/ tableaux of Daisy and Jordan
   3. The use of settings in the exposition, e.g. Gatsby’s and Buchanans’ mansions, the contrast between West/ East Egg and The Valley of Ashes, Myrtle’s NY apartment and Gatsby’s mansion (and their parties)
   4. Build up of tension, e.g. the anticipation of readers’ introduction to Jay Gatsby, introducing conflicts
   5. Foreshadowing, e.g. through violent imagery
   6. Verisimilitude, e.g. real life locations
   7. References to the Old World, e.g. Oxford and Versailles
   8. The treatment and references to time, e.g. evening, Sunday morning
   9. References to particular material possessions, e.g. Myrtle’s dog, Gatsby’s library, Gatsby’s car
   10. References to vision, e.g. ‘the eyes of Doctor T. J. Eckleburg’
10. Consider the characters so far. If you were a director, who would you cast to play them in your production, and why? You can consider specific actors or the characteristics of the actors that you think would do the parts justice.
11. Create a short presentation of a chosen character or setting.
    1. A collage
    2. A powerpoint
    3. A moodboard
    4. *An alternative creative option*
12. Choose a character and write 2 – 3 paragraphs of their internal monologue
    1. Try to use some of the wording from the novel
    2. Try to include some of the events or references from the novel through paraphrasing.
13. Choose a moment from the novel, e.g. one of the parties. Which changes would you make to update the scene to the 21st century?
14. Map out how a modern reader may relate to the ideas in the novel. Which parallels may we perceive? Any contrasts, e.g. due to changes in society over time?
15. Research some key tragic conventions: Does Fitzgerald utilise any tragic conventions in his novel?
16. Research the features of chivalric romance: Does Fitzgerald incorporate any of the features in his novel?
17. As you finish reading the novel, what is your initial response to the resolution? To what extent do you find it satisfying?
18. Consider your view on the following statements:
    1. *‘Jay Gatsby is no hero – he is a manipulating and self-serving criminal.’* How far do you agree?
    2. *‘Fitzgerald’s novel proves that the idealised democratic vision of the 1920s US is just a chimera; it is privilege that prevails.’* How far do you agree?
    3. *‘Fitzgerald’s novel examines the gender inequalities permeating contemporary society. All female characters are ultimately victims.’* How far do you agree?