

Dear future Junior AP Student,

Welcome to AP Language and Composition! In preparation for our study of American literature next year, I am including the following directions for your summer reading assignment. This summer you will read *The Great Gatsby*, by F. Scott Fitzgerald, and annotate as you read in order to complete a short writing reflection. This assignment will be **due on the first day** that you return to school. This will be in addition to our one school, one book that you also must read by the first day of school.

In exploring this text, we will engage a set of themes that our contemporary American experience has made imminent: our nation's ideals of family values, poverty, wealth, success, and "hard work." We will work on recognizing, questioning, and articulating the inherent values, beliefs, and practices of the "American Experience." Our focus with this work will be the exploration of how some groups may be disenfranchised by the expectations implicit in our society's concept of the American Dream. We will use Fitzgerald's book to research and debate certain cultural assumptions that surround the idea of the American Dream.

The ideology inherent within the "American Dream" tells us that, in America, anything is possible! In other words, anyone can "make it" in this great country, simply by "pulling oneself up by one's bootstraps." This theory defines hard work as being the key to social and economic success. Therefore, its implications reveal that those who are not financially successful must not "work hard enough." In reading our summer reading book, we will explore how these assumptions are at play in our contemporary atmosphere.

Fitzgerald's novel, written in 1925, investigates the culture of the Jazz Age and the ways in which socioeconomic success defines self-identity in modern America. As you read this book, I want you to heavily annotate it while considering the following questions.

Annotating for *The Great Gatsby*: Consider all of the following and mark passages in the novel.

1. Relationships between characters in the text.
2. Fitzgerald's opinion of Jay Gatsby.
3. Nick's opinion of Jay Gatsby.
4. Fitzgerald's view of the American Dream.
5. Fitzgerald's descriptions of wealth and how they relate to his own views about excess.
6. Nature of love between characters in the novel
7. Motifs of haunting, ghosts, or nostalgia in the novel.

After you finish reading, write an essay between 700-900 words answering the following question:

- Does Fitzgerald believe that the American dream is an inclusive or exclusive ideology?

Your essay must be typed in MLA format and have perfect grammar. You should include at least 4 quotes (no longer than 15 words each) from *The Great Gatsby* to support your reasoning. Make sure that you introduce each quote with its context (what was happening at this point in the book? Who was there? Etc). Then, make sure to fully explain how the quote supports your argument. You should include a works cited page. Your paper should be well organized with an introduction and thesis statement, body paragraphs with topic sentences, concrete details, and commentary, and a conclusion.

Your paper is due to turnitin.com before our first class. You must also submit a hard copy in class.

Info to enroll in the class on turnitin:

Class ID: 21228194

Code: ap1920