

# Honors/AP: The Great Gatsby

Content Area: **English Language Arts**  
Course(s): **Generic Course, Language Arts Literacy III Honors**  
Time Period: **4 weeks**  
Length: **4 weeks**  
Status: **Published**

## Unit Overview

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This unit will use *The Great Gatsby* as a thematic and contextual background for understanding fact of, reasons for, and results of wealth inequality, social inequality, greed, and political/social/class uprising. The unit will emphasize non-fiction texts to accompany the novel as a means of exposing the students to possible AP Language exam questions modern political documents, political journalism, music of the era, photo-journalism, et cetera. Finally, students will use the context of the book to write a variety of essays exploring the issues in the unit as well as responding and persuading others about issues in the unit.

## Transfer

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Students will be able to independently use their learning to...

- Understand the role of historical context and its importance in a novel's meaning.
- Identify examples of internal and external conflict that exist in adult relationships.
- Recognize how various settings in a novel can affect the plot of a text.
- Identify and make personal connections to "The American Dream" as it relates to love and relationships in both the 1920's and today's society.
- Recognize the role and importance of a narrator and his point of view as well as it's affect on a story's meaning.
- Analyze arguments about wealth inequality in modern writing and media.
- Identify and describe the claims and evidence of an argument. (SC3)
- Analyze and select evidence to develop and refine a claim. (SC4)
- Describe the line of reasoning and explain whether it supports an argument's overarching thesis. (5.A)
- Explain how the organization of a text creates unity and coherence and reflects a line of reasoning. (5.B)
- Recognize and explain the use of methods of development to accomplish a purpose. (5.C)
- Develop a line of reasoning and commentary that explains it throughout an argument. (6.A)
- Use transitional elements to guide the reader through the line of reasoning of an argument. (6.B)
- Use appropriate methods of development to advance an argument. (6.C)
- Explain how word choice, comparisons, and syntax contribute to the specific tone or style of a text. (7.A)
- Strategically use words, comparisons, and syntax to convey a specific tone or style in an argument. (8.A)

## Meaning

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## **Understandings**

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Students will understand...

- Understand the following in all readings:
- Thesis or Claim
- Tone or Attitude
- Purpose
- Audience and Occasion
- Aristotelian Triangle: Audience, Speaker, Subject
- Evidence or Data
- Appeals: Logos, Ethos, Pathos
- Assumptions or Warrants
- Style (how the author communicates his message: rhetorical mode, rhetorical devices, which always include diction and syntax)
- Organizational patterns found in the text, i.e., main idea detail, comparison/contrast, cause/effect, extended definition, problem/solution, etc.
- Use of detail to develop a general idea

Students will also know the following:

- How Fitzgerald uses color, imagery, and manipulation of time to progress his exploration of hope, wealth inequality, love, et cetera.
- How Fitzgerald uses characterization to criticize the frivolity of the Roaring Twenties.
- How governmental and banking policies/decisions lead to rampant wealth inequality.
- How inequality of wealth and class equals an inequality of justice.

## **Essential Questions**

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Students will keep considering...

1. What is Fitzgerald saying about the interplay between poverty, wealth inequality, greed, and class struggle in relation to the American Dream?
2. How does Fitzgerald's use of symbolism contribute to his theme?
3. How do writers with political and social agendas make effective arguments?
4. How do writers guide understand of a text's lines of reasoning and claims through that text's organization and integration of evidence?
5. How does a rhetorical situation inform the specific stylistic choices that writers make?

## **Application of Knowledge and Skill**

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### **Students will know...**

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Students will know...

- Understand the following in all readings:
- Thesis or Claim
- Tone or Attitude
- Purpose
- Audience and Occasion
- Aristotelian Triangle: Audience, Speaker, Subject
- Evidence or Data
- Appeals: Logos, Ethos, Pathos
- Assumptions or Warrants
- Style (how the author communicates his message: rhetorical mode, rhetorical devices, which always include diction and syntax)
- Organizational patterns found in the text, i.e., main idea detail, comparison/contrast, cause/effect, extended definition, problem/solution, etc.
- Use of detail to develop a general idea

Students will also know the following:

- How Fitzgerald uses color, imagery, and manipulation of time to progress his exploration of hope, wealth inequality, love, et cetera.
- How Fitzgerald uses characterization to criticize the frivolity of the Roaring Twenties.
- How governmental and banking policies/decisions lead to rampant wealth inequality.
- How inequality of wealth and class equals an inequality of justice.

### **Students will be skilled at...**

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Students will be able to independently use their learning to...

- Students will be able to independently use their learning to...
  - Understand the role of historical context and its importance in a novel's meaning.
  - Identify examples of internal and external conflict that exist in adult relationships.
  - Recognize how various settings in a novel can affect the plot of a text.
  - Identify and make personal connections to "The American Dream" as it relates to love and relationships in both the 1920's and today's society.
  - Recognize the role and importance of a narrator and his point of view as well as its affect on a story's meaning.
  - Analyze arguments about wealth inequality in modern writing and media.

- Identify and describe the claims and evidence of an argument. (SC3)
- Describe the line of reasoning and explain whether it supports an argument's overarching thesis. (5.A)
- Explain how the organization of a text creates unity and coherence and reflects a line of reasoning. (5.B)
- Recognize and explain the use of methods of development to accomplish a purpose. (5.C)
- Explain how word choice, comparisons, and syntax contribute to the specific tone or style of a text. (7.A)
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- Refine ability to do the following in their own writing (in-class and take-home essays):
- Develop a line of reasoning and commentary that explains it throughout an argument. (6.A)
- Use transitional elements to guide the reader through the line of reasoning of an argument. (6.B)
- Use appropriate methods of development to advance an argument. (6.C)
- Strategically use words, comparisons, and syntax to convey a specific tone or style in an argument. (8.A)
- Analyze and select evidence to develop and refine a claim. (SC4)

## **Academic Vocabulary**

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- Narrator
- Point of View
- Prohibition
- Style/Content
- Symbolism
- The American Dream

## **Learning Goal**

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Students will understand Fitzgerald's view about the interplay between poverty, wealth inequality, greed, and class struggle in relation to the American Dream.

## **Objective 1**

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Students will cite examples from the novel of the themes of poverty, wealth inequality, greed, and class struggle while reading, in reflections, and in class discussions.

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|---------------|--|
| LA.RL.11-12.1 | Cite strong and thorough textual evidence and make relevant connections to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain. |
| LA.RL.11-12.2 | Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development  |

over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.

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| LA.RL.11-12.3   | Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).  |
| LA.RL.11-12.7   | Analyze multiple interpretations of a story, drama, or poem (e.g., recorded or live production of a play or recorded novel or poetry), evaluating how each version interprets the source text. (e.g., Shakespeare and other authors.)  |
| LA.RL.11-12.10a | By the end of grade 11, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems at grade level text-complexity or above with scaffolding as needed.   |
| LA.W.11-12.10   | Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes.   |
| LA.SL.11-12.1   | Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with peers on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.                         |
| LA.SL.11-12.1.A | Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well reasoned exchange of ideas.                      |
| LA.SL.11-12.1.C | Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives.          |
| LA.SL.11-12.1.D | Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task. |

## **Objective 2**

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Students will write analytically about the themes of poverty, wealth inequality, greed, and class struggle in the novel.

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| LA.RL.11-12.1   | Cite strong and thorough textual evidence and make relevant connections to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.   |
| LA.RL.11-12.2   | Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.                                      |
| LA.RL.11-12.3   | Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).  |
| LA.RL.11-12.7   | Analyze multiple interpretations of a story, drama, or poem (e.g., recorded or live production of a play or recorded novel or poetry), evaluating how each version interprets the source text. (e.g., Shakespeare and other authors.)  |
| LA.RL.11-12.10a | By the end of grade 11, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems at grade level text-complexity or above with scaffolding as needed.   |
| LA.W.11-12.2.A  | Introduce a topic; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information so that each new element builds on that which precedes it to create a unified whole; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension. |

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| LA.W.11-12.2.B | Develop the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience’s knowledge of the topic.                           |
| LA.W.11-12.2.C | Use appropriate and varied transitions and syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.   |
| LA.W.11-12.2.D | Use precise language, domain-specific vocabulary, and techniques such as metaphor, simile, and analogy to manage the complexity of the topic.  |
| LA.W.11-12.2.F | Provide a concluding paragraph or section that supports the argument presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).   |
| LA.W.11-12.4   | Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)                                 |
| LA.W.11-12.5   | Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, trying a new approach, or consulting a style manual (such as MLA or APA Style), focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience. |

## **Learning Goal 2**

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Students will understand how Fitzgerald uses of symbolism, characterization, and manipulation of narrative to explore the themes of love, wealth, and justice inequality.

## **Objective 1**

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Students will cite examples of how Fitzgerald develops characters through direct and indirect characterization.

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| LA.RL.11-12.3 | Analyze the impact of the author’s choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed). |
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## **Objective 2**

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Students will identify and analyze how Fitzgerald uses and develops symbols in individual scenes and throughout the novel.

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| LA.RL.11-12.3 | Analyze the impact of the author’s choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed). |
| LA.RL.11-12.6 | Analyze a case in which grasping a point of view requires distinguishing what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant (e.g., satire, sarcasm, irony, or understatement).                               |

## **Objective 3**

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Students will cite examples of how Fitzgerald uses Nick's voice to manipulate the narrative.

LA.RL.11-12.3

Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).

## **Objective 4**

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Students will evaluate and analyze how symbolism, characterization, and manipulate of the narrative inform and shift the reader's understanding of the novel's themes.

LA.RL.11-12.1

Cite strong and thorough textual evidence and make relevant connections to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

LA.RL.11-12.2

Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.

LA.RL.11-12.5

Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.

LA.RL.11-12.6

Analyze a case in which grasping a point of view requires distinguishing what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant (e.g., satire, sarcasm, irony, or understatement).

LA.RL.11-12.10a

By the end of grade 11, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems at grade level text-complexity or above with scaffolding as needed.

## **Learning Goal 3**

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Students will write synthesis and analysis essays which pay close attention to the rhetorical situation of Fitzgerald's novel and texts related to it, paying close attention to the selection of evidence to advance a claim, organization to develop the line of reasoning, and especially, in terms of style, the word choice and elements of composition that should be used to advance the argument.

## **Objective 1**

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Demonstrate an understanding of an audience's beliefs, values, or needs.

LA.W.11-12.1.B

Develop claim(s) and counterclaims avoiding common logical fallacies and using sound reasoning and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases.

LA.W.11-12.1.D

Establish and maintain a style and tone appropriate to the audience and purpose (e.g., formal and objective for academic writing) while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.

LA.W.11-12.2.E

Establish and maintain a style and tone appropriate to the audience and purpose (e.g., formal and objective for academic writing) while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.

## **Objective 2**

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Qualify a claim using modifiers, counterarguments, or alternative perspectives.

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| LA.W.11-12.1.A | Introduce precise, knowledgeable claim(s), establish the significance of the claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that logically sequences claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.  |
| LA.W.11-12.1.B | Develop claim(s) and counterclaims avoiding common logical fallacies and using sound reasoning and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases. |

## **Objective 3**

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Develop a line of reasoning and commentary that explains it throughout an argument.

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|----------------|---|
| LA.W.11-12.1.B | Develop claim(s) and counterclaims avoiding common logical fallacies and using sound reasoning and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases. |
| LA.W.11-12.2.B | Develop the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.  |

## **Objective 4**

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Use transitional elements to guide the reader through the line of reasoning of an argument.

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| LA.W.11-12.1.C | Use transitions (e.g., words, phrases, clauses) to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims. |
| LA.W.11-12.2.C | Use appropriate and varied transitions and syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.   |

## **Objective 5**

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Strategically use words, comparisons, and syntax to convey a specific tone or style in an argument.

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| LA.W.11-12.1.D | Establish and maintain a style and tone appropriate to the audience and purpose (e.g., formal and objective for academic writing) while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing. |
| LA.W.11-12.2.E | Establish and maintain a style and tone appropriate to the audience and purpose (e.g., formal and objective for academic writing) while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing. |
| LA.W.11-12.4   | Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)    |



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| LA.L.11-12.3   | Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening. |
| LA.L.11-12.5.A | Interpret figures of speech (e.g., hyperbole, paradox) in context and analyze their role in the text.   |
| LA.L.11-12.5.B | Analyze nuances in the meaning of words with similar denotations.   |

## Objective 6

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Write sentences that clearly convey ideas and arguments.

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| LA.W.11-12.1.D | Establish and maintain a style and tone appropriate to the audience and purpose (e.g., formal and objective for academic writing) while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing. |
| LA.W.11-12.2.D | Use precise language, domain-specific vocabulary, and techniques such as metaphor, simile, and analogy to manage the complexity of the topic.   |
| LA.W.11-12.2.E | Establish and maintain a style and tone appropriate to the audience and purpose (e.g., formal and objective for academic writing) while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing. |
| LA.W.11-12.4   | Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)    |
| LA.L.11-12.3.A | Vary syntax for effect, apply an understanding of syntax to the study of complex texts.   |

## Learning Goal 4

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Students will be able to evaluate how the political/social exigency of a text influence the components of the rhetorical situation and the strategic stylistic choices that writers make.

## Objective 1

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Identify and describe components of the rhetorical situation: the exigence, audience, writer, purpose, context, and message.

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| LA.RI.11-12.1 | Accurately cite strong and thorough textual evidence, (e.g., via discussion, written response, etc.), to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferentially, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain. |
| LA.RI.11-12.6 | Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness or beauty of the text.  |

## Objective 2

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Explain how an argument demonstrates understanding of an audience's beliefs, values, or needs.

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| LA.RI.11-12.5 | Analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of the structure an author uses in his or her exposition or argument, including whether the structure makes points clear, convincing, and engaging.               |
| LA.RI.11-12.6 | Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness or beauty of the text. |

### **Objective 3**

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Explain how word choice, comparisons, and syntax contribute to the specific tone or style of a text.

|                |  |
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| LA.RI.11-12.5  | Analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of the structure an author uses in his or her exposition or argument, including whether the structure makes points clear, convincing, and engaging.               |
| LA.RI.11-12.6  | Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness or beauty of the text. |
| LA.L.11-12.1.A | Apply the understanding that usage is a matter of convention, can change over time, and is sometimes contested.  |
| LA.L.11-12.4.B | Identify and correctly use patterns of word changes that indicate different meanings or parts of speech (e.g., conceive, conception, conceivable).   |
| LA.L.11-12.5.B | Analyze nuances in the meaning of words with similar denotations.  |

### **Formative Assessment and Performance Opportunities**

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- Chapter Quizzes/Reading Checks
  - Timed Practice Synthesis Essay (In-Class)
  - Timed Practice Persuasive Essay (In-Class)
  - Timed Practice Analysis Essay (In-Class)
  - Practice AP Multiple Choice (based on essay of related content to provide context for the reading)
  - In-Class Discussion
  - Journaling
  - Quotation Explication
  - Group Activities Analyzing Specific Essays
  - Graded Socratic Dialogues
  - Discussion Boards
  - Alternating Roles of Discussion Leaders

### **Summative Assessment**

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- Unit Test
  - Practice Essay (Synthesis, Analysis, or Persuasive)

- Presentation on Fitzgerald's Primary Sources in writing *The Great Gatsby*

## 21st Century Life and Careers

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| CRP.K-12.CRP2     | Apply appropriate academic and technical skills.   |
| CRP.K-12.CRP2.1   | Career-ready individuals readily access and use the knowledge and skills acquired through experience and education to be more productive. They make connections between abstract concepts with real-world applications, and they make correct insights about when it is appropriate to apply the use of an academic skill in a workplace situation.  |
| CRP.K-12.CRP4     | Communicate clearly and effectively and with reason.   |
| CRP.K-12.CRP4.1   | Career-ready individuals communicate thoughts, ideas, and action plans with clarity, whether using written, verbal, and/or visual methods. They communicate in the workplace with clarity and purpose to make maximum use of their own and others' time. They are excellent writers; they master conventions, word choice, and organization, and use effective tone and presentation skills to articulate ideas. They are skilled at interacting with others; they are active listeners and speak clearly and with purpose. Career-ready individuals think about the audience for their communication and prepare accordingly to ensure the desired outcome. |
| TECH.8.1.12.A     | Technology Operations and Concepts: Students demonstrate a sound understanding of technology concepts, systems and operations.   |
| TECH.8.1.12.E     | Research and Information Fluency: Students apply digital tools to gather, evaluate, and use information.   |
| TECH.8.1.12.E.CS1 | Plan strategies to guide inquiry.  |
| TECH.8.1.12.E.CS2 | Locate, organize, analyze, evaluate, synthesize, and ethically use information from a variety of sources and media.  |

## Accommodations/modifications

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- Allowing students to read fewer essays outside of class
- Allowing students to choose more than one response on multiple choice assessments
- Grouping students with others of greater ability

## Unit Resources

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- *The Great Gatsby*, novel
- Henry Adams, "The Virgin and the Dynamo" (essay; excerpt)
- Paul Krugman, "Why We're in a New Guided Age" by Paul Krugman (essay/book review; *NY Review of Books*)
- Glass-Steagall Legislation

- Article advocating for repeal of Glass-Steagall?
- Dodd-Frank Bill
- from *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*, Thomas Picketty
- *Inside Job*, documentary
- Newspapers from the 1920s (Fitzgerald's source materials)
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- **Activity Packet**
- [Newsela](#)
- **Resources**
- **Color Imagery Lesson**
- **Using The New York Times**
- **Complete Study Guide**
- **Complete Study Guide**
- **Activity Worksheets**
- **Lesson Plans**
- **Essay questions including movie questions**

- Background Notes
- Historical Music/ Photos
- Video
- Vocabulary words and examples