The Great Gatsby: Unit Overview

ENG3U, Grade 11 English (University), Unit 5. 14 classes of 75 minutes (about three weeks).

The big question

Is the American Dream a promise or an illusion?

Students read F. Scott Fitzgerald's The Great Gatsby (1925, public domain) chapter by chapter, tracking symbols and testing Nick Carraway's reliability as a narrator. Lessons include a 1920s context gallery, a party-planning simulation, a fact-check of Gatsby's life story, an inquest into Myrtle's death, a mock trial of Nick and a fact-check of claims about wealth and mobility today (the “Great Gatsby Curve”). The unit ends with a fishbowl seminar on the central question and a media text (a 1920s magazine spread or a book trailer) with a written rationale. A full Reading Edition and a Gatsby Companion are included.

Lessons

#	Lesson	Classes	Question	Expectations	What's inside
1	**The Roaring Twenties**	1	What was the Jazz Age, and what is the Dream?	R 1.1, R 1.5, OC 2.1	Context stations; opinion line; characters
2	**Reserve All Judgements**	1	Can we trust Nick?	R 1.4, R 1.8, R 2.3	Ch. 1; the Buchanans; the green light; trackers begin
3	**The Valley of Ashes**	1	Who pays for the dream?	R 1.6, R 2.3, R 3.3	Ch. 2; Eckleburg's eyes; Myrtle's performance
4	**The Party**	1	Who is Gatsby?	R 1.4, R 1.6, OC 2.1	Ch. 3; party simulation; rumour mill; the smile
5	**The Self-Made Man**	1	Liar or dreamer?	R 1.4, R 1.7, R 1.8	Ch. 4; fact-check Gatsby; Wolfshiem (critically); Jordan's story
6	**The Reunion**	1	Can a dream survive coming true?	R 1.6, R 2.3, W 2.1	Ch. 5; emotional arc; the shirts; the green light
7	**Can't Repeat the Past?**	1	Who was James Gatz?	R 1.4, R 1.5, OC 2.1	Ch. 6; self-invention then and now; debate
8	**Full of Money**	1	Old money vs new money	R 1.6, R 1.8, R 2.3	Ch. 7 (first half); the Plaza; power map
9	**The Death Car**	1	Who is responsible?	R 1.3, R 1.4, R 1.6	Ch. 7 (second half, with care); the inquest
10	**Boats Against the Current**	1	What does the ending mean?	R 1.6, R 1.7, R 2.3	Ch. 8 and 9; careless people; the final page

© 2026 K9solutions

#	Lesson	Classes	Question	Expectations	What's inside
11	**The Nick Trial**	1	Is our narrator reliable?	R 1.8, R 1.7, OC 2.1	Mock trial; verdict
12	**1920s and 2020s**	1	Is the Dream alive today?	R 1.5, M 1.2, W 1.4	Great Gatsby Curve; fact-checking claims; seminar prep
13	**The Seminar**	1	Promise or illusion?	OC 2.1, OC 2.2, R 1.6	Fishbowl seminar (summative 1)
14	**Media Studio**	1	How do media texts argue?	M 1.2, M 3.4, W 2.1	Magazine spread or book trailer with rationale (summative 2)

Assessment

Type	In this unit
Assessment for learning	Context stations, Nick Reliability Log, Symbol Tracker, setting close read, rumour mill, fact-check Gatsby, emotional arc, power map, inquest, final passage, case file, claims to check, seminar prep, layout or storyboard
Assessment as learning	Seminar self-assessment, observer sheets
Assessment of learning	Fishbowl seminar (Oral Communication) and a media text with written rationale (Media Studies and Writing), with rubrics in the Summative Tasks file

Texts

Included in the Start Here folder:

- **Gatsby Reading Edition:** the complete novel (public domain), formatted for class
- **Gatsby Companion:** a character list, plain-language chapter summaries and eleven key passages
- **Original nonfiction:** a short piece on the “Great Gatsby Curve” and four claims for students to fact-check

The novel includes Tom's racist views, an antisemitic portrayal of Meyer Wolfshiem, period racial language, domestic violence and three violent deaths. Lessons build in discussion norms, summarize the most graphic passages and include support resources in the teacher notes. In the media task, students use only original, public domain or properly licensed images and sound.

What's in each lesson

- Teacher lesson plan with expectations, timed sequence, differentiation, look-fors and answer guides
- Slides with speaker notes
- Student handouts and organizers
- Editable Word and PowerPoint files, plus PDFs

© 2026 K9solutions