

## FAST FACTS

# Author's Works and Themes: The Great Gatsby

"Author's Works and Themes: *The Great Gatsby*." Gale, 2019, [www.gale.com](http://www.gale.com).

## Writings by F. Scott Fitzgerald

- *Flappers and Philosophers* (short stories) 1920
- *This Side of Paradise* (novel) 1920
- *The Beautiful and Damned* (novel) 1922
- *Tales of the Jazz Age* (short stories) 1922
- *The Vegetable; or, From President to Postman* (play) 1923
- *The Great Gatsby* (novel) 1925
- *All the Sad Young Men* (short stories) 1926
- *Tender Is the Night* (novel) 1934
- *Taps at Reveille* (short stories) 1935
- *The Last Tycoon* (unfinished novel) 1941
- *The Crack-Up* (essays, notebooks, and letters) 1945
- *Afternoon of an Author* (short stories and essays) 1957
- *The Pat Hobby Stories* (short stories) 1962
- *The Letters of F. Scott Fitzgerald* (letters) 1963
- *Dear Scott/Dear Max: The Fitzgerald-Perkins Correspondence* (letters) 1971
- *As Ever, Scott Fitz: Letters Between F. Scott Fitzgerald and His Literary Agent Harold Ober, 1919-1940* (letters) 1972
- *The Basil and Josephine Stories* (short stories) 1973
- *Bits of Paradise [with Zelda Fitzgerald]* (short stories) 1973
- *The Notebooks of F. Scott Fitzgerald* (notebooks) 1978
- *The Price Was High* (short stories) 1979
- *The Fantasy and Mystery Stories of F. Scott Fitzgerald* (short stories) 1991
- *Jazz Age Stories [with Thomas Hardy]* (short stories) 1998
- *Dear Scott, Dearest Zelda* (letters) 2002

## Major Themes

Echoes of the American Dream pervade *The Great Gatsby*, which contrasts the supposed innocence and moral sense of the "Western" characters with the sophistication and materialism of the "Eastern" characters. Gatsby's lavish existence in the nouveau riche Long Island community of West Egg, moreover, cannot ever compensate for his lack

of the more pedigreed wealth of East Egg. He remains an "innocent" in his single-minded pursuit of Daisy despite his association with underworld characters and ill-begotten money. The Valley of Ashes and the sign with the blank eyes of Dr. Eckleburg indicate a moral wasteland and an absent God--as well as the emptiness of the new commercial culture. Gatsby's pursuit of his dream takes on a mythic quality, mirroring the dream which led Americans to conquer the frontier. Gatsby's "frontier," however, is an ill-advised pursuit of a vacuous young woman not worthy of his love. Initially, Nick, the Midwestern moral arbiter, disdains Gatsby's values, but he eventually comes to see something heroic in Gatsby's vision, which reflects America's own loss of innocence in the face of the crass materialism of the 1920s.

## Paper Topics

- Explain the meaning of the American Dream and connect it to Gatsby's pursuit of Daisy.
- Describe the use of symbols in *The Great Gatsby*. What do they say about American values?

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