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Great Gatsby [11th grade]

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Education Department

Understanding by Design Curriculum Units

Trinity University

Year 2006

Great Gatsby

Kathleen Fenske
Trinity University,

UNDERSTANDING BY DESIGN

Unit Cover Page

Unit Title: *The Great Gatsby*

Grade Level: 11th Grade

Subject/Topic Area(s): AP English III

Designed By: Kathleen Fenske

Time Frame: 3 weeks

School District: North East Independent School District

School: Reagan High School

School Address and Phone: 19000 Ronald Reagan
San Antonio, TX 78258
(210) 482-2200

Brief Summary of Unit (Including curricular context and unit goals):

This unit focuses on exploring *The Great Gatsby* and how the time period and culture in which the novel is written plays a vital part in the author's overall message in the novel. One of the key understandings to this unit is how good literature makes a statement on culture, but great literature is timeless and universal and provides a lens to view our own lives and society. Through an examination of the 1920s culture, the students will be able to understand Fitzgerald's message about the 1920s. They will further examine this through a group project where they will take *The Great Gatsby* and compare it with Fitzgerald's short stories. Since the stories were written as precursors to *The Great Gatsby* and as failed attempts to write *The Great Gatsby*, the groups will examine the differences in plot, characters, and setting along with how each uses themes and imagery to portray Fitzgerald's message about the 1920s. The groups will compare the message of each story to each other and create a poster that depicts their results. In order to show how these messages can reflect today's society, each student will choose a central theme in *The Great Gatsby* and show/tell how it is present in today's society. The student can choose between a variety of mediums and must include a one-page explanation of the project.

Along with exploring the author's message through literature, the students will also explore the major themes in *The Great Gatsby*. They will explore the themes of identity and reality versus illusion. They will begin to think about these themes through the chalk talk questions (How can it be possible to not know oneself? How is one's life affected either by the process of self-discovery or by the failure to try to understand oneself? Why do some people have difficulty distinguishing between what is reality and what is illusion?) and the discussion about *The Great Gatsby*.

Understanding By Design: *The Great Gatsby*

Title: *The Great Gatsby*

Stage 1: Desired Results

Understandings

- ◆ Good literature makes a statement on culture; great literature is timeless and universal and provides a lens to view our own lives and society.
- ◆ While the 1920s, Roaring Twenties, were a height of wealth, fashion, and jobs, they were also a time of moral neglect, loss of responsibility, and political activism.
- ◆ The discovery of one's true self or the refusal, inability, or incapacity to accept one's true self has consequences.
- ◆ Reaching for self-identity causes reconciliation between what is real and what is ideal (reality versus illusion).

Essential Questions

Knowledge & Skill

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ What is the author's message in <i>The Great Gatsby</i>? What was Fitzgerald saying about the 1920s? Was it truthful/reliable? ◆ How does literature reflect a culture or time period? ◆ Can fiction reveal truth? Should a story teach you something? ◆ How can it be possible to not know oneself? ◆ How is one's life affected either by the process of self-discovery or by the failure to try to understand oneself? ◆ Why do some people have difficulty distinguishing between what is reality and what is illusion? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ 1B. Write in a voice and style appropriate to audience and purpose. ◆ 1C. Organize ideas in writing to ensure coherence, logical progression, and support for ideas. ◆ 7A. Establish and adjust purpose for reading such as to find out, to understand, to interpret, to enjoy, and to solve problems. ◆ 7B. Draw upon his/her own background to provide connection to texts. ◆ 7G. Draw inferences such as conclusions, generalizations, and predictions and support them with text evidence and experience. ◆ 8B. Read in varied sources such as diaries, journals, textbooks, maps, newspapers, letters, speeches, memoranda, electronic texts, and other media. ◆ 8C. Read American and other world literature, including classic and contemporary works. |
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- ◆ 8D. Interpret the possible influences of the historical context on literary works.
- ◆ 9A. Recognize distinctive and shared characteristics of cultures through reading.
- ◆ 9B. Compare text events with his/her own and other readers' experiences.
- ◆ 10A. Respond to informational and aesthetic elements in texts such as discussions, journal entries, oral interpretations, enactments, and graphic displays.
- ◆ 10C. Analyze written reviews of literature, film, and performance to compare with his/her own responses.
- ◆ 11A. Compare and contrast aspects of texts such as themes, conflicts, and allusions both within and across texts.
- ◆ 11B. Analyze relevance of setting and time frame to text's meaning
- ◆ 11E. Connect literature to historical contexts, current events, and his/her own experiences.
- ◆ 16D. Identify and analyze the effect of aesthetic elements within literary texts such as character development, rhyme, imagery, and language.
- ◆ 18A. Make valid interpretations of a variety of literary texts.

Stage 2: Assessment Evidence
Performance Task Summary

- ◆ **Group Project:** This project is a group project where the class will be divided into groups of 3 or 4. Each group will take *The Great Gatsby* and compare it with one of Fitzgerald's short stories. Since the stories were written as precursors to *The Great Gatsby* and as failed attempts to write *The Great Gatsby*, the groups will examine the similarities and differences in plot, characters, and setting along with how each uses themes and imagery to portray Fitzgerald's message about the 1920s. The groups will compare the message of each story to each other and create a poster that depicts their results.
- ◆ **Individual Project:** This project is an individual project where each student will choose a central theme in *The Great Gatsby*. Since we have already discussed the themes in *The Great Gatsby*, each student will take the theme they have chosen and show/tell how it is present in today's society. The student can choose between creating a piece of art, creating a collage, creating a piece of music with lyrics, writing a poem, writing a short story, performing a skit, or creating a movie to portray the theme's presence in today's society. Each project must include a one-page explanation of the project.

Self-Assessments	Other Evidence, Summarized
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Admit slips/Exit slips ◆ Self-Assessment for Individual Project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ AP Words and Examples ◆ Journals ◆ Reading Log ◆ Quizzes over Chapters ◆ <i>The Great Gatsby</i> Test ◆ Discussion of <i>The Great Gatsby</i> ◆ Culture Questions ◆ Argument Essay ◆ Short Story Questions ◆ Review of <i>The Great Gatsby</i>

Stage 3: Learning Activities

Day 1-AP Word: —

Journal: —

Class Work: *The Great Gatsby* Test

Homework: Work on Research Paper; Draft Due 3/28, Tuesday; Final Copy Due 4/3, Monday

Day 2-AP Word: imagery—3 images from *The Great Gatsby*

Journal: write mock love poem using “Love after Love”

Class Work: Introduction to Questions/Chalktalk; Admit Slip; Discussion; Author’s Purpose

Homework: Work on Research Paper; Draft Due 3/28, Tuesday; Final Copy Due 4/3, Monday

Day 3-AP Word: paradox—ex. from *The Great Gatsby*, Ch. 3, p. 54

Journal: —

Class Work: Assign Individual Project; Stations on 1920s Culture (Music (listen to music), Daily Life and Politics, Art (re-create art work), Literature, Fashion, Film (watch movie), and Sports); Questions to Answer; Exit Slip

Homework: Work on Research Paper; Draft Due 3/28, Tuesday; Final Copy Due 4/3, Monday; Individual Project Due April 7, Friday

Day 4-Due: Research Paper Draft

AP Word: symbolism—choose 3 from the chart to complete

Journal: Zelda’s letter—answer questions

Class Work: Argument Essay; Assign “Dice, Brassknuckles and Guitar” for Homework; Assign Questions

Homework: Read “Dice, Brassknuckles and Guitar” and Questions Due 3/30, Thursday; Work on Research Paper; Final Copy Due 4/3, Monday; Individual Project Due April 7, Friday

Day 5-Due: “Dice, Brassknuckles and Guitar” Questions

AP Word: irony—2 ex. from *The Great Gatsby*, identify whether ex. is situational or dramatic

Journal: poems-“Think Different” and “We Wear the Mask,” p. 836—re-create the first line of one of the poems

Class Work: Read “The American Dream,” p. 820; Read “Winter Dreams,” p. 841; Assign Questions

Homework: Work on Research Paper; Final Copy Due 4/3, Monday; Individual Project Due April 7, Friday

Day 6-Due: Research Paper

AP Word: figurative language—2 ex. from *The Great Gatsby*

Journal: story writing—write episode

Class Work: Group Project

Homework: Individual Project

Day 7-AP Word: juxtaposition—ex. from *The Great Gatsby*, Ch. 2 & 3

Journal: poems-“Richard Cory,” p. 831 and “Miniver Cheevy,” p. 832—answer questions

Class Work: Finish Group Projects; Show Reviews; Review Novel

Homework: Individual Project

Day 8- Turn in Individual Projects; Complete Self-Assessment on Individual Project