

Year 9 The Great Gatsby – English Knowledge Organiser

Expectations and content

What is this unit about and why do we teach it?

This unit offers students the opportunity to explore some of the very finest American literature ever written. The mature and thoughtful activities are designed for students to understand some of the most prevalent themes in modern American history and literature. The unit focuses on students analytical and symbolism skills; using the challenging nature of the book to elicit thoughtful opinions on difficult topics such as class, race, wealth and consumerism. The novel also provides the opportunity for theme and character study, with activities geared towards clear assessment of understanding in these areas. Barby's character education continues with the study of this novel as some of the worst human behaviour is identified and scrutinised in the plot, leading students to evaluate and learn from characters' errors.

Revising terminology :

- Imagery
- Pathetic fallacy
- Symbolism
- metaphors

Possible new vocabulary: :

- Facade
- Charmed
- Irony

Skills that we are practicing:

- ATEASE
- Topic sentences
- Exploding quotations for analysis

If your child needs support

Suggested activities to help:

- Create your own list of evaluative verbs with definitions so that you can apply them to your learning in class easily.
- Research the writer 'Scott F Fitzgerald' and research his other works to see if he created characters similar to Gatsby.
- Create a character profile of one of the main characters using your knowledge from the characterisation unit alongside quotations to describe them from the novel.
- Watch one of the film versions of the film, or watch the one we wanted in class again.
- Research America in the 1920s and explore what life was like for the average person trying to succeed in the American Dream.
- Research the 1920's American gangsters and bootleggers.

If your child needs extension

Questions to discuss with your child:

- Which character do you trust the least?
- What do you think about the main character not revealing her first name?
- Would you recommend that I read the book? Why or why not?

Challenging activities to complete:

- If you had to re-write the ending what would you do differently?
- Select a part of the setting and consider what the story would be like if it was set in Yorkshire?
- Can you come up with a sophisticated list of adjectives to describe the narrator, Nick Carraway or Mrytle?

Suggested further reading:

- Smith, Miachel Farris, Nick.
- Lockhart, E. We Were Liars.
- Bennicasa, Sara., Great.
- Bui, Thi, The Best We Could Do.