Baker Street Readers

Great reads for all ages

**Nick Carraway's mysterious neighbour Gatsby gazes across the dark bay at a distant green light...**

As the summer unfolds, Nick is drawn into Gatsby's world of luxury cars, speedboats and extravagant parties. But the more he hears about Gatsby – even from what Gatsby himself tells him – the less he is sure of the truth. Did Gatsby really go to Oxford University? Was he a hero in the war? Did he once kill a man?

Nick recalls how he came to know Gatsby. He recounts how he enters the world of his cousin Daisy and her wealthy husband Tom. But does their money make them any happier? How do everybody's stories connect?

Will you come to know the real Gatsby after reading Nick's account of that fateful summer?

| Lexile® Level | AR Level | Word Count |
|---|---|---|
| 900L | 5.7 | 6,028 |

*bakerstreetreaders.co.uk*

ISBN 978-1-912464-04-3

9 781912 464043

"Miniature masterpieces"

*- BBC R4, Open Book*

THE GREAT GATSBY

F. SCOTT FITZGERALD

# THE GREAT GATSBY

F. SCOTT FITZGERALD



# THE GREAT GATSBY

F. SCOTT FITZGERALD



Baker Street Readers

*www.bakerstreetreaders.co.uk*

Retold by Sean Connolly
Illustrated by Sam Kalda

TEACHER'S INSPECTION ONLY

Baker Street Press

Newbury, Berkshire, UK
www.bakerstreetpress.co.uk

Published by Baker Street Press Ltd. in 2018
Reprinted 2018, 2019, 2021
First published by Real Reads Ltd. in 2012

Text copyright © Sean Connolly 2013
Illustrations copyright © Sam Kalda 2013
The author asserts their moral right to be identified as the author of this work

All rights reserved
No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, or any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher.

LEXILE® and the LEXILE® logo are trademarks of MetaMetrics, Inc., and are registered in the United States and abroad.
Copyright © 2021 MetaMetrics, Inc. All rights reserved.

ISBN 978-1-912464-04-3

Accelerated Reader
Level 5.7
Word count: 6,028

Lexile® level: 900L

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

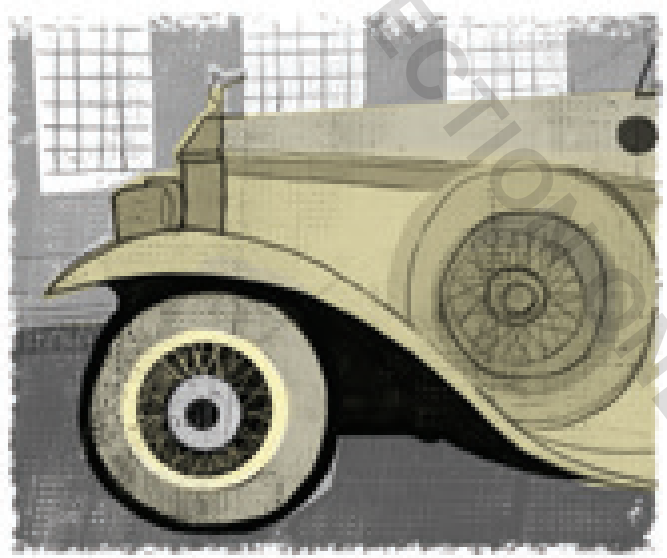
Typeset in Baskerville and Scala
Printed in Turkey by Imago Ltd.

In line with making this retelling as authentic as possible the Publisher has retained the US spelling conventions of the original. For a glossary comparing American and British English in this book, visit www.bakerstreetreaders.co.uk

TEACHER'S INSPECTION ONLY

# CONTENTS

The Characters 4
The Great Gatsby 7
Looking Closer 55



TEACHER'S INSPECTION ONLY

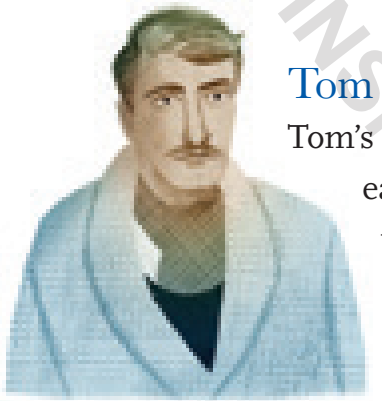
# THE CHARACTERS

## Nick Carraway



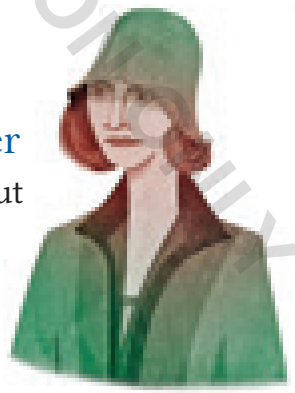
Nick is proud of his honesty and his unwillingness to judge people. Will he be forced to take sides? If so, whose side will he be on?

## Tom Buchanan



Tom's wealth seems to make it easy for him to get what he wants. But can he be sure of keeping his own wife?

## Jordan Baker



Jordan is a champion golfer, but she is not known for playing fair. Is it time for her to change her ways?



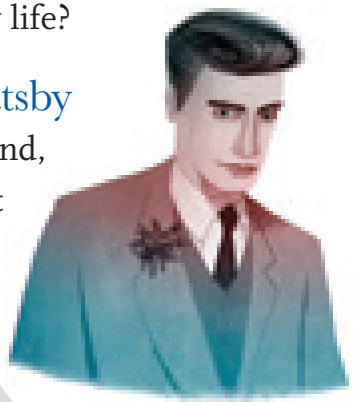
TEACHER'S INSPECTION ONLY

## Daisy Buchanan



Daisy is related to Nick, but they have only now begun spending any time together. She lives in comfort, but will she be forced to start a new life?

## Jay Gatsby



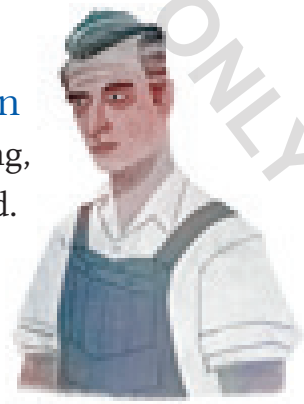
Gatsby is the richest person around, but no one is quite sure about just who he is. Will anyone ever find out about his past, and how he became so wealthy?

## Myrtle Wilson



Myrtle feels trapped in a grey, washed-out world. Will she ever share in the excitement of the rich people who drive by her house each day?

## George Wilson



Myrtle's husband is hard-working, but timid and usually very tired. Can he stand up to the cruel tricks that life can play?



# THE GREAT GATSBY

Some years ago my father gave me some advice that I took to heart: 'Nick – whenever you feel like criticizing anyone, just remember that all the people in this world haven't had the advantages that you've had.' I understood his point: for three generations the Carraways had overseen a prosperous hardware business in the Middle West.

Since returning from the East, though, I have been less inclined to give people the benefit of the doubt. The only exception has been Gatsby, the man who gives his name to this book. Here was a man who represented everything I scorned in life, and yet somehow he remains the one person who could sense the promises of life. His extraordinary gift for hope set him apart, but a foul dust in the wake of his dreams preyed on him.

TEACHER'S INSPECTION ONLY

Back home from Europe's Great War, I felt that the Middle West was too remote, and in 1922 I got a job in the bond business in New York. I rented a cottage in West Egg, a peninsula twenty miles east of the city and separated by a narrow bay from more fashionable East Egg. Some 'new money' mansions on West Egg, though, dwarf anything on the other Egg. The Gatsby property next door to me, for example, resembled a French chateau overlooking the sea.

I had some connection with the other Egg, and one summer evening drove over to have dinner with the Buchanans. Tom had been at Yale with me, and his wife Daisy was my distant cousin. Her family, the Fays, were leading lights in Louisville society. Tom, still in riding clothes, greeted me on the front porch of their waterfront Georgian mansion. 'Nick Carraway! Welcome to our humble abode.'

His friendly tone masked – but only barely – an air of aggression and superiority. Tom led me



into a bright room where two young women sat on an enormous couch. The younger, a Miss Baker, was a stranger to me. The other was Daisy, and her light laughter reminded me of all the young men who had yearned for her company.

'You must know Gatsby', Miss Baker remarked, learning that I lived in West Egg.

'Gatsby?' demanded Daisy. 'What Gatsby?'

Before I could reply we were ushered out to the porch where dinner was laid. Over dinner Tom began praising a book called *The Rise of the Colored Empires*.

'The idea is if we don't look out the white race will be – will be utterly submerged.'

'We've got to beat them down,' whispered Daisy, winking ferociously toward the fervent sun.

A telephone summoned the butler inside. He returned and whispered to Tom, who went inside without a word. Daisy made some brittle small talk and then excused herself. Miss Baker was trying to make out what was being said inside. I asked why.



TEACHER'S INSPECTION ONLY
TEACHER'S INSPECTION ONLY

America did, however, undergo an important change just as the 1920s began. From January 1920 it became illegal to sell or buy alcoholic drinks in the United States. This law, known as Prohibition, remained in effect until 1933. During the Prohibition era, people could still get hold of illegal alcohol – if they had enough money or the right connections. As you can tell from the freely-flowing alcohol available to Gatsby's friends, if you had money it was still easy to obtain alcoholic drinks of every kind! Importers of alcohol, known as bootleggers, smuggled alcohol across the Canadian and Mexican borders, or from ships at night. Some people even distilled their own drinks, and 'bath-tub gin' was common in many cities.

Rival gangs fought to control this valuable trade in alcohol. Almost every day, American newspapers had stories of fierce gun battles between the 'gangsters' in Chicago and New York.

African Americans also found themselves in the news, but for less dangerous reasons. Popular music was dominated by jazz, which began in New Orleans, Chicago and Memphis – cities with large black populations. And with



African Americans also becoming more prominent in politics and sports, some white people began to feel threatened.

Fitzgerald's characters reflect the different aspects of his country in the 1920s – the excitement, danger, wealth and hope. This is one reason why *The Great Gatsby* has often been called 'The Great American Novel'.

## Finding out more

We recommend the following books and websites to gain a greater understanding of F. Scott Fitzgerald and the world he lived in:

### Books


- John Bankston, *F. Scott Fitzgerald*, Mitchell Lane, 2004.
- Jim Corrigan, *The 1920s Decade in Photos: The Roaring Twenties*, Enslow, 2010.
- Fitzgerald, F. Scott, *Bernice Bobs Her Hair and Other Stories*, Dover, 2009.
- Michael J. O'Neal, *America in the 1920s*, Facts on File, 2005.


TEACHER'S INSPECTION ONLY