

Big Ideas in *The Great Gatsby*

F. Scott Fitzgerald wrote *The Great Gatsby* in a specific way in order to make specific statements about the following big-picture ideas. Your task while we read is to look for clues and evidence in the story to help you figure out Fitzgerald's message (thematic statement) about each big-picture idea below.

Idea 1: Money and happiness

Think about how money and happiness are (or are not) related. What can money do? What can't it do?

The message Fitzgerald wants readers to understand about money and happiness in *Gatsby* is _____, and this is proven when _____.

Idea 2: Social status and its limitations

Think about old money, new money, those without money. Can social status be easily changed? Why or why not?

The message Fitzgerald wants readers to understand about social status and its limitations in *Gatsby* is _____, and this is proven when _____.

Idea 3: The American Dream

Think about the way people define the American Dream. How do people attempt to achieve their dreams, and which methods actually work? How does one's past play into their future?

The message Fitzgerald wants readers to understand about the American Dream in *Gatsby* is _____, and this is proven when _____.

Idea 4: Love and desire

Think about how love (or the lack thereof) is portrayed through different characters and relationships in the story. What is true love? What is the difference between love and desire? How is the idea of desire portrayed in the plot of the book?

The message Fitzgerald wants readers to understand about love and desire in *Gatsby* is _____, and this is proven when _____.