

The great gatsby research paper

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During the Roaring twenties, social class was an important aspect of society. All different classes were for the most part separated by where people lived. In other words, by no means would anyone from a lower class be caught in an uptown setting. There are a variety of characters in the novel that come from different economic backgrounds. In the novel, *The Great Gatsby*, F. Scott Fitzgerald successfully uses location to differentiate social status amongst his characters while the weather and seasons of those locations help guide them.

Each character helps represent and support the differences of social class and the four main locations, The East Egg, the West Egg, the Valley of Ashes, and New York City. In *The Great Gatsby* geographical locations separate social classes. East Egg represents old wealth. The characters from East Egg are wealthy but empty inside. Their lives are shallow and unfulfilled. Jordan Baker is beautiful on the outside but is only interested in cheating her way through life to get what she wants. The Buchanans look perfect on the outside but are dysfunctional on the inside.

The characters in East Egg are arrogant. “ Tom Buchanan is wealth brutalized by selfishness and arrogance” (Cowley 71). “ Tom’s restlessness is an arrogant assertiveness seeking to evade in bluster the deep uneasiness of self knowledge” (Dyson 62). Daisy Buchanan is really only interested in herself and will use any means that will ultimately benefit her. West Egg represents new wealth. The characters that live in West Egg have made their money more recently. Nick Carraway is educated at Yale and starts a job in the bond business when he moves to West Egg.

Nick is honest and listens to others' problems. In the novel, Nick Carraway is always trying to help his girlfriend Jordan Baker. Her problems revolve around her cheating and being self centered. The characters can also find new wealth through desperate and dishonest means. Jay Gatsby gains most of his wealth through inheritance. Gatsby thinks that wealth will buy him the love of Daisy and the life which he dreams of. In addition Gatsby has also made his fortune through criminal activity, as he is willing to do anything to gain the social position he thinks necessary to win Daisy.

The Valley of Ashes represents the socially unaccepted. The characters in the Valley of Ashes represent poverty. " This is the Valley of Dry Bones, the Waste Land, The dusty replica of modern society, where ash-grey men are crumbling, like Eliot's hollow men" (Bicknell 98). Myrtle and George Wilson both live in a run down garage in the Valley of Ashes. Myrtle Wilson tries desperately to improve her life and get out of the Valley of Ashes. The Valley of Ashes also represents doom and death. Myrtle is found as the victim of a hit and run caused by Daisy and Gatsby.

The Valley of Ashes represents the death and dreams for Jay Gatsby, Myrtle Wilson, and George Wilson. These characters die in the novel due to misconception and anger. The characters go through the Valley of Ashes to get to New York City. New York City represents glitz and immorality. While in New York City Tom Buchanan has an affair with Myrtle Wilson. Myrtle Wilson doesn't care about anyone except those who will direct her on the correct path to improve her life. This is one of the reasons why she has an affair with Tom.

Tom Buchanan has no moral doubts about his own extramarital affair with Myrtle but when it comes to other people such as Daisy and Gatsby he becomes outraged and forces a confrontation. During a party in New York City, Myrtle Wilson drinks too much and begins to taunt Tom about Daisy. Tom responds to this by hitting Myrtle and breaking her nose. New York City represents a passion for money and inhibited pleasure. West Egg represents dreams while East Egg represents the devastation of reality. Jay Gatsby and Nick Carraway both come from the mid-west.

The mid-west represents everything that is associated with warmth and home. After leaving the mid-west both Gatsby and Nick move to West Egg which is similar to the mid-west. In contrast, the east represents everything that is shallow and uncaring. Jordan Baker is a prime example of someone who lives a shallow life in East Egg. F. Scott Fitzgerald incorporates color, weather, and seasons into *The Great Gatsby*. The green light that Gatsby sees every night from Daisy's dock represents his future with her. Involuntarily I glanced seaward-and distinguished nothing except a single green light, minute and far away, that might have been the end of a dock" (Fitzgerald 21). Every night Gatsby reaches out for the green light in hopes that his longed for dream will finally come true. The green light is in East Egg and even though it is barely visible from his West Egg home he looks for it every night and hopes it will some day be his future. Weather guides the characters actions in *The Great Gatsby*. Gatsby and Daisy reunite with each other in the pouring rain.

This represents the awkwardness of seeing each other again. They fall in love again in the fair weather when the sun begins to come out. This shows

that their relationship is blossoming. Seasons also guide actions in *The Great Gatsby*. Tom Buchanan confronts Jay Gatsby about his affair with Daisy in the heat of the summer. This is similar to the fatal encounter between Mercutio and Tybalt in *Romeo and Juliet*. George Wilson kills himself and Gatsby when summer turns to fall. In conclusion, The Wilsons and Jay Gatsby never fulfill their dreams of wealth.

The Wilsons meet their doom just as the Valley of Ashes symbolizes when George Wilson kills himself and Myrtle Wilson is a victim in a hit and run. Jay Gatsby's dream is never fulfilled because money and desperation control him. "Gatsby's death is brought about by Daisy, who first lets him shield her and then deserts him; by Tom, who directs the demented Wilson to the place where he is to be found; and by Wilson himself—a representative of the ash-grey men who comes to Gatsby, in his disillusionment, as a terrible embodiment of the realities which have killed his dream" (Dyson 65). For Tom and Daisy retreat back into their money or their vast carelessness" (Burnam 112). Tom Buchanan lets George Wilson believe it was Gatsby who had an affair with Myrtle and it was his car who killed her. Daisy Buchanan doesn't care that she is the one who actually killed Myrtle, allowing Gatsby to take the blame. The Buchanans continue to live behind a facade, never allowing anyone to see their emptiness inside.

They blame their actions on others, never taking the blame. The Wilsons are not missed by anyone since their lives represent those that are socially unaccepted. Nick Carraway and Jordan Baker split up and Jordan gets engaged to another man. Nick decides to move back to the mid-west because he is sick of East Egg and its empty values. In each case, location

has separated the characters economically, socially, and eventually defined their fate.