

Welcome to Junior English 300: American Literature

Mrs. Foiles | 2025–2026 | Summer Reading Assignment

In American Literature, it is my deep hope that we become good thinkers, speakers, readers, and writers who access, marvel, and magnify God in all and all for God. I use the word “good” because it ties us to Scripture and invites us to explore the many meanings and applications of goodness.

Like all who have explored America, you will begin your journey in American literature by encountering new people and places. This summer, you will read *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald, first published in 1925, a work of historical fiction set in the Jazz Age. Through the world of Jay Gatsby, you will explore idolatry, the American Dream, illusion, and identity. As you read, you will consider America’s story, your story, and God’s story, and how they connect.

Summer Reading Assignment: The Great Gatsby

Read and annotate *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald (1925). As you read, engage with the text with curiosity and care, noticing how Fitzgerald develops characterization, symbolism, and meaning. Pay attention to how the story is told, especially the narrative structure and point of view, and how those choices shape your understanding. As you move through the novel, consider important passages, track the development of central ideas, and make connections between characters, conflicts, and themes, while also noticing how language and imagery reveal deeper meaning. Come prepared to share your thinking through discussion, analysis, and writing as we explore this novel together.



Instructions:

Read carefully for detail and meaning. Read with a pen or pencil in your hand and actively engage with the text as you go. **Your annotations will be checked during the first days of school and will count as a daily grade:**

1. At the end of each chapter, write 3–5 bullet points summarizing key events.
2. Circle each new character’s name the first time it appears and write a brief note identifying them.
3. Write enough margin notes per chapter to show engagement with the text. Mark what you like or find confusing.
4. Identify point of view, shifts between past and present, and setting.
5. Track conflict: internal (inside the character) and external (outside the character).
6. Analyze characterization: direct (author tells what a character is like) and indirect (revealed through actions, dialogue, thoughts, or others’ reactions); note which characters change and which stay the same.



Supplies to Bring for the First Day:

- Your annotated copy of *The Great Gatsby*: books are available at Half Price Books, Barnes and Noble, or Amazon.com
- Pens: Black or blue ink, plus one pen in a different color for editing
- A folder with pockets (to leave in class)
- A spiral notebook
- Two boxes of tissues and/or individually wrapped treats (like lollipops) that you like and want to share. We have a snack cube!
- Your charged computer
- Your bright mind and willing heart!



Blessings,

Mrs. Foiles

Questions? Please feel free to email me: afoiles@gmail.com