

The Great Gatsby: A Critical Analysis Essay

In F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, Fitzgerald uses vivid descriptions and applies his knowledge of literary devices. He uses a variety of devices to symbolize something much more intricate. He uses imagery to describe things so precisely that the picture appears in your head as though you are dreaming, and in which you are living in your dreams. An extraordinary amount of settings is used from houses to mansions, different locations, east egg and west egg. Many more are used, allegory, allusions to sports, tone, and syntax.

Symbols, a device that is found throughout the 9 chapters, that put life into the novel. Grey, the color found everywhere in the valley of ashes, symbolizes lack of spirit or life, such as the pain Wilson had when his wife, Myrtle died in a car crash. Nick Carraway, the narrator notes that "The eyes of Doctor T.J. Eckleburg are blue and gigantic- their retinas are one yard high. They look out of no face but, instead, from a pair of enormous yellow spectacles". This might symbolize the eyes of god looking over what is happening in East and West Egg. Him having no face might symbolize that peace are but also it might symbolize the eyes of young Mr. Carraway. He is the observer in this twisted tale, who has no opinions and just tells the story as is. He is the "Doctor T.J. Eckleburg" just sitting and watching what is going on. The green light, that is seen by Jay Gatsby across the bay is more than a light it is a sign of hope. Green, the color of hope, is emitting from the dock of his beloved Daisy and "Gatsby believed in the green light" showing that he still had hope for pulling daisy back to his arms. Money can also symbolize hope because Gatsby promised himself to be successful and to throw big parties for false hopes of winning back Daisy.

Imagery, a literary device that appeals to the five senses of the human body. I can just imagine that "the interior was unprosperous and bare; the only car visible was the dust-covered wreck of a ford which crouched in a dim corner." In mind, I see the blank interior and wrecked car, these are the images that pop into my head because of the way that Fitzgerald describes them. The way that he described "Gatsby's gorgeous car [lurching] up the rocky drive to [his] door and [how it] gave out a burst of melody from its three-noted horn" just automatically plays a movie in my head.

Syntax, the grammatical arrangement of the words in a sentence, is used to classify the rich and the poor. For example, George Wilson, when talking to Tom at the garage, uses slang by replacing does not with don't, when he asks, "Works pretty slow, don't he?" This shows that Wilson is of a lower class with improper grammar and improper conditions of living, which is shown by him living in the valley of ashes. On the other hand, Nick has better grammar and a marvelous home on East Egg.

Setting, the place or places where the story is set. The setting of this story is in the Summer of 1922, or as what Fitzgerald calls it the "post-jazz era" in Long Island and New York City. Fitzgerald uses the setting as another way to separate the higher class and lower class. He has the West Egg for the newly rich people and he has East Egg for the rich established people. He also uses

different settings to represent different events, such as The Valley of Ashes, a place of destruction, the place where Myrtle dies.

Allusion, a casual reference is used many times in this book. Like when Wilson talks to Michaelis an affair that his wife has, they discuss the eyes of T.J. Eckleburg by Wilson saying "God sees everything" when he is talking about the billboard. This is an allusion to the all-powerful god, who is "always watching" you. Another allusion was when Nick talks about how his books on banking and crediting would unlock the "shining secrets that only Midas and Morgan and Maecenas knew." All three of these men are wealthy and have great money-making abilities and thus if he studies the books, he will become just like them. Another example is when at Gatsby's party, music by Mr. Vladimir Tostoff was going to play, and it had: attracted so much attention at Carnegie Hall," which is an allusion to a great event because it is a huge concert hall. For instance, when in Ch.4 Gatsby told Nick that Meyer Wolfsheim is "the man who fixed the World's Series back in 1919," an allusion to Meyer's "un-American" nature.

Tone, a particular mental state of disposition, is changed only a few times throughout this book. At the beginning of the book, the tone is happy and cheery because everyone is in joy and love. Nick is living a good life and everyone is happy with their lives, or as it seems. But towards the middle the tone starts becoming confused and uncertain because of many reasons. First of, Nick starts realizing all the affairs that are going on. Then he figures out that Gatsby is in love with Daisy. In the end, the tone is horrifying because all the deaths have occurred and Nick is upset that all this happened.

Allegory, a novel in which the apparent meaning of the characters and events is used to symbolize a deeper moral or spiritual meaning.

Works Cited

UKEssays. (November 2018). The Great Gatsby: A Critical Analysis.