*The Great Gatsby* is a novel written by Francis Scott Key Fitzgerald which describes a story about several upper class characters living in West and East Egg on Long Island. First published in April 1925, in its first year, *The Great Gatsby* sold poorly. However, the novel revive during World War II, a lot of stage and film come after. For now, it is one of the most well-known book in the world. Most importantly, this book includes a variety of themes the greatness of Gatsby, the American dream, symbolism and the historical influences of the Jazz Age.

First of all, the book title, obviously Gatsby is great. In a multiple of ways which Gatsby is great. Gatsby has great love for Daisy and his great tragic figure build him up. Besides, Gatsby has great passion and optimism in his life. The primary impression for Gatsby that he is ultimate wealthy, mansion and his luxurious lifestyle. However he still is a tragedy character, because he loves Daisy for his whole life time, everything he did that is all about win Daisy’s heart back and failed. Gatsby is hiding himself with his wealth, overweening optimism and passion. And under that mask, he is just like rest of us which is chasing for his perfect love. “When we meet Gatsby, we see his luxurious, ostentatious veneer: the grand mansion, lavish parties, and faux Britishness. Nothing we see is real. Every bit of his persona is ill-gotten and fabricated. Despite Gatsby’s profligate lifestyle, he wins us (and Nick) over with his overweening optimism and passion. It’s so purely American and *innocent* that we have to smile” (Hartmann). So, Gatsby is an authentic human being even what people see on the exterior. “All his pretenses aside, Jay Gatsby is a nervous boy in love. It is only when Daisy returns to his arms when his dreams come true. In a strange way, Gatsby isn’t evil or greedy, he’s just like the rest of us: yearning for love and his perfect lover. Gatsby’s love for Daisy is the only pure and authentic thing about him. And what a
thing it is! Gatsby goes all in for his love. He risks everything for her” (Hartmann). Gatsby lives in Roaring Twenties, but he still has those pure love which is rare and commendable. Also, because his pure love of Daisy made him a tragedy character. “It was Tom’s and Daisy’s lies and misdeeds that led to Gatsby’s demise, not his own. It was Daisy who drove the car and Tom who had the affair. Gatsby was a relative innocent. It is the ultimate irony that Gatsby — a criminal, a living facade — was the most real person in that degenerate affair. That terrible irony is what makes Gatsby a great tragic figure. His authentic love led to his death, a love that proved to be illusory” (Hartmann). Gatsby is a great tragic character, he is most veritable human being in whole novel. But his authentic love made him died, also proved that the love of Daisy is illusory. “He is considered ‘great’ in a paradoxical sense. Gatsby is considered ‘great’ by the measurement of dreams, his wealth, his larger-than-life personality, the festivities and joviality that, to others in the novel, mark him as a man of high stature and almost god-like in personal proportions” (Hartmann). Gatsby has great passion and optimism in his life. The biggest reason of his successful and moving forward which is his optimism, because of his optimism that he becomes ultimate wealth man. Such a God for the other characters in the novel. “There is and can only ever be one Jay Gatsby, a persona born of a “Platonic conception” of the seventeen-year-old man striving for the fulfillment of intensely personal dreams, for fantastical things” (Hartmann). Gatsby try hard for his personal dreams which got every readers respect and awe of him. Gatsby is great in a variety of ways such as great love for Daisy, great tragic figure, great passion and optimism, ultimate wealthy, and never stop striving for the personal dreams.

One of the major themes of The Great Gatsby which is the tragedy of the American Dream. In this novel, Fitzgerald implies that the American dream is unattainable. Tanfer is the
author of *The Great Gatsby: The Tragedy of the American Dream on Long Island's Gold Coast*. He analyzes the tragedy of the American Dream from the people who live in West and East Egg, the party, and the women. “Gatsby's West Egg (present-day Great Neck) is the domicile of nouveau riche Americans who made their fortunes during the booming years of the United States stock market and lived like Gilded Age robber barons. Gatsby, who acquired his wealth through organized crime (e.g., distributing illegal alcohol, trading in stolen securities, and bribing police officers), is part of this new element of society” (Tanfer 1). Being rather gaudy and showy which is the people who lives in West egg are portrayed, just like the brand new monstrosity. Such as Gatsby, “he wears pink suits, gaudy shirts, and drives an extravagant Rolls Royce. Despite all of their obvious wealth, the nouveau riche are imposters—cheap materialistic imitations of the American Dream. They can never possess the Buchanans's old-wealth taste, epitomized by their "cheerful red and white Georgian Colonial mansion, overlooking the bay" (4). On Long Island, aristocratic grace and elegance cannot be purchased, only inherited. Try as they may, the inhabitants of West Egg will never be able to acquire *true* opulence” (Tanfer 2). Also, they are just like Gatsby that they are socially awkward. It is seem like they do not know what to do with their newly earned riches. Therefore, people who lives in West egg are trying to copy that possessions and manners of the rich which they thought. This is a clear criticize of the excessive materialism while chasing the American Dream. On the other hand, those who have always had money live at East Egg. “While members of the East Coast aristocracy possess understated sophistication, refinement, and breeding, they do not embody the American Dream with the passion and intensity of self-made individuals. As Nick elaborates, members of the aristocracy are cruel. Tom’s racism provides important insight into the sinister
and arrogant nature of old wealth” (Tanfer 2). The people who lives in East Egg, look like they have class, dignity, and manners. But their behave are not better than their newly rich neighbors. All in all, the different between West and East Egg imply the result of the American Dream which is wealth causes destruction. The party at Gatsby’s white mansion also express the tragedy of the American Dream. By through stating “Fitzgerald uses Gatsby’s elaborately staged weekend parties as another metaphor for the greed, material excess, and unrestrained desire for pleasure that resulted in the corruption and disintegration of the American Dream. The anonymous guests, who are nouveau riche social climbers and freeloaders, attend Gatsby’s spectacles with the hope of acquiring aristocratic wealth, power, and status. On the other hand, the parties, where guests dance to jazz music on tables, mingle with Roosevelts, and drink bootleg. Illusion, conjecture, intrigue, and gossip sustain this identity” (Tanfer 3). The author actually want to express that the American Dream is fragmented and corruption by appetency, waste and freedom. Everyone want to get money, power and status, greedy make the American Dream insecure and degenerate. The women in the novel are another miserable manifestation of the American Dream. The women became selfish and materialism of the 1920s. “Daisy, whose voice is "full of money," is Gatsby's "silver idol" of illusion (76, 120). Obsessed with the idea of recreating the past "just as it was," Gatsby is blind to Daisy's selfish, juvenile, and self-destructive personality. He cannot confront the fact that she would never abandon her family to be with him, and refuses to acknowledge Tom and Pammy, for to do so would extinguish the nostalgic flame of their romance. The innocence and hope with which Gatsby stares at the "green light that burns all night at the end of [Daisy's] dock," is, like his own future, metaphorically shrouded in an impenetrable mist (61). In the end, Gatsby becomes Daisy's victim, and a victim
of the elusive American Dream” (Tanfer 3). Gatsby is one of the man who is chasing the
American Dream for whole life. Daisy can not marry him when he was poor, so the motivation
of work hard and make money is he always has been in love with Daisy. Gatsby’s hard work
metaphor achieve the American Dream. But, finally Daisy still can not marry him, because
selfish and materialism of Daisy. Gatsby’s death also because of Daisy and she leave with her
husband. “Gatsby, like the young men who perished during WWI, does not live to realize this
impossible dream. Despite all of his efforts, Gatsby is unable to disown his humble past; he
manages to obtain the artificial security of wealth, but can never secure the respectability of old
money that Daisy represents. In his blind pursuit of wealth, status, and success for his own
gain, Gatsby follows a dream that ultimately becomes a nightmare” (Tanfer 5). Gatsby’s dream is
a tragedy, the same is the American Dream. Tanfer analyzes the tragedy of the American Dream
from the people who live in West and East Egg, the party, and the women.

In *The Great Gatsby*, symbolism run through the whole novel. Fitzgerald uses car to
characterize. Seiters using “adolescent's dream” to analyze Gatsby’s car. He also point out
“Gatsby is not sufficiently creative to choose a truly unique machine, so he selects a copy of the
gaudy dream car spun from the lowest common denominator of intelligence and
imagination” (Seiters 1). Because Gatsby can not define the different between romance and
reality which just like the gaudy dream car. Seiters also think the color of Gatsby’s car is white
and yellow which symbolize “so his car blends colors representing both traits. It is a rich cream
color, a combination of the white of the dream and the yellow of money, of reality in a narrow
sense” (Seiters 1). But “After Myrtle Wilson's death, a witness to the accident describes the car
as just plain yellow, which, as color imagery unfolds, becomes purely and simply corruption.
White, the color of the dream, has been removed from the mixture. Only the corruption, the foul dust, remains of Gatsby's dream after that hot day in New York” (Seiters 1), in this time witness said the murderer’s car’s color just plain yellow also symbolize the dream become corruption and foul. In the novel car also symbolize the death, “With everything set up to create expectations of disaster whenever a car appears, the accident that kills Myrtle seems inevitable, not the very strange coincidence it really is. Image patterns have made it possible for Fitzgerald to use an unlikely series of events and to make them seem natural. He has led us carefully to the moment when Myrtle lies dead, one breast amputated like the amputated front wheels in earlier scenes” (Seiters 2), The light and shadow also is a major theme of the novel. Because of many scenes happened during the night and under the darkness, the light become significance in the novel such as moonlight and green light. Seiters point out darkness and light just like the relationship between Gatsby and Nick “they can see one another only in darkness. Perhaps their relationship could not survive the light of day; a better conclusion, considering Fitzgerald's penchant for ironically twisting symbols, is that darkness offers a more realistic picture than light does. Gatsby must become himself because the dark hides his gorgeous suit, his magnificent house, his fabulous car. Gatsby stands as if naked in the dark, and he comes off pretty well. Without his absurd trappings, he is enough of a human being to force the fanatically cautious Nick into a human commitment, something no one else has done” (Seiters 3). In the earlier novels moonlight symbolized romance, but not in *The Great Gatsby* moon becomes the sinister light of nightmare (Seiters 3). “Gatsby's dream, however, suffers a blow in the moonlight when Daisy disapproves of the party. The death of Myrtle then sends it reeling, and suddenly the moon is no longer the fabric from which dreams are spun. The moon becomes associated with the
grotesque after Myrtle's death” (Seiters 4). The symbolism of car and light and shadow make this novel become more mysterious.

This novel is written during Jazz age. The Jazz age began at the end of World War I, also during stock market crash at 1929. “Victorious in the war, America experienced an economic boom and expansion during this time. Politically, the country made major advances in the area of women's independence”(historical context). The society had a big change during 1920s which is Fitzgerald wrote and set the novel (historical context). In the novel, Jordan Baker is the example of a flapper by being “an independent and self-reliant woman, who maintains a hardened, amoral view of life” (Historical Context). Also during that time fostered a large underworld industry, the people who lie Gatsby made a lot of profit by brook the law. “For years, New York was under the control of the Irish politicians of Tammany Hall, who assured that corruption persisted. Bootlegging, prostitution, and gambling thrived, while police took money from shady operators engaged in these activities and overlooked the illegalities” (historical context). Because of those history event the masterpiece—*The Great Gatsby* gone be coming out.

All in all, *The Great Gatsby* is a masterpiece. It not only tells the beautiful and sad story of Gatsby and his pursue of Daisy, but also includes a variety of themes the greatness of Gatsby, the American dream, symbolism and the historical influences of the Jazz Age.