

Name: Mrs. Cullen  
Topic: The Great Gatsby

Interviewer: (Q's) Mrs. Cullen  
Interviewee: (A's) Darien Kailher

Approx time: 4 min.

Title: English for the Day

### **OPENING MUSIC** (15 seconds)

Loop/Jingle from Garageband

### **INTRODUCTION** (15 seconds)

**Mrs. Cullen:** Hi and Welcome to the Natick High podcast station. I am Mrs. Cullen and today we will be interviewing Sophomore student, Darien Kailher on her latest read of, The Great Gatsby. How are you today Darien?

**Darien:** I am great, thank you!

### **PODCAST BODY** (3 minutes)

**Mrs. Cullen:** Alright, down to business. Let's talk about the last book which you finished reading in English which was The Great Gatsby by: F. Scott Fitzgerald. So before we begin can you give us a little low down on the basics of the book?

**Darien:** The book is a Jazz age novel and was first published in 1925 by Charles Scribner's Sons. The setting of the book is in Long Island, NY and Nick Carraway is the narrator. Nick Carraway narrates in both first and third person, presenting only what he himself observes.

**Mrs. Cullen:** As with every book there must be an underlying conflict. What would you say the major conflict is in this book?

**Darien:** Gatsby, the narrator's neighbor has a self-motivated goal to win the affections of the upper-class Daisy Buchanan, but his mysterious past stands in the way of his being accepted by her. It may sound like the typical love story but it is far from that and you learn that the further you get into the book.

**Mrs. Cullen:** Alright time for the low down from start to finish. Let's hear about the beginning of the book.

**Darien:** Here goes....Nick Carraway, a young man from Minnesota, moves to New York in the summer of 1922 to learn about the bond business. He rents a house in the West Egg district of Long Island, a wealthy but unfashionable area populated by the new rich, a group who have made their fortunes through established social connections and who

are prone to garish displays of wealth. Nick's next-door neighbor in West Egg is a mysterious man named Jay Gatsby, who lives in a gigantic Gothic mansion and throws extravagant parties every Saturday night.

**Mrs. Cullen:** Uhh sounds like upscale mysterious fun. Let's hear more.

**Darien:** Near the middle of the book, Nick drives out to East Egg one evening for dinner with his cousin, Daisy Buchanan, and her husband, Tom. Daisy and Tom introduce Nick to Jordan Baker, a beautiful, cynical young woman with whom Nick begins a romantic relationship. Nick also learns a bit about Daisy and Tom's marriage: Jordan tells him that Tom has a lover, Myrtle Wilson, who lives in the valley of ashes, a gray industrial dumping ground between West Egg and New York City. Not long after this revelation, Nick travels to New York City with Tom and Myrtle. At a vulgar, gaudy party in the apartment that Tom keeps for the affair, Myrtle begins to taunt Tom about Daisy, and Tom responds by breaking her nose.

**Mrs. Cullen:** Uhhh, don't stop their, tell us more!

**Darien:** The fight occurs and life goes on. After a short time, Tom grows increasingly suspicious of his wife's relationship with Gatsby. Nick stages a small funeral for Gatsby, ends his relationship with Jordan, and moves back to the Midwest to escape the disgust he feels for the people surrounding Gatsby's life and for the emptiness and moral decay of life among the wealthy on the East Coast. Nick reflects that just as Gatsby's dream of Daisy was corrupted by money and dishonesty, the American dream of happiness and individualism has disconnected into the mere pursuit of wealth. Though Gatsby's power to transform his dreams into reality is what makes him "great," Nick reflects that the era of dreaming—both Gatsby's dream and the American dream—is over.

**Mrs. Cullen:** Wow, we have a lot going on in this book with a lot of characters to follow. Of all the characters in the book which three are you favorite?

**Darien:** By far my favorite characters are: Nick Carraway, Jay Gatsby and Daisy Buchanan.

**Mrs. Cullen:** Can you tell us a little bit more about each of your favorite characters.

**Darien:** Sure, i'll start with Nick Carraway. The novel's narator, Nick is a young man from Minnesota who, after being educated at Yale and fighting in World War I, goes to New York City to learn the bond business. Honest, tolerant, and inclined to reserve judgement, Nick often serves as a confidant for those with troubling secrets. After moving to West Egg, a fictional area of Long Island that is home to the newly rich, Nick quickly befriends his next-door neighbor, the mysterious Jay Gatsby. As Daisy Buchana's cousin, he facilitates the rekindling of the romance between her and Gatsby. The Great Gatsby is told entirely through Nick's eyes; his thoughts and perceptions shape and color the story.

**Mrs. Cullen:** I would love to meet Nick Carraway, to bad he is not around these days. What can you tell us about Jay Gatsby?

**Darien:** Jay Gatsby is the protagonist of the novel, Gatsby is a fabulously wealthy

young man living in a Gothic mansion in West Egg. He is famous for the lavish parties he throws every Saturday night, but no one knows where he comes from, what he does, or how he made his fortune. As the novel progresses, Nick learns that Gatsby was born James Gatz on a farm in North Dakota; working for a millionaire made him dedicate his life to the achievement of wealth. When he met Daisy while training to be an officer in Louisville, he fell in love with her. Nick also learns that Gatsby made his fortune through criminal activity, as he was willing to do anything to gain the social position he thought necessary to win Daisy. Nick views Gatsby as a deeply flawed man, dishonest and vulgar, whose extraordinary optimism and power to transform his dreams into reality make him “great” nonetheless.

**Mrs. Cullen:** He sounds dangerous but interesting all at the same time. Now to your favorite female character, Daisy Buchanan.

**Darien:** Daisy is Nick’s cousin, and the woman Gatsby loves. As a young woman in Louisville before the war, Daisy was courted by a number of officers, including Gatsby. She fell in love with Gatsby and promised to wait for him. However, Daisy harbors a deep need to be loved, and when a wealthy, powerful young man named Tom Buchanan asked her to marry him, Daisy decided not to wait for Gatsby after all. Now a beautiful socialite, Daisy lives with Tom across from Gatsby in the fashionable East Egg district of Long Island. She is sardonic and somewhat cynical, and behaves superficially to mask her pain at her husband’s constant infidelity.

**Mrs. Cullen:** Do you think you would be friends with Daisy?

**Darien:** I can honestly say I would not be friends with Daisy. The lack of confidence she demonstrates in the book and her ability to lie are qualities I do not look for in a friend.

**Mrs. Cullen:** As a high school student why do you think you were assigned to read this book and what lesson did you take from the theme?

**Darien:** The theme of the book is The Decline of the American Dream in the 1920s. On the surface, *The Great Gatsby* is a story of the confused love between a man and a woman. The main theme of the novel, however, encompasses a much larger, less romantic scope. Though all of its action takes place over a mere few months during the summer of 1922 and is set in an area in the vicinity of Long Island, New York, *The Great Gatsby* is a highly symbolic meditation on 1920s America as a whole, in particular the crushing of the American dream in an era of destroyed dreams and material excess.

**Mrs. Cullen:** That is a great reflection Darien. It sounds like you really took a lot from the theme; deeper than the average reader.

**Darien:** I really did enjoy the book. If your listeners also enjoy this book I recommend they read the book called, *The Letters* which is also written by F. Scott Fitzgerald.

**CLOSING** (15 seconds)

**Mrs. Cullen:** Well Darien thank you for joining us this afternoon. You have been a pleasure to be with. If our listeners have any further questions regarding this book may they contact you?

**Darien:** Yes, they can contact me at [Darien@myemail.com](mailto:Darien@myemail.com) Well Mrs. Cullen thank you for having me and I hope your listeners enjoy the book as much as I did.

**Mrs. Cullen:** Well that is a wrap, make sure to join us tomorrow to learn more about the latest iPod controversy.

**CLOSING MUSIC** (15 seconds)

Jingle/Loop in Garageband