

Researching Information for Note Cards

A direct quote should reflect and support the thesis statement. A direct quote is used when the author makes a point in a significant or unusual way. Paraphrase cards keep the author's intended meaning; however, the wording and sentence structure have been altered. Use fragments when creating this kind of card. Choose one direct quote and one paraphrase from the following passage, which support the given thesis, and make sample cards. Assume this is your B source.

Thesis: In F. Scott Fitzgerald's novel, *The Great Gatsby*, the theme "money cannot buy happiness" is expressed through the values of the main characters Jay and Daisy.

Gatsby represents the American dream of self-made wealth and happiness, the spirit of youth and resourcefulness, and the ability to make something of one's self, despite one's origins. He achieved more than his parents had and felt he was pursuing a perfect dream, Daisy, who for him embodied the elements of success. Gatsby's mentor, Dan Cody, was the ultimate self-made man who influenced Gatsby in his tender, impressionable youth. When Gatsby found he could not win Daisy's love, he pursued the American Dream in the guise of Cody. Inherent in this dream, however, was the possibility of giving in to temptation and to corrupt get-rich-quick schemes like bootlegging and gambling. Fitzgerald's book mirrors the headiness, ambition, despair, and disillusionment of America in the 1920s: its ideals lost behind the trappings of class and material success.

Examples of the American Dream gone awry are plentiful in *The Great Gatsby*: Meyer Wolfsheim's enterprising ways to make money are criminal; Jordan Baker's attempts at sporting fame lead her to cheating; and the Buchanans' thirst for the good life victimizes others to the point of murder. Only Gatsby, who was relatively unselfish in his life, and whose primary flaw was a naive idealism, could be construed as fulfilling the author's vision of the American Dream. Throughout the novel are many references to his tendency to dream, but in fact, his world rests insecurely on a fairy's wing. On the flip side of the American Dream, then, is a naïveté and a susceptibility to evil and poor-intentioned people.

"Themes and Construction: The Great Gatsby." *EXPLORING Novels*. Detroit: Gale, 2003. *Discovering Collection*. Gale. Web. 12 Aug. 2009. <<http://find.galegroup.com/>>.