

Lesson Overview: **Paying the Cost for Being the Boss**

Author/Teacher: Tom McConkey

Grade Level: English, 12

Unit Description:

The Great Gatsby allows students to develop a thorough understanding of the historical context in which the novel was written and how the novel relates to past and present social and political concepts in American culture. Students will need to read and analyze Fitzgerald's writing closely, paying particular attention to his use of figurative language and extended metaphors. The unit also requires students to analyze and discuss, both individually and as a class, the important and common themes in the novel and to speak and write insightfully about the literary concepts contained in *The Great Gatsby*, including what the students' own opinions are about those ideas. The unit will be covered in **30 forty-five minute periods**.

Essential Question:

What is the real cost of the American Dream and is its pursuit worth the price?

Summative Assessment Description:

Students will choose one song or a few excerpts from the soundtrack of the film or any song of the teacher's choosing, and in a 750-800 word essay, discuss how that song relates to a character in *The Great Gatsby* and their pursuit of the American Dream. Students will determine what was the cost of the character's dream and was the dream worth the costs they paid. Students will conclude their essay by sharing how the song relates to their pursuit of their own dreams for the future.

Woke Cypha Elements:



Music as text: (1) Giving authority to lyrics as text (2) using lyrics as an entry point and conduit to making connections.



Take it to the streets: This unit reflects the current sociopolitical context and empowers students to develop and/or deepen their self-agency.



Storytelling: To honor the exchange and significance of our oral tradition as African people to our learning.

Materials and Resources for the unit:

- *The Great Gatsby* (1925 Novel)
- *The Great Gatsby* (2013 Film)
- Access to Twitter and memegenerator.net
- List of *The Great Gatsby* soundtrack songs
- *Improving Student Performance: Writing and Thinking Across the Curriculum* (Collins Writing Program)

Summative Assessment

Project Name	"Name YOUR Tune"
<p>In depth summative assessment description</p>	<p>Students will choose one song or a few excerpts from the soundtrack of the film or any song of the teacher's choosing, and in a 750-800 word essay, discuss how that song relates to a character in <i>The Great Gatsby</i> and their pursuit of the American Dream. Students will determine what was the cost of the character's dream and was the dream worth the costs they paid. Students will conclude their essay by sharing how the song relates to their pursuit of their own dreams for the future. This will be a Collins Writing Program Type Four writing assignment (self and peer edit for three focus correction areas).</p>
<p>Rubric and length</p>	<p>Pursuant to the Collins Writing Program, the rubric for this assignment will be in the form of three focus correction areas (FCAs). For this assignment, the FCAs are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clear and concise START (source, title, author, right verb, topic) thesis statement 10 points 2. MLA formatted textual evidence supporting their character's dream and cost paid in pursuit (4) 45 points 3. Conclusion reflects on how the song relates to their dream 45 points

About the Educator

Educator Bio:

- **New York City Department of Education** New York, NY
Careers in Sports High School (Bronx) September 2011 to Present
English Teacher, Grade 12
- **American Bilingual School of Kuwait** Kuwait City, Kuwait
Humanities Teacher Upper and Middle School Division 2009 to 2011
- **Keystone Oaks Area School District** Pittsburgh, PA
English Teacher – Varsity Head Football Coach 1998 to 2009
- **Mars Area School District** Pittsburgh, PA
Middle School English Teacher -Varsity Head Football Coach 1990 to 1998
- **University of Pittsburgh** Pittsburgh, PA
Assistant Football Coach 1989 to 1990
- **University of Maryland** College Park, MD
Assistant Football Coach 1987 to 1989
- **Marshall University**
Assistant Football Coach 1986

Education

- **Carnegie Mellon University** Pittsburgh, PA
- **Masters of Public Management** 2001
- **The Heinz School of Public Policy and Management** Concentration in Educational Leadership
- **Marshall University** Huntington, WV
- **Bachelors of Arts** – English Education 1986
 - Omicron Delta Kappa (National Leadership and Honor Society Member)
 - Four-year varsity football letter winner