

Excerpt from *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald

The following excerpt is taken from Chapter 3.

There was music from my neighbor's house through the summer nights. In his blue gardens men and girls came and went like moths among the whisperings and the champagne and the stars. At high tide in the afternoon I watched his guests diving from the tower of his raft, or taking the sun on the hot sand of his beach while his motor-boats slid the waters of the Sound, drawing aquaplanes over cataracts of foam. On weekends his Rolls-Royce became an omnibus, bearing parties to and from the city between nine in the morning and long past midnight, while his station wagon scampered like a brisk yellow bug to meet all trains. And on Mondays eight servants, including an extra gardener, toiled all day with mops and scrubbing-brushes and hammers and garden-shears, repairing the ravages of the night before.

Every Friday five crates of oranges and lemons arrived from a fruiterer in New York—every Monday these same oranges and lemons left his back door in a pyramid of pulpless halves. There was a machine in the kitchen which could extract the juice of two hundred oranges in half an hour if a little button was pressed two hundred times by a butler's thumb.

At least once a fortnight a corps of caterers came down with several hundred feet of canvas and enough colored lights to make a Christmas tree of Gatsby's enormous garden. On buffet tables, garnished with glistening hors-d'oeuvre, spiced baked hams crowded against salads of harlequin designs and pastry pigs and turkeys bewitched to a dark gold. In the main hall a bar with a real brass rail was set up, and stocked with gins and liquors and with cordials so long forgotten that most of his female guests were too young to know one from another.

By seven o'clock the orchestra has arrived, no thin five-piece affair, but a whole pitful of oboes and trombones and saxophones and viols and cornets and piccolos, and low and high drums. The last swimmers have come in from the beach now and are dressing up-stairs; the cars from New York are parked five deep in the drive, and already the halls and salons and verandas are gaudy with primary colors, and hair shorn in strange new ways, and shawls beyond the dreams of Castile. The bar is in full swing, and floating rounds of cocktails permeate the garden outside, until the air is alive with chatter and laughter, and casual innuendo and introductions forgotten on the spot, and enthusiastic meetings between women who never knew each other's names.

The lights grow brighter as the earth lurches away from the sun, and now the orchestra is playing yellow cocktail music, and the opera of voices pitches a key higher. Laughter is easier minute by minute, spilled with prodigality, tipped out at a cheerful word. The groups change more swiftly, swell with new arrivals, dissolve and form in the same breath; already there are wanderers, confident girls who weave here and there among the stouter and more stable, become for a sharp, joyous moment the centre of a group, and then, excited with triumph, glide on through the sea-change of faces and voices and color under the constantly changing light...The party has begun.

The Soaring Twenties

The 1920s were a period of dramatic technological change that transformed the fundamental structure of the economy in the United States, altered the nature of the family, and challenged the social norms of the 19th century. Technology is of particular importance, because it was technological change that improved the economic welfare of many. The technological revolution of the 1920s was driven by the continued development and widespread adoption of the internal combustion engine, the development of electrical machinery, and the spread of electricity to households and manufacturing. This great transformation led to a rise in productivity that re-made society.

Technology had a profound impact on household production—the set of tasks that are necessary to run a household and maintain a family. In 1907, only 8% of households had electricity. By 1930, 68.2% had electricity. There were also corresponding increases in the availability of central heating, running water, and indoor plumbing. These innovations made possible the adoption of new technologies for household production—washers, electric irons, refrigerators and so on. The effect of these changes on the household have been studied by Jeremy Greenwood and his co-authors. They were dramatic. In 1900, they estimate, household production required 58 hours a week. By 1975, the estimate was 18 hours per week. However, the most dramatic productivity changes were in the manufacturing sector. The introduction of electrically-driven machinery to the manufacturing process had dramatically accelerated productivity in the 1920s. By 1929, more than 70% of the industry was powered by electricity. The iconic symbol of this productivity boom was the Model T Ford car which, by 1928, rolled off the assembly line every 10 seconds. Before World War I, a Ford would cost the equivalent of two years' wages for the average worker. By the late 1920s, it cost about three months' earnings.

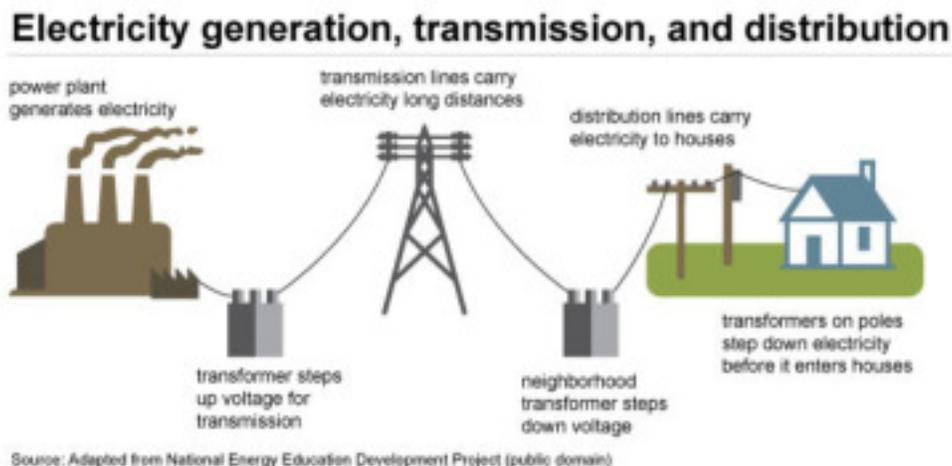
The increased productivity increased incomes and led to the mass production of automobiles, consumer durables, the radio, motion pictures, and many other things that changed the nature of everyday life. Household credit expanded to facilitate the purchase of all these new durable goods. Along with these technological changes came societal transformations. The increase in the rewards to skilled labor, along with a major rise in the compensation of executives, led inevitably to a rise in inequality. The data tend to be somewhat anecdotal, but suggest that executive compensation rose sharply in the 1920s and that incentive-based compensation in the form of bonuses and stock ownership became more common. Scholars suggest that these changes led to major societal inequalities with only 7 % of the population gaining wealth and the other 93 % stagnating. In fact, the share of income earned by the top 10% peaked at close to 50% in 1928. It did not reach that level again until 2006.

Adapted from Cooley, T.F. (2009). The soaring 20s. *Forbes Magazine*.

Modern Electricity Generation and Distribution

Electricity use has dramatically changed daily life. We use electricity to do many jobs every day—from lighting, heating, and cooling homes, to powering televisions and computers. However, before electricity became widely available about 100 years ago, candles and kerosene lamps provided light, iceboxes kept food cold, and wood-burning or coal-burning stoves provided heat.

The electricity that we use in our homes is a secondary energy source because it is produced by converting primary sources of energy such as coal, natural gas, nuclear energy, solar energy, or wind energy into electrical power. It is also referred to as an energy carrier, which means it can be converted to other forms of energy such as mechanical energy or heat. Electricity is generated at power plants and moves through a complex system, sometimes called the grid, of electricity sub-stations, transformers, and power lines that connect electricity producers and consumers. Most local grids are interconnected, forming larger, more dependable networks. In the United States, the entire electrical grid consists of hundreds of thousands of miles of high-voltage power lines and millions of miles of low-voltage power lines with transformers that connect thousands of power plants to hundreds of millions of homes and businesses.



The electricity that power plants generate is delivered to customers over transmission and distribution power lines. High-voltage transmission lines, like those that hang between tall metal towers, carry electricity over long distances to where it is needed. Higher voltage electricity is more efficient for long distance electricity transmission. Lower voltage electricity is safer for use in homes and businesses. Transformers increase or reduce voltages to adjust to the different stages of the journey from the power plant on long distance transmission lines to distribution lines that carry electricity to homes and businesses.

Adapted from a report by the United States Energy Information Administration.

- 9) Based on information in the passage and graphic, describe the sequence of events through which energy is generated and transmitted from power plants to homes.
- 10) Share your sequence of events with a neighbor. Are your answers similar or different? What are some of the strengths and weaknesses of each of your answers? Based on your conversation, revise your sequence of events to make it even better.
- 11) What does the phrase “step down,” which is used in the graphic, mean in this context? If you didn’t know this phrase, how might you use context clues from the passage or graphic to understand its meaning?
- 12) During Gatsby’s time, most Americans got electricity in their homes for the first time. Based on all three passages, How do you think that might have changed their lives? What might they have been able to do with electricity that they could not do before?

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The following excerpt is taken from Chapter 3.

There was music from my neighbor's house through the summer nights. In his blue gardens men and girls came and went like moths among the whisperings and the champagne and the stars. At high tide in the afternoon I watched his guests diving from the tower of his raft, or taking the sun on the hot sand of his beach while his motor-boats slid the waters of the Sound, drawing aquaplanes over cataracts of foam. On weekends his Rolls-Royce became an omnibus, bearing parties to and from the city between nine in the morning and long past midnight, while his station wagon scampered like a brisk yellow bug to meet all trains. And on Mondays eight servants, including an extra gardener, toiled all day with mops and scrubbing-brushes and hammers and garden-shears, repairing the ravages of the night before.

Every Friday five crates of oranges and lemons arrived from a fruiterer in New York—every Monday these same oranges and lemons left his back door in a pyramid of pulpless halves. There was a machine in the kitchen which could extract the juice of two hundred oranges in half an hour if a little button was pressed two hundred times by a butler's thumb.

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- 1) In one sentence, summarize what happened in the passage.

In this passage, a narrator describes in great detail the extravagant parties he observes at his neighbor, Gatsby's, house during the summer.

- 2) What do you think the word “prodigality” means in this context? If you didn’t know this word, how might you use context clues from the passage to understand its meaning?

In the sentence in which “prodigality” is used, laughter is “easier minute by minute” and “tipped out at a cheerful world,” so I think the meaning of “prodigality” has to do with being extravagant or excessive. The word ends in -ality, so I also know it is a noun.

- 3) What do you think the author was trying to communicate in the following sentence? Why do you think he chose the word “moths”?

“In his blue gardens men and girls came and went like moths among the whisperings and the champagne and the stars.”

In this sentence, the author is trying to show how the party-goers move around the party. The author probably chose the word “moths” because moths are attracted to bright lights, and the party-goers are similarly attracted to the “whisperings and the champagne and the stars.”

- 4) Provide two pieces of evidence from the text that support the following claim: Gatsby and his party-goers led extravagant lives characterized by excess.

“On buffet tables, garnished with glistening hors-d’oeuvre, spiced baked hams crowded against salads of harlequin designs and pastry pigs and turkeys bewitched to a dark gold.”

“...and already the halls and salons and verandas are gaudy with primary colors, and hair shorn in strange new ways, and shawls beyond the dreams of Castile.”

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Technology had a profound impact on household production—the set of tasks that are necessary to run a household and maintain a family. In 1907, only 8% of households had electricity. By 1930, 68.2% had electricity. There were also corresponding increases in the availability of central heating, running water, and indoor plumbing. These innovations made possible the adoption of new technologies for household production—washers, electric irons, refrigerators and so on. The effect of these changes on the household have been studied by Jeremy Greenwood and his co-authors. They were dramatic. In 1900, they estimate, household production required 58 hours a week. By 1975, the estimate was 18 hours per week. However, the most dramatic productivity changes were in the manufacturing sector. The introduction of electrically-driven machinery to the manufacturing process had dramatically accelerated productivity in the 1920s. By 1929, more than 70% of the industry was powered by electricity. The iconic symbol of this productivity boom was the Model T Ford car which, by 1928, rolled off the assembly line every 10 seconds. Before World War I, a Ford would cost the equivalent of two years' wages for the average worker. By the late 1920s, it cost about three months' earnings.

The increased productivity increased incomes and led to the mass production of automobiles, consumer durables, the radio, motion pictures, and many other things that changed the nature of everyday life. Household credit expanded to facilitate the purchase of all these new durable goods. Along with these technological changes came societal transformations. The increase in the rewards to skilled labor, along with a major rise in the compensation of executives, led inevitably to a rise in inequality. The data tend to be somewhat anecdotal, but suggest that executive compensation rose sharply in the 1920s and that incentive-based compensation in the form of bonuses and stock ownership became more common. Scholars suggest that these changes led to major societal inequalities with only 7 % of the population gaining wealth and the other 93 % stagnating. In fact, the share of income earned by the top 10% peaked at close to 50% in 1928. It did not reach that level again until 2006.

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- 5) Based on information in the passage, how did the availability of electricity change between 1907 and 1930?

According to the passage, the availability of electricity in United States households increased from 8% in 1907 to 68.2% in 1930.

- 6) Provide two pieces of evidence from the text that supports the author’s claim: “This great transformation led to a rise in productivity.”

“The introduction of electrically-driven machinery to the manufacturing process had dramatically accelerated productivity in the 1920s. By 1929, more than 70% of the industry was powered by electricity.”

“The iconic symbol of this productivity boom was the Model T Ford car which, by 1928, rolled off the assembly line every 10 seconds.”

- 7) Based on the information in both passages, explain how the technological changes that occurred during the 1920s led to the life of opulence described in *The Great Gatsby*. Use two pieces of evidence from the passages to support your explanation.

According to *The Soaring Twenties*, technological change in the 1920s led to increased productivity, which “increased incomes and led to the mass production of automobiles.” Automobile ownership is a symbol of wealth that is referenced several times in *The Great Gatsby*. In the first paragraph, Gatsby is said to have both a Rolls-Royce and a station wagon. In the fourth paragraph, the narrator states that “the cars from New York are parked five deep in the drive.” Overall, many of the party-goers in *The Great Gatsby* seem to own automobiles, which are vehicles that developed as a result of technological changes during the 1920s.

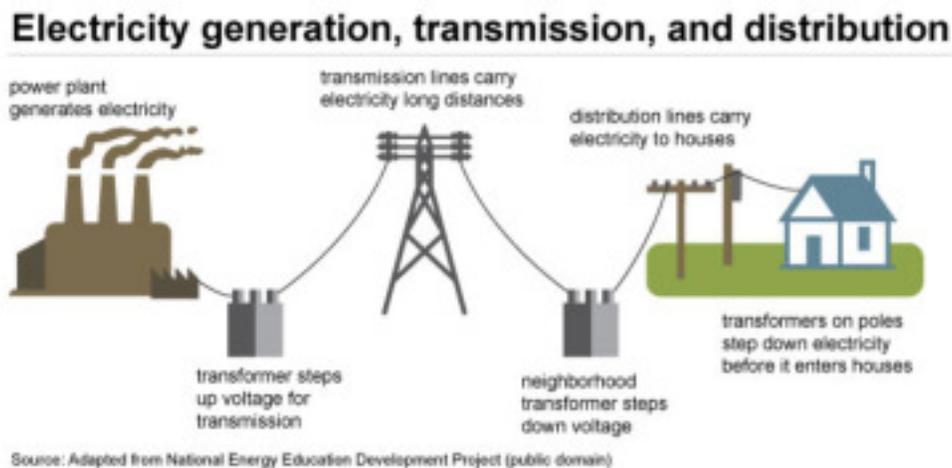
- 8) Share your explanation with a neighbor. Are your explanations similar or different? What are some of the strengths and weaknesses of each of your explanations? Based on your conversation, revise your explanation to make it even better.

My argument was about how technology developed in the 1920s and evidence for it in *The Great Gatsby*, and my neighbor’s argument was about how Gatsby might have become wealthy during the 1920s as a result of technological developments. My argument has more direct evidence from the passages, and my neighbor had to make more assumptions because *The Great Gatsby* passage does not say how Gatsby got his money. My argument could be improved by including specific types of technology that led to automobile development, such as the combustion engine.

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- 9) Based on information in the passage and graphic, describe the sequence of events through which energy is generated and transmitted from power plants to homes.

First, energy is generated as electricity at a power plant. From the power plant, electricity moves through a network of power lines and transformers before reaching homes.

- 10) Share your sequence of events with a neighbor. Are your answers similar or different? What are some of the strengths and weaknesses of each of your answers? Based on your conversation, revise your sequence of events to make it even better.

My neighbor's sequence of events included more details about what power lines and transformers do. I revised my sequence to make it more detailed:

First, energy is generated as electricity at a power plant. From the power plant, electricity moves through a network of power lines (which carry the electricity) and transformers (which increase or decrease the voltage of the electricity) before reaching homes.

- 11) What does the phrase “step down,” which is used in the graphic, mean in this context? If you didn't know this phrase, how might you use context clues from the passage or graphic to understand its meaning?

As it is used in the graphic, “step down” means *to reduce*. According to the passage, “lower voltage electricity is safer for use in homes.” The passage also states that transformers can reduce electricity voltage for different phases of electricity distribution. At this point in the graphic, electricity is about to be distributed to a home, so reduced voltage is needed.

- 12) During Gatsby's time, most Americans got electricity in their homes for the first time. Based on all three passages, how do you think that might have changed their lives? What might they have been able to do with electricity that they could not do before?

Based on the passages, having electricity in their homes must have radically changed Americans' lives in the 1920s. According to *The Soaring Twenties*, electricity allowed people to have features like central heating, running water, and indoor plumbing in their homes, which all would have improved peoples' quality of life. Based on *The Great Gatsby*, electricity also allowed some people have extravagant lifestyles. Gatsby, for example, had “a machine in the kitchen which could extract the juice of two hundred oranges in half an hour.”

The Great Gatsby – Lesson Planning Information and Standards Mapping

This close reading and writing task includes an excerpt from *The Great Gatsby* and two additional passages designed to connect with and build upon the themes present in the book. These materials were developed to engage students in the level of rigor and types of skills and practices they will encounter on the Evidence-Based Reading and Writing (EBRW) section of the SAT. Like the EBRW section of the SAT, this activity involves close reading of complex literary, historical, and scientific passages. Based on the rigor of the passages, these materials are targeted towards an 11th grade level.

The questions that follow each passage are aligned with relevant standards from Common Core State Standards (CCSS), ACT College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS), and SAT Domains and Dimensions. Each of these questions is mapped to one or more relevant standards below to illustrate the relevant types of thinking and reasoning targeted by each question.

Question 1:

- The student will identify a reasonable summary of a text or of key information and ideas in text. (SAT IISM.01: Summarizing)
- Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.2)
- Summarize key supporting ideas and details in more challenging passages. (CCRS IDT 503)

Questions 2 & 11:

- The student will determine the meaning of words and phrases in context. (SAT IIWD.01: Interpreting words and phrases in context)
- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.4)
- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines faction in Federalist No. 10). (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.4)
- Interpret words and phrases in a passage that makes consistent use of figurative, general academic, domain-specific, or otherwise difficult language. (CCRS WME 603)

Question 3:

- The student will analyze the relationship between a particular part of a text (e.g., a sentence) and the whole text. (SAT RTS.02: Analyzing part-whole relationships)
- Analyze a case in which grasping a point of view requires distinguishing what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant (e.g., satire, sarcasm, irony, or understatement). (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.6)
- Infer a purpose in more challenging passages and how that purpose shapes content and style. (CCRS PPV 601)
- The student will determine how the selection of specific words and phrases or the use of patterns of words and phrases shapes meaning and tone in text. (SAT RWC.01: Analyzing word choice).
- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (Include Shakespeare as well as other authors.) (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.4)

- Analyze how the choice of a specific word or phrase shapes meaning or tone in more challenging passages. (CCRS WME 502)

Questions 4 & 6:

- The student will cite the textual evidence that best supports a given claim or point. (SAT IITE.01: Citing textual evidence)
- Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.1)
- Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.1)
- Analyze how one or more sentences in more challenging passages offer reasons for or support a claim. (CCRS ARG 501)

Question 5:

- The student will identify information and ideas explicitly stated in text. (SAT IIRC.01: Determining explicit meanings)
- Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.1)
- Locate important details in more challenging passages. (CCRS CLR 502)

Questions 7 & 8:

- The student will synthesize information and ideas from paired texts. (SAT SMT.01: Analyzing multiple texts)
- Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.9)
- Make straightforward comparisons between two passages. (CCRS SYN 301)
- The student will cite the textual evidence that best supports a given claim or point. (SAT IITE.01: Citing textual evidence)
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- Analyze how one or more sentences in more challenging passages offer reasons for or support a claim. (CCRS ARG 501)

Questions 9 & 10:

- The student will identify explicitly stated relationships or determine implicit relationships between and among individuals, events, or ideas (e.g., cause-effect, comparison-contrast, sequence). (SAT IIUR.01: Understanding Relationships)
- Determine the central ideas or conclusions of a text; summarize complex concepts, processes, or information presented in a text by paraphrasing them in simpler but still accurate terms. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RST.11-12.2)
- Order sequences of events in more challenging passages. (CCRS REL 601)

Question 12:

- The student will synthesize information and ideas from paired texts. (SAT SMT.01: Analyzing multiple texts)
- Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.9)

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