

THE GREAT GATSBY VOCABULARY

You will only be tested on the highlighted words; all other words have been compiled for your convenience. Always keep this list near you as you read.

Chapter 1

- 1. reserved:** *adj.* - formal or self-restrained in manner and relationship; avoiding familiarity or intimacy with others: *a quiet, reserved man.*
- 2. privy:** *adj.* - participating in the knowledge of something private or secret (usually fol. by *to*):
Many persons were privy to the plot.
- 3. feign:** *verb* - to make believe; pretend
- 4. levity:** *noun* - a manner lacking seriousness
- 5. mar :** *verb* - to damage, ruin, deface
- 6. abortive:** *adj.* - partially or imperfectly developed; vain
- 7. elation:** *noun* - a feeling or state of great joy or pride; exultant gladness; high spirits
- 8. confer:** *verb* - 1. to bestow upon as a gift, favor, honor; 2. to consult together
- 9. acute:** *adj.* - sharp; intense
- 10. savor:** *verb* - to taste or smell
- 11. reproach:** *noun* - an object of scorn or contempt
- 12. wistfully/wistful:** *adv/adj* - full of wishful yearning or longing, often with sadness
- 13. supercilious:** *adj.* - having or showing arrogant superiority to and disdain of those one views as unworthy; cocky
- 14. effeminate:** *adj.* - having traits, tastes or habits traditionally considered feminine
- 15. pungent:** *adj.* - sharply affecting the organs of taste or smell
- 16. buoy:** *verb* - to float or rise by reason of lightness
- 17. divan:** *noun* - sofa or couch, usually without arms or a back
- 18. compulsion:** *noun* - a strong, usually irresistible impulse to perform an act, esp. one that is irrational or contrary to one's will
- 19. deft:** *adj.* - quick and skillful
- 20. retort:** *verb* - to reply to, usually in a sharp or retaliatory way
- 21. incredulous:** *adj* - skeptical; disbelieving
- 22. reciprocal:** *adj.* - given or felt by each toward the other; mutual
- 23. contemptuously/contemptuous:** *adv/adj* - showing or feeling disapproval or disdain toward something a person considers mean, vile, or worthless; scornful
- 24. languidly/languid:** *adv./adj.* - lacking energy or vitality; weak
- 25. unobtrusively/unobtrusive:** *adv./adj.* - Not undesirably noticeable or obvious
- 26. claret:** *noun* - the red table wine produced in the Bordeaux region of France
- 27. fervent:** *adj.* - having or showing great warmth or intensity of spirit, feeling, enthusiasm
- 28. infinitesimal:** *adj.* - immeasurably small; less than an assignable quantity
- 29. vigil:** *noun* - a devotional watching, or keeping awake, during the customary hours of sleep

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30. **settee**: *noun* – a seat for two or more persons, having a back and arms
31. **cynical**: *adj.* – distrusting, criticizing, or mocking the motives of others; pessimistic; glass is half empty mentality
32. **rotogravure**: *noun* – a print made by a photomechanical process using a copper cylinder
33. **corroborate**: *verb* – to make more certain; confirm
34. **libel**: *noun* - a false publication, as in writing, print, signs, or pictures, that damages a person's reputation
35. **banns**: *noun* – any public announcement of a proposed marriage
36. **intimation/intimate**: *noun/verb* - an indirect suggestion; a slight suggestion or vague understanding

Chapter 2

1. **grotesque gardens**: *adj.* - fantastically ugly or absurd; bizarre
2. **impenetrable cloud**: *adj.* - dense; cannot be penetrated, pierced, entered, etc.
3. **wild wag**: *noun* - witty person who likes to make jokes; **oculist**: *n* - eye doctor
4. **borough of Queens**: *noun* - district—N.Y. City is divided up into boroughs
5. **solemn**: *adj.* - formal; serious; sober; lacking humor or happiness
6. **proprietor**: *noun* - property owner; business manager
7. **anemic**: *adj.* - weak; lacking power, vigor, vitality; wishy-washy **the spelling has changed since Fitzgerald's time
8. **facet or gleam of beauty**: *noun* - aspect, feature
9. **perceptible**: *adj.* - noticeable; recognizable
10. **vitality**: *noun* - liveliness; energy (physical and/or mental); spirit; vigor
11. **smoldering**: *adj.* - burning ** the spelling has changed since Fitzgerald's time
12. **discreet**: *adj.* - marked by caution, prudence, or modesty and wise self-restraint; subtle
13. **defer** : *verb* - to yield respectfully in judgment or opinion to another [usually followed by "to"; ex:
Because she is an accountant, I defer to my mom on questions regarding my taxes.]
14. **muslin**: *noun* - delicately woven cotton fabric
15. **indeterminate**: *adj.* - indefinite, uncertain; not clear
16. **haughty**: *adj.* - snooty; arrogant
17. **countenance** : *noun* - appearance, especially the face
18. **rakish angle**: *adj.* - Dashing or sportingly stylish
19. **incessant** : *adj.* - never-ending; ceaseless
20. **innumerable pottery**: *adj.* - countless; very numerous
21. **laughed immoderately**: *adv.* - without restraint; excessive; extreme
22. **flat**: *noun* - apartment
23. **wife was shrill** : *adj.* - high-pitched
24. **impressive hauteur/haughty**: *noun* - pride, arrogance; cockiness *adj.* – cocky, snobby

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25. high **mincing** shout : *adj.* - dainty, elegant
26. **disdain**: *verb* – to despise or scorn; *noun* – haughty contempt, extreme dislike; scorn
27. **shiftless**: *adj.* - lazy, without ambition
28. **flounce**: - to go with impatient or impetuous, exaggerated movements
29. **kike/kyke**: *noun* - offensive slang for a Jewish person
30. **strident**: *adj.* - loud, harsh, grating, or shrill
31. a **wave**: *noun* - women's hairdo from the 1920s that created waves in the hair

Chapter 3

1. **omnibus**: *noun* - a bus or long motor vehicle
2. once a **fortnight** *noun* - fourteen nights--two weeks
3. **harlequin** design: *adjective* - fancy variation in color
4. **cordials** so long forgotten: *noun* - liqueurs or tonics
5. **Castile**: *proper noun* - allusion to former kingdom of Spain
6. **permeate**: *verb* – to fill up, seep into; to saturate
7. **innuendo**: *noun* - an indirect hint or suggestion about a person or thing, especially of an insulting or an offensive nature
8. spilled with **prodigality**: *noun* - extravagant wastefulness
9. moving her hands like **Frisco**: *noun* - allusion to famous pianist Rocky Frisco
10. **Erroneous**: *adjective* - incorrect; wrong
11. **Gilda Gray**: *proper noun* - famous actress known for her dance move “the shimmy” seen in the *Follies* (a theatrical revue of song and dance)
12. majestic **hand**: *noun* - handwriting
13. **eddies**: *plural noun* - a current moving in the opposite direction of the main current. [Fitz uses as metaphor – “eddies of people I didn't know”]
14. denied so **vehement/vehemently**: *adjective/adverb* - strongly passionate or emotion; often with anger
15. **cordial** remarks: *adjective* - friendly; warm
16. dignified **homogeneity**: *noun* - uniformity; being similar
17. **staid** nobility: *adjective* – 1) serious; straight-laced; 2) permanent; fixed
18. **spectroscopic**: *adjective* - full spectrum of color and light
19. **veranda**: *noun* - a porch or balcony
20. **Gothic** library: *adjective* - literature genre known for gloom, darkness, and the supernatural
21. **ascertain**: *verb* - to determine; to make certain or clear
22. **Belasco**: - allusion to fictional sorcerer with a wide knowledge of spells
23. **contralto**: *noun* - lowest female vocal range in opera
24. **vacuous** (p. 46/51) *adjective* – empty; lacking ideas or intelligence; stupid

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25. **florid:** *adj.* – 1) a healthy reddish color—as in cheeks; 2) elaborately ornate
26. **corpulent** person: *adjective* - plump; large or bulky in body
27. **echolalia:** *noun* – immediate, uncontrollable repetition of words spoken by others
28. **jauntiness/jaunty** about her movements: *noun/adjective* - perky; confident; carefree
29. **obstetrical** conversation: *adjective* - relating to childbirth
30. **implore:** *verb* - to beg urgently
31. **ineptly/inept:** *adverb/adjective* - lacking skill; awkward; clumsy
32. **vinous** sleep: *adjective* - relating to wine
33. **asunder:** *adverb* - separated into pieces; apart from each other
34. **dissension:** *noun* - disagreement; difference of opinion
35. **deplorable/deplorably:** *adjective/adverb* - causing grief, regret, or disapproval
36. **indignant** wives: *adjective* - angry; annoyed
37. **malevolence:** *noun* - a desire to harm others; evil
38. **enjoined** me eagerly: *verb* – 1) to urge or command with authority; 2) to forbid
39. man in a long **duster:** *noun* - a long coat designed to protect clothing from dust
40. **caterwauling** horns: *adjective* - a howl that sounds like a cat in heat
41. **chasms:** *noun* - deep crack or hole; *metaphor comparing NYC streets to a crack or hole*
42. **subterfuge:** *noun* - a plan that hides the real purpose; a deceptive scheme
43. **insolent** smile: *adjective* - boldly rude; disrespectful

Chapter 4

1. **bootlegger:** *noun* - someone who sells smuggled goods illegally—in the '20s it was alcohol
2. **disintegrate:** *verb* - to decay; decompose; break up
3. **knickerbockers:** *noun* - loose-fitting pants that gathered at or below the knee
4. **sporadic:** *adj* - periodic; random; happening at irregular intervals
5. **punctilious:** *adj* - painstaking; meticulous; strict attention to minute details
6. **disconcerting:** *adj* - confusing; disturbing; causing emotional disturbance
7. slapping himself **indecisively/indecisive:** *adv./adj* - hesitantly; uncertain; unable to make a decision
8. **evasion:** *noun* - avoiding something unpleasant; escaping
9. **retribution:** *noun* - something justly deserved; taking revenge or correcting a wrong
10. **sinister** : *adj* - evil; bad; wicked
11. **rajah:** *noun* - an Indian king, prince, or chief
12. **threadbare** : *adj* - shabby; thin; worn off
13. **incredulity:** *noun* - inability or unwillingness to believe; skeptical
14. **girders:** *noun* - large beams that support a building

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15. **anteroom:** *noun* – an entry room or waiting area
16. **somnambulatory/somnambulance :** *adj/noun* - sleepwalking
17. business **gonnegtion:** connection (with a Jewish accent)
18. **juxtaposition:** *noun* - placing two or more things side by side to emphasize the link or contrast
19. **succulent :** *adj* – 1) juicy; 2) rich in desirable qualities
20. **roadster:** *noun* - small, open-topped sports car
21. I had a few **beaux** myself: *noun* - boyfriends
22. **effectual/effectually:** *adj./adv.* - capable of producing a desired effect; adequate

Chapter 5

1. **elongating** [usually *elongated*]: *adj*: extended; lengthened
2. **tactless:** *adj*: lacking or showing a lack of what is fitting and considerate in dealing with others
3. **obliged:** *verb*: to place under a debt of gratitude for some benefit, favor, or service. (*ex: I'm much obliged for the ride.*)
4. **scrutinize:** *verb*: to examine in detail with careful or critical attention.
5. **harrowed:** *adj*: distressed
6. **ecstatic:** *adj*: of, pertaining to, or characterized by ecstasy; rapturous
7. **tonic:** *noun*: anything invigorating physically, mentally, or morally
8. **defunct:** *adj*: no longer in effect or use; not operating or functioning
9. **demoniac:** *adj*: of, pertaining to, or like a demon; demonic
10. **Kant:** German philosopher who was said to have been in the habit of looking at a steeple when he was thinking
11. **obstinate:** *adj*: Stubbornly adhering to an attitude, opinion, or course of action; stubborn
12. **vestige:** *noun*: a mark, trace, or visible evidence of something that is no longer present or in existence
13. **exultation:** *noun*: The act or condition of rejoicing greatly
14. **postern:** *noun*: a private entrance or any entrance other than the main one
15. **jonquil:** *noun*: a narcissus; a fragrant, yellow or white flower
16. **hawthorn:** *noun*: any of numerous plants belonging to the rose family
17. **swathe:** *verb*: to wrap up closely or fully
18. **disheveled:** *adj*: hanging loosely or in disorder; unkempt; untidy
19. **garnish:** *verb*: to provide or supply with something ornamental; to adorn or decorate
20. **disarray:** *noun*: disorder; confusion
21. **corrugated:** *adj*: shaped into alternating parallel grooves and ridges; wrinkled
22. **pompadour:** *noun*: an arrangement of a man's hair in which it is brushed up high from the forehead
23. **scanty:** *adj*: lacking in amount, quantity; meager; not adequate
24. **nebulous:** *adj*: hazy, vague, indistinct, or confused
25. **remote:** *adj*: far apart; far off; distant

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Chapter 6

1. **transpire** ---- *verb*: to occur; happen; take place
2. **laudable** ---- *adj*: deserving praise; praiseworthy; commendable
3. **insidious** ---- *adj*: attractive or enticing but harmful; intended to entrap
4. **meretricious** ---- *adj*: alluring by a show of flashy or vulgar attractions
5. **ineffable** ---- *adj*: Incapable of being expressed; indescribable or unutterable
6. **robust** ---- *adj*: strong and healthy; hardy; vigorous
7. **ramification** ---- *noun*: a development or consequence that complicates a situation
8. **turgid** ---- *adj*: Excessively ornate or complex in style or language
9. **repose** ---- *verb*: to lie or be at rest, as from work, activity, etc.
10. **florid** ---- *adj*: reddish; ruddy; rosy
11. **debauchee** ---- *noun*: a person addicted to excessive indulgence in sensual pleasures; one given to debauchery.
12. **antecedent** *noun*: the history, events, characteristics, etc., of one's earlier life
13. **ingratiate** ---- *verb*: to establish (oneself) in the favor or good graces of others, esp. By deliberate effort (usually fol. by *with*)
14. **senile** ---- *adj*: showing a decline or deterioration of physical strength or mental functioning
15. **perturbed** ---- *adj*: disturbed greatly; uneasy; anxious
16. **septic** ---- *adj*: infected
17. **lethargic** ---- *adj*: drowsy; sluggish; lazy
18. **euphemism** ---- *noun*: an inoffensive or indirect expression that is substituted for one that is considered offensive or too harsh (ex: "To pass away" is a euphemism for "to die.")
19. **obtrusive** ---- *adj*: Tending to push self-assertively forward; brash
20. **menagerie** ---- *noun*: a collection of wild or unusual animals, or an unusual and varied group of people
21. **dilatory** ---- *adj*: tending to delay or procrastinate; slow; tardy

Chapter 7

1. **Trimalchio** —the lavish host in *The Satyricon*, a Latin work by Petronius
2. **dilatory** —*adj*: tending to delay or procrastinate; slow; tardy
3. **caravansary** —*noun*: any large inn or hotel
4. **harrowing** —*adj*: extremely disturbing or distressing; grievous
5. **commutation** —*noun*: the act of commuting, as to and from a place of work
6. **affront** —*noun*: a personally offensive act or word; deliberate act or display of disrespect; intentional slight; insult

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7. **croon** —*verb*: to sing or hum in a soft, soothing voice
8. **genial(ly)** —*adj/adv*: warmly and pleasantly cheerful; cordial
9. **refuse** [REF-yoos] —*noun* (**not the verb**): something that is discarded as worthless or useless; rubbish; trash; garbage
10. **boisterous(ly)** —*adj*: rough and noisy; noisily jolly or rowdy; unrestrained
11. **medium** —*noun*: a person through whom the spirits of the dead are alleged to be able to contact the living
12. **alight(ed)** —*verb*: to encounter or notice something accidentally
13. **inviolate** —*adj*: free from violation, injury, desecration, or outrage
14. **precipitate(ly)** —*adj*: proceeding rapidly or with great haste
15. **tumultuous** —*adj*: raising a great clatter and commotion; disorderly or noisy
16. **intermittent** —*adj*: Stopping and starting at intervals
17. **portentous** —*adj*: of momentous or ominous significance; ominously prophetic
18. **vicarious(ly)** —*adj*: Felt or undergone as if one were taking part in the experience or feelings of another
19. **octave** —*noun*: in music, a series or range of eight notes
20. **rancor** —*noun*: bitter resentment or ill will; hatred; malice ** the spelling has changed since Fitzgerald's time
21. **leave in the lurch** —*noun*: to leave in an uncomfortable or desperate situation; desert in time of trouble
22. **magnanimous** —*adj*: generous in forgiving an insult or injury; free from petty resentfulness or the need to seek retribution
23. **presumptuous** —*adj*: Going beyond what is right or proper; excessively forward; impolitely bold
24. **inquest** —*noun*: an inquiry into the cause of an unexpected death
25. **expostulation** —*noun*: the act of expressing earnest opposition or protest
26. **laden** —*adj*: burdened; loaded down
27. **truculent** —*adj*: fierce; cruel; savagely brutal
28. **luminosity** —*noun*: the quality or condition of radiating or reflecting light
29. **rift** —*noun*: an opening made by splitting, cleaving, etc.

Chapter 8

1. **indiscernible** ---- *adj*: impossible to see or understand
2. **redolent** ---- *adj*: 1) with a strong, pleasant, or particular scent; suggestive or reminiscent of something
3. **ravenous/ravenously** ---- *adj./adverb*: extremely hungry or greedy for something

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4. **unscrupulous/unscrupulously** ---- *adj/adv*: not restrained by moral or ethical principles; dishonest; corrupt
5. **stratum** ---- *noun*: a social class or level of society consisting of people or similar cultural, economic, or educational status
6. **whim** ---- *noun*: a sudden thought, idea, or desire—especially one based on impulse rather than reason
7. **Armistice** ---- *proper noun*: the truce that ended WWI on Nov. 11, 1918
8. **sharper** ---- *noun*: a skillful cheat, especially in gambling
9. **day coach** ---- *noun*: an ordinary railroad passenger car, as distinguished from a sleeping car, parlor car, or other deluxe accommodations
10. **vestibule** ---- *noun*: 1) an enclosed area at the entrance of a railroad car; 2) a small room/hall between an outer door and the main part of the building
11. **benediction** ---- *noun*: 1) an expression or approval of good wishes; 2) a prayer asking for God's blessing, usually at the end of a service
12. **corroborate** --- *verb*: to give or represent evidence of the truth of something; to confirm or substantiate
13. **ecstatic** ---- *adj*: 1) showing or feeling great pleasure or delight; 2) completely dominated by an intense emotion
14. **cahoots** ---- *informal plural noun*: questionable collaboration; secret partnership
15. **divot** ---- *noun*: a small lump of grass and earth accidentally dug out of the ground while playing a sport, especially golf
16. **tactful** ---- *adj*: having or showing concern upsetting or offending people; polite; sensitive to the feelings of others
17. **garrulous** ---- *adj*: 1) excessively or pointlessly talkative; 2) using too many words
18. **lapped** ---- *past tense of verb lap*: 1) to drink a liquid by scooping into the mouth with the tongue; 2) to flow or splash gently against the surface
19. **forlorn** ---- *adj*: 1) lonely and miserable as though deserted or abandoned; 2) expressing hopelessness and despair
20. **pneumatic** ---- *adj*: 1) operated by compressed air in a tool or machine; 2) filled with compressed air; 3) concerning or involving the soul or spirit
21. **fortuitous/fortuitously** ---- *adj/adv*: 1) happening by accident or chance; 2) lucky or fortunate
22. **amorphous** ---- *adj*: without any clear shape, form, or structure; 2) not obviously belonging to any particular category or type
23. **corrugate** ---- *verb*: to become folded into parallel ridges and channels, or to fold something—like cardboard—into parallel ridges and channels
24. **holocaust** ---- *noun*: 1) complete mass destruction of any kind; 2) complete consumption by fire—especially of a large number of human beings or animals; 3) a sacrifice totally consumed by fire

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Chapter 9

1. **adventitious** – *adj*: Occurring accidentally or spontaneously
2. **racy** – *adj*: slightly improper or indelicate
3. **pasquinade** – *noun*: a satire or lampoon, esp. one posted in a public place
4. **deranged** – *adj*: driven insane
5. **surmise** – [In the novel *surmise* is used as a noun, but usually it is used as a verb, so that is the part of speech we will go with.] *Verb*: to think or infer without certain or strong evidence; conjecture; guess
6. **superfluous** – *adj*: being more than is sufficient or required; excessive
7. **addenda** – (plural of addendum) *noun*: things to be added; an addition
8. **ulster** – *noun*: A loose, long overcoat made of heavy, rugged fabric and often belted
9. **sparse** – *adj*: not thick or dense; thin
10. **James J. Hill** (p. 176/168) – Railroad tycoon (1838-1916) who lived in St. Paul, Minnesota
Fitzgerald's hometown
11. **bulbous** – *adj*: bulb-shaped; bulging
12. **elocution** – *noun*: a person's manner of speaking or reading aloud in public
13. **El Greco** - Greek-born Spanish painter of religious works, such as *Christ Stripped of His Garments* (1579) and *Assumption* (1577), characterized by elongated human figures, contrasting colors, and deep shadows.
14. **sullen** – *adj*: showing irritation or ill humor by a gloomy silence or reserve
15. **lustreless** [British spelling; American spelling: *lusterless*] – *adj*: lacking in brightness, sparkle, or sheen
16. **pander** – *verb*: To cater to the lower tastes and desires of others or to exploit their weaknesses
17. **aesthetic** – *adj*: Of or concerning the appreciation of beauty or good taste
18. **commensurate** – *adj*: corresponding in amount, magnitude, or degree; proportionate adequate
19. **orgastic** – *adj*: intense or unrestrained excitement
20. **elude** – *verb*: to avoid or escape by speed, cleverness, trickery, etc.; to evade