

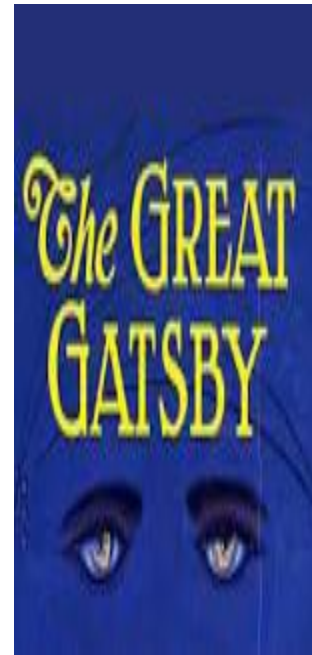
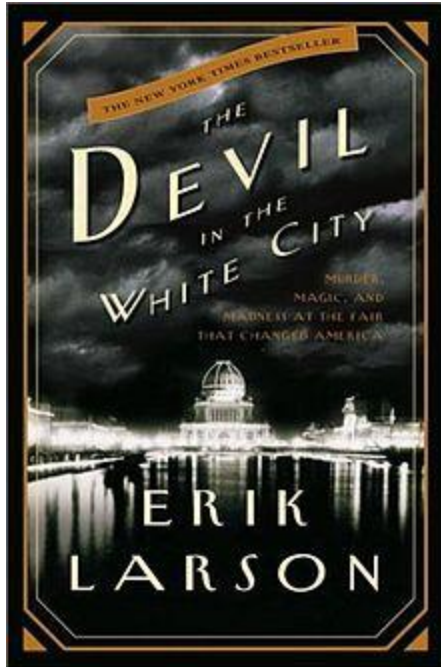
SUMMER READING PROJECT
11th Grade

Dr. Kathleen Carroll (kcarroll@cdobcs.org)

Readings: *The Devil in a White City* by Erik Larson;
The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald

Project: Interactive Journal, Essay, Preparation for
Socratic Seminar

Incoming juniors have **two books** to read for their summer reading projects which include *The Devil in a White City* by Erik Larson and *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald. The books will be used for cross curricular activities this year. It is also recommended that you purchase a **small composition book** which students can use as an interactive journal to answer the questions found below and to take notes for their essay.



As you read *The Devil in a White City*, you will be exposed to many of the topics related to our first unit. The Gilded Age. "Mark Twain [was the first to call] the late nineteenth century the "Gilded Age."

By this, he meant that the period was glittering on the surface but corrupt underneath. In the popular view, the late nineteenth century was a period of greed and guile: of Robber Barons and their shady business practices, scandal-plagued politics, and vulgar display." At the same time, it was a period of immense technological achievement, urban growth, and new opportunities. "it is easy to caricature the Gilded age as an era of corruption, conspicuous consumptions, and

unfettered capitalism. But it is more useful to think of this as modern America's formative period, when an agrarian [farm] society of small producers was transformed into an urban society dominated by industrial corporations."

It is now your job to analyze the novel by looking at why this period was so glorious, yet corrupt at the same time.

**Please answer all questions in full sentences:
Answers should be handwritten and in your own words. academic integrity is the expectation at JDA.**

1. Why did architects have so much difficulty building tall structures in Chicago? how did they solve the problem?
2. Identify at least three obstacles to creating the fair. How did the new technology of the time help people to overcome these obstacles?
3. Why was the fair's location called the "white city" ?
4. Describe Jackson Park before the fair was built on it. What famous park did Frederick Olmstead design other than Jackson Park? Why did parks like these become popular to create during the time period?
5. How and why did the railroad affect attendance at the fair?

6. What economic problems conflicts between immigrants and union workers?
7. What new inventions were on display at the fair that we take for granted today?
8. What type of man was Burnham? What qualities did he need and have that made the fair successful?
9. In what ways does the Chicago World's Fair of 1893 change America? What lasting inventions and ideas did it introduce into American culture? What important figures were critically influenced by the Fair?
10. In his speech before his wheel took on its first passengers, George Ferris "happily assured the audience that the man condemned for having 'wheels in his head' had gotten them out of his head and into the heart of the Midway Plaisance" [p. 279]. In what way is the entire Fair an example of the power of human ingenuity, of the ability to realize the dreams of imaginations?
11. Erik Larson writes "Beneath the gore and smoke and loam, this book is about the evanescence of life, and why some men choose to fill their brief allotment of time engaging the impossible, other in the manufacture of sorrow" [xi]. What does this book reveal about "the inevitable conflict between good and evil"? What is

the essential difference between men like Daniel Burnham and Henry H. Holmes? Are they alike in any way?

12. After the Fair ended, Ray Stannard Baker noted "What human downfall after the magnificence and prodigality of the World's Fair which has so recently closed its doors? Heights of splendor, pride, exaltation in one month: depths of wretchedness, suffering, hunger, cold, in the next month." [p.334] What is the relationship between the opulence and grandeur of the Fair and the poverty and degradation that surrounded it? In what ways does the Fair bring into focus the extreme contrast of the Gilded Age?
13. What is the total picture of the late nineteenth-century America that emerges from *The Devil in the White City*? How is that time both like and unlike contemporary America? What are the most significant differences? In what ways does that time mirror the present?

14. What is your personal opinion of the book? What did you find interesting? What do you think could have been done differently?

PROJECT

For *The Great Gatsby*, show me your creative side. Create something that proves to me that you have read and understand the book .

Other books you will need to purchase for this year are listed below:

Nickel and Dimed by Barbara Ehrenreich

Thank you for Arguing by Jay Heinrichs

Questions? Concerns?

Contact Dr. Carroll

kcarroll@cdobcs.org