

Robbie Human

EN30SL

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Ms. Smith

Similarities and Differences between Tom Buchanan and Jay Gatsby

In society, there are two constants that are most often sought after. These two constants are money and love. In the novel The Great Gatsby, F. Scott Fitzgerald writes of two men who are the embodiment of the pursuit of these two ideals, and the possible consequences in pursuing them. Tom Buchanan and Jay Gatsby both share many qualities, including a need for love and a lust for money, but these men are different in terms of how they get and handle what they want. ✓

Tom and Gatsby are both quite wealthy men, and both are keen on staying like that. They both own nice houses, drive nice cars, have plenty of land, and can be the envy of others in terms of their wealth. Both men enjoy having money, and like to flaunt it often. When Myrtle Wilson, a woman who Tom is having an affair with, wanted a dog, Tom was willing to pay for it and then go above and beyond that, "Here's your money. Go and buy ten more dogs with it." (Fitzgerald 28). Tom could have just as easily bought Myrtle the one dog and she would have been happy, but he had to show her that he had even more. Gatsby, on the other hand, appears to flaunt his money for no one but himself. When Gatsby and Nick, Gatsby's neighbour, are to have lunch together, Gatsby shows up at Nick's house in a glorious looking vehicle, "Gatsby's gorgeous car lurched up the rocky drive to my door..." (Fitzgerald 63). It is later evident that this move was to impress Nick, and in extension, Daisy, Tom's wife, but his actions were obviously an effort to show people that he had money. The fact that these men like using money for their wants and needs is unmistakable, but using money to get what people want is not always enough. While money is what encourages society to keep moving there are still more important aspects to

having a good life. Tom and Gatsby's life and well-being may not have been as sound as they portrayed. Ellen G. Goldman, a health and wellness coach, says,

Income is often thought to be a good measure of happiness and well-being. However, when researched, it was found to be less significant than predicted. Although individuals with higher income levels report overall satisfaction with their lives, they often enjoy themselves less on a daily basis and experience greater moments of stress than those with lower incomes (Can money buy happiness?).

Tom and Gatsby may have looked okay on the outside, flaunting their money everywhere, but they were probably worse inside their minds than an average person. Tom Buchanan and Jay Gatsby are both men following the ideals of wanting at least two things in life. One of these things is having plenty of money and the other is having love.

These two men in the novel are in need of an acquaintance to go through life with. One could look at this as a noble cause, for in many cultures in the world finding love is the single most important thing one could do. What is different for Tom and Gatsby is that they are fighting for what they believe to be love, but is really something else. Tom and Gatsby will go to any length to receive love. Gatsby attempts to force the woman he 'loves' to tell the man she married that she was never in love with him in the first place. Gatsby is driven so mad with love for Daisy that he makes decisions that are really not rational, "It doesn't matter anymore. Just tell him the truth – that you never loved him – and it's all wiped out forever" (Fitzgerald 132).

Gatsby believes he can turn back time so that Daisy meeting and eventually marrying Tom never happened. Tom quickly retorts attempting to prove his loyalty, "Of course it matters. I'm going to take better care of you from now on" (Fitzgerald 133). The truth is, however, neither Tom nor Gatsby actually loved Daisy. They want her and what comes with her, but do not truly love her.

Tom wants her as a face of beauty to live with and someone to organize his life. Gatsby is simply hooked on an old ideal. He is in love with a previous person of whom Daisy is no longer (Compare and Contrast the characters of Tom and Gatsby). Tom and Gatsby both want love and want to love, but are in love with the wrong elements of Daisy. Nevertheless, they still believe it is true love; however, the ways in which they try to receive and care for this 'love' differs greatly. ✓

Gatsby has never loved anyone as much as Daisy while he was in the army. Tom eventually came to require her after she had fallen in love with him (his money), as described by Nick, "Her voice was full of money" (Fitzgerald 120). The pair both wants money and love. The method they use to get what they want happened in two separate manners. Tom was born to an already wealthy family, growing up having everything he needed and being granted what he pleased was normal to him and it would be of displeasure to him if something did not happen this way. Eventually, he would inherit his family's money and Daisy would come along and fit right into his plan. Opposite to that Gatsby grew up poor and had to work to make any money, later turning to bootlegging to get to the point at which he is in the novel. ✓ While in the army, Gatsby had to work for Daisy's attention, and then later lose it. Tom never had to work for anything, and Gatsby was the total opposite, but both of them still have the same goal. Tom is old money, with a new sense of love, while Gatsby has recently acquired new money, but tries to rekindle an old love. Under these terms, it appears that Gatsby would be the better candidate for love. He is a more genuine figure compared to Tom, a more caring lover, but Daisy's love still resides in Tom, no matter his personality. Gatsby is a mysterious man, but he truly wants to love more than anything else. He buys his house across the bay from Daisy (Fitzgerald 78) and he looked at news articles about a man he may have despised for even a hint of Daisy (Fitzgerald 79), but

overall, he really cares what Daisy thinks of him. When Gatsby asks Nick, “What’s your opinion of me, anyhow?” (Fitzgerald 65), he hopes to have a good impression on Nick because Nick is related to Daisy. Tom is aggressive and doesn’t want equality, as described when he breaks Mrs. Wilson’s nose (Fitzgerald 37) and during his, Gatsby’s, and Daisy’s fight, says “...Nowadays people begin sneering at family life and family institutions, and next they’ll throw everything overboard and have intermarriage between black and white.” (Fitzgerald 130). Still, Daisy could only see Tom and his money first, and will not leave him. Both Tom and Gatsby are in need of two main things, money and love, and their pasts determine how they satisfy their needs.

Money and love are two staple themes in this novel, and both can be used to describe Tom Buchanan and Jay Gatsby. Inside their minds and to those who understand their personalities, they are two very different men. However, both men in the larger picture are very much the same. Tom and Gatsby were caught up in a cycle of a lust for money and a need for love. If it had not been for Gatsby’s murder, and if no mending was ever done, both men and Daisy would continue to experience tremors in their emotions for the rest of their lives.

Works Cited

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Day 3

Explaining Your Writing Variables

Identify the five writing variables you have chosen for your writing task XXXXXXXXXX

Central Idea: There are similarities and differences between Tom Buchanan & Jay Gatsby
Form: Essay
Purpose: To inform on the differences and similarities between Tom Buchanan & Jay Gatsby
Public Audience: Wealthy, married people, those struggling w/ money or love
Context: Forbes, Brides magazine, wealth magazine

Explain how your chosen writing variables work together to make your text effective.

5 marks

110

A essay is the most ideal way to explain the similarities and differences between Tom Buchanan and Jay Gatsby, in The Great Gatsby, because I can easily organize evidence from both the novel and research. The many quotes and references allow me to prove that there are many similarities and differences between the two men. People who are wealthy, or are struggling with money, could be interested to understand my opinions on the men because it could totally change the way they look at these men or affirm previous beliefs. If someone is worried or wonders about getting married they could read this essay in a wedding magazine like Brides, to know more about some of the outcomes or consequences of getting married. If not worried and just reading up on wealth or love and marriage, people could be interested to learn that love and money are not always everything in life. The more important thing is to be happy.

good idea!