

Appendix 4.3. Group 3: The Historical Approach I (Teacher Answer Key)

Research the famous athletes of the 1920s to discover who or what may have provided the real-life inspiration for *The Great Gatsby*.

1. *Read:* Examine key passages specified below (pagination refers to the 1995 Scribner paperback edition) and consult the secondary sources provided to you: (a) "Will the Real Great Gatsby Please Stand Up?" (Laskow); (b) "The Real Tom Buchanan" (Chensvold); (c) *American Decades: 1920–1929* (Baughman); and (d) *Encyclopedia of the Jazz Age: From the End of World War I to the Great Crash* (Ciment).

Character from <i>The Great Gatsby</i>	The real-life/historical counterpart or inspiration
Jordan Baker, the golfer (23)	<i>Edith Cummings was the first female athlete to appear on the cover of Time magazine; dubbed "The Fairway Flapper," she won the U.S. Women's Amateur in 1923 at the Westchester Country Club.</i>
Tom Buchanan, "the polo player" (111)	<i>More than 35,000 people witnessed the 1924 Westchester Cup on Long Island, NY, and watched a polo player, Tommy Hitchcock Jr.</i>
Jay Gatsby, "old Sport" (52; 134; 141)	<i>Max Gerlach signed a note to the Fitzgeralds that said, "Here for a few days on business—How are you and the family old Sport?"</i>
Meyer Wolfshiem "fixed the world series" (78; 179)	<i>Arnold Rothstein, widely believed to have fixed the 1919 World Series</i>

2. *Discuss:* How essential is the setting to *The Great Gatsby*? Could the story have taken place anywhere else? In any other time? What does the novel suggest about celebrity culture?
(Answers will vary.)
3. *Write:* Craft a thesis statement that expresses how and why Fitzgerald uses the games people play to create meaning in *The Great Gatsby*.
(Answers will vary.)