

“Winter Dreams” by F. Scott Fitzgerald
Suggested Lesson Procedure

PREVIEW
(~160 minutes)

1. Begin the lesson by having students complete the anticipation guide (~10 minutes).
2. Introduce F. Scott Fitzgerald’s background and historical context using the PowerPoint presentation (~5 minutes).
3. Lead into vocabulary instruction using the PowerPoint presentation, guiding students through each word and its meaning. Students should copy down the definitions, parts of speech, and synonyms into their vocabulary charts (~20 minutes).
4. After reviewing the words, have students write their own original sentences that demonstrate understanding of each vocabulary term (~15 minutes).
5. Read the full story in class; this can be done aloud, in small groups, or individually depending on preference (~50 minutes).
6. Once the reading is complete, instruct students to create a title for each part to reinforce comprehension and structure (10 minutes).
7. Move into comprehension by having students answer the reading-check questions to ensure understanding of plot, characters, and events (~15 minutes).
8. Follow with the literary analysis questions, which may be completed in pairs or independently (~15 minutes).
9. Conclude the lesson by reviewing all answers as a class, clarifying misunderstandings and reinforcing key themes, vocabulary, and ideas (~15 minutes).

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Name:

Date:

Before Reading

Read each statement below carefully. Before reading “Winter Dreams,” check whether you agree or disagree with each statement based on your own opinion.

Statement	Agree	Disagree
1. Rich people are often rude or entitled.		
2. Going to college automatically makes a person smarter.		
3. People who don't attend college aren't respected by the upper-class.		
4. It's important to have ambitions and dreams for the future.		
5. If you don't have a goal, your life lacks meaning.		
6. People often fall in love with the <i>idea</i> of someone more than the real person.		
7. You should be content with what you have instead of always wanting more.		
8. Only young people have the drive and energy to be truly ambitious.		
9. Physical beauty plays a big role in how society values a person.		
10. It's better to dream big and fail than to never dream at all.		

1. Which statement feels most connected to your own experiences or beliefs? Describe why it resonates with you.

2. Which statement would you be most willing to defend in a debate? What evidence or reasoning would you use to support your position?

3. Based on the statements above, what themes do you think might appear in “Winter Dreams”?

Winter Dreams
Vocabulary Chart

Word	Part of Speech	Definition	Synonyms
perceptible			
vitality			
involuntarily			
preposterous			
enormity			
obediently			
mundane			
surfeit			
transcend			
indignities			

Name:

Date:

Winter Dreams Vocabulary
Write Your Own Sentences

Directions: Write an original sentence for each vocabulary word. Make sure each sentence clearly shows the meaning of the word through its context. Use proper grammar, capitalization, and punctuation.

1. perceptible

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2. vitality

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3. involuntarily

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4. preposterous

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5. enormity

6. obediently

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7. mundane

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8. surfeit

9. transcend

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10. indignities

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Winter Dreams

Directions: The story is separated into 6 untitled parts.

Title each part, and beneath each title provide a short explanation of why you selected that specific title.

Part I

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Part II

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Part III

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Part IV

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Part V

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Part VI

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Name:

Date:

Reading Comprehension Questions

Answer the following questions using complete sentences.

Part I

1. Who is Dexter Green? What is he like?

2. Why does Dexter decide to quit his job as a caddy at the golf course?

3. How does Dexter's background differ from that of the wealthy people he admires at Sherry Island?

Part II

4. What attracts Dexter to Judy Jones?

Part III

5. What does Judy's story about the "poor as a church-mouse" man reveal about her values in relationships, and how does her conversation influence Dexter's decision about what to tell her about himself?

Part IV

6. Describe the relationship between Judy and Dexter.



7. Why does Dexter continue pursuing Judy even though she repeatedly hurts, manipulates, or ignores him?

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8. How does Irene's personality and behavior contrast with Judy's?

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Part V

9. Why does Dexter welcome the start of the war with a sense of relief?

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Part VI

10. What does Devlin reveal to Dexter about Judy Jones? How does this news impact Dexter?

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After Reading
Literary Analysis

1. How does Dexter Green change from the beginning to the end of "Winter Dreams"?

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2. How does the historical context of the 1920s help readers understand Dexter's ambitions and desires in "Winter Dreams"?

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3. Identify similarities of hedonistic attitudes and materialistic values shown in "Winter Dreams" compared to the way people chase pleasure, success, and status in today's society.

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4. What is ironic about the fact that Dexter forms his greatest dreams and ambitions during the winter season?

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5. When does ambition turn into idealism, and how can that become a problem for someone like Dexter in "Winter Dreams"?

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6. Was Judy a positive or negative influence on Dexter's life? Explain with an example from the text.

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7. What makes your life feel truly fulfilled? When you start to feel unfulfilled or dissatisfied, what steps can you take to bring more meaning or purpose back into your life? (Answer all parts of the question.)

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8. If someone calls you a "dreamer" would that be a compliment or an insult to you? Explain in at least three sentences.

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Winter Dreams

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Historical Context

- The events in “Winter Dreams” unfold in Minnesota and New York from the early 1900s through the 1920s.
- This period is often called the Roaring Twenties or the Jazz Age.
- This era was marked by indulgence and self-gratification, especially among the wealthy who embraced lavish parties, new fashions, and extravagant lifestyles.
- Critics have noted that people of the time seemed to care little for the past and even less for the future, choosing instead to live recklessly in the moment.
- The era’s booming economy and avaricious spirit encouraged people to chase success and the “American Dream.”
- The American Dream was the idea that wealth and status are attainable through hard work.

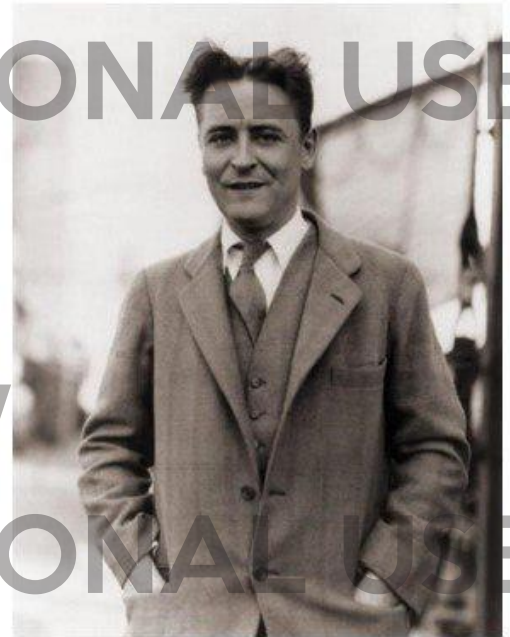


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F. Scott Fitzgerald

- Francis Scott Key Fitzgerald was an American author, now considered one of the greatest American writers of the 20th century.
- As America emerged from World War I into a time of economic prosperity (1918), F. Scott Fitzgerald became the defining voice of the Jazz Age, both capturing and personally reflecting its energetic, pleasure-seeking spirit.
- Fitzgerald was born in St. Paul, Minnesota, and was deeply affected by his middle-class status.
- Fitzgerald wrote "Winter Dreams" while working on *The Great Gatsby*—his most popular novel.
- Both stories explore similar themes of ambition, class, and the pursuit of wealth and love.

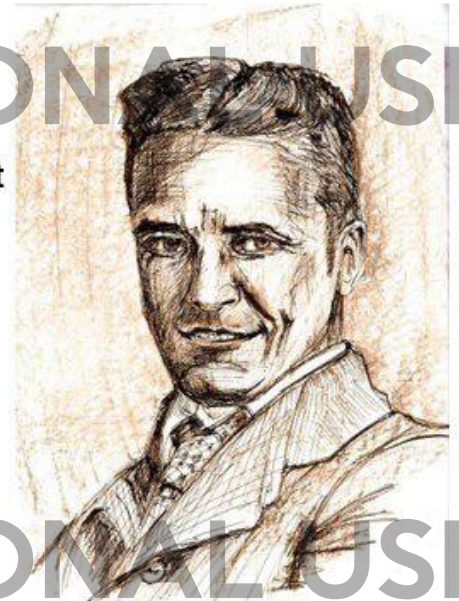


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Influence for “Winter Dreams”

- Ginevra King, a wealthy socialite and heiress, directly influenced “Winter Dreams.”
- Ginevra came from one of Chicago’s wealthiest families.
- Her father, Charles Garfield King, was a highly successful businessman and financier, and she was expected to inherit part of his large fortune.
- Fitzgerald and Ginevra were romantically involved and deeply infatuated with each other, but her family did not approve (1915).
- Her father reportedly told Fitzgerald that “poor boys shouldn’t think of marrying rich girls” and forbid him from seeing her again.
- Fitzgerald was heartbroken after his relationship with Ginevra King ended, so he left Princeton University and joined the U.S. Army during World War I (1917).



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perceptible

Definition: Able to be seen, heard, or noticed

Part of Speech: Adjective

Synonyms: noticeable, detectable

Example Sentence: The takeoff was smooth and nearly silent, with only the faintest perceptible hint of movement.



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vitality

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Definition: Energy and strength

Part of Speech: Noun

Synonyms: energy, liveliness

Example Sentence: The newswoman reports the news with such vitality that every segment feels compelling.



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involuntarily

Definition: Done without planning or control;
not on purpose

Part of Speech: Adverb

Synonyms: accidentally, unintentionally

Example Sentence: Jessica began
involuntarily shivering as the cold wind hit her
body.



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preposterous

Definition: Completely ridiculous or impossible to believe

Part of Speech: Adjective

Synonyms: absurd, unbelievable

Example Sentence: The idea that he could run a marathon without training sounded preposterous.



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enormity

Definition: The great seriousness, or impact of something

Part of Speech: Noun

Synonyms: vastness, magnitude

Example Sentence: Sara laughed as she tried to lift the pumpkin, surprised by the enormity of the one she had chosen.



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obediently

Definition: Doing what you are told to do

Part of Speech: Adverb

Synonyms: dutifully, willingly

Example Sentence: The dog obediently sat when its owner gave the command.



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mundane

Definition: typical and boring

Part of Speech: Adjective

Synonyms: dull, everyday

Example Sentence: Emma wished for adventure instead of her mundane daily routine.



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surfeit

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Definition: an overload

Part of Speech: Noun

Synonyms: excess, abundance

Example Sentence: After Halloween, we had a surfeit of candy in the house.



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transcend

Definition: to go beyond the limits

Part of Speech: Verb

Synonyms: surpassed, exceeded

Example Sentence: Their friendship transcended distance and time.



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indignities

Definition: Actions that make someone feel embarrassed, disrespected, or insulted

Part of Speech: Noun

Synonyms: insults, humiliations

Example Sentence: Tom felt the indignities of being talked down to by his older brother.



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