

CIDI – INGLESE

Literature and Democracy.

Materials and methods for developing critical thinking and cultural awareness
through the teaching of literatures in the English Language
Perugia 2018-2019 Tutor Prof.ssa Lorena Falcinelli

PROGETTO DI SPERIMENTAZIONE DIDATTICA IN CLASSE

F. S. Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby rewritten* (1925; 2019)

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The Pilgrim Fathers

The Pilgrim Fathers were the first settlers of the Plymouth Colony in Plymouth, Massachusetts (1620). Of the 102 colonists, 35 were members of the English Separatist Church, a radical faction of Puritanism, who had earlier fled to the Netherlands to escape persecution at home. Seeking a more abundant life along with religious freedom, they negotiated with a London stock company to finance a pilgrimage to America; initially referred to as the Old Comers and later as the Forefathers, they did not become known as the Pilgrim Fathers until two centuries after their arrival. The Pilgrims' story became a central theme in the history and culture of the United States.

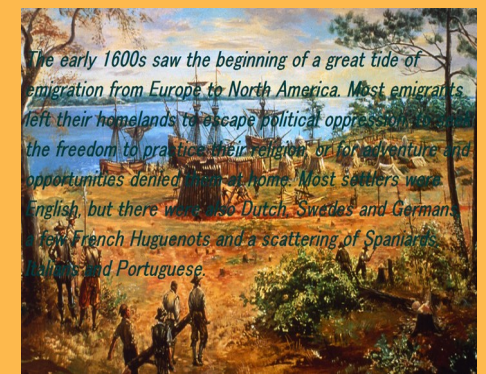
The American Revolution, also called United States War of Independence or American Revolutionary War (1775-83), was an insurrection by which 13 of Great Britain's North American colonies won political independence and went on to form the United States of America.



The United States Declaration of Independence
Thomas Jefferson, 3rd US President (1743-1826)

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are, life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

— Declaration of Independence



The early 1600s saw the beginning of a great tide of emigration from Europe to North America. Most emigrants left their homelands to escape political oppression, the freedom to practice their religion, or for adventure and opportunities denied them at home. Most settlers were English, but there were also Dutch, Swedes and German, French Huguenots and a scattering of Spaniards, Italians and Portuguese.

The colonial period

The growth of the American nation by the end of the 19th century -
The Gilded Age



The Gilded Age, a term derived from Mark Twain, is the late 19th century, from the 1870s to about 1900. It was an era of rapid economic growth, especially in the North and West. As American wages were much higher than those in Europe, especially for skilled workers, the period saw an influx of millions of European immigrants. The rapid expansion of industrialization led to a real wage growth of 60% between 1860 and 1890, spread across the ever-increasing labor force.

However, the Gilded Age was also an era of serious social problems masked by a thin gold gilding, being an era of abject poverty and inequality as millions of immigrants—many from impoverished regions—poured into the United States, and the high concentration of wealth became more visible and contentious.

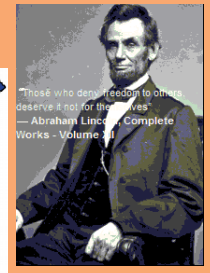
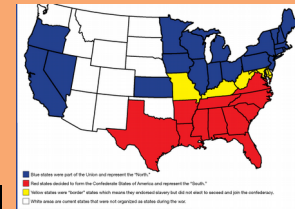
The Great Gatsby rewritten



I'm an angel now but in life I was Tom's mistress and I hated Daisy, his wife. I died in a car accident because of her!
DAISY:
We're all dying. The house is on fire and the fire which devoured my soul and Gatsby's.
TOM:
Damn women! These damn women killed me! I'm dying in anger and I can have no revenge!
NICK:
This living hell is inevitable. The sequence of the vain dream we shared. Our reputation really has no value!
JESSE:
I'm the only one who survived this. The hell if nothing really changed after all this. Always the same. I'm still so. No more green light in my life. My parties are over!



Slavery and the American Civil War.
Abraham Lincoln



The Civil war lasted four years, ending in 1865, when the blue Northern troops defeated the grey Confederates. Five days later, President Lincoln was assassinated by a Southern fanatic. After the Civil War, the abolition of slavery was sanctioned by the 13th Amendment to the Constitution.

Manifest Destiny. American Indians.



It was a phrase used to justify a sort of divine right to the territorial expansion of the United States from coast to coast, from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean. An effect of Manifest Destiny was that slavery spread throughout the US and divided the nation.

Walt Whitman



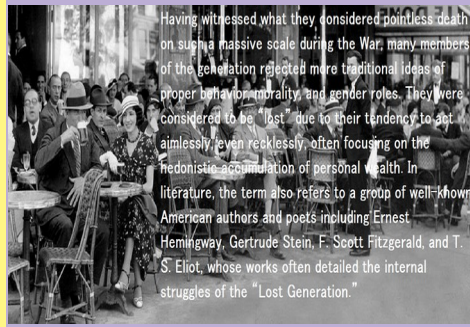
He celebrated America in all its variety – the land itself, its people, its natural life. To him his country represented the expression of the idea of democracy, the incarnation of the “American dream” which he always believed in.

The '20s and the '30s. The Great Depression



The Great Depression was the worldwide economic downturn that began in 1929 and lasted until about 1939. It was the longest and most severe depression ever experienced by the industrialized Western world. It

originated in the United States from a multitude of causes such as decline in consumer demand, financial panics, and misguided government policies, and caused drastic declines in output, severe unemployment and acute deflation in almost every country of the world. In the United States the Great Depression represented the harshest adversity faced by Americans since the Civil War.



Having witnessed what they considered pointless death on such a massive scale during the War, many members of the generation rejected more traditional ideas of proper behavior, morality, and gender roles. They were considered to be “lost” due to their tendency to act aimlessly (even recklessly) often focusing on the hedonistic accumulation of personal wealth. In literature, the term also refers to a group of well-known American authors and poets including Ernest Hemingway, Gertrude Stein, F. Scott Fitzgerald, and T. S. Eliot, whose works often detailed the internal struggles of the “Lost Generation.”

The Lost Generation

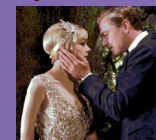
Francis Scott Fitzgerald



“I'm not sentimental - I'm as romantic as you are. The idea, you know, is that the sentimental person thinks things will last - the romantic person has a desperate confidence that they won't.”

F. Scott Fitzgerald, *This Side of Paradise*

THE GREAT GATSBY - The gap between the past and the present and the decay of the “American dream”



Gatsby believed in the green light, the orgastic future that year by year recedes before us. It

eluded us then, but that's no matter—to-morrow we will run faster, stretch out our arms farther. . . . And one fine morning — So we beat on, boats against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past.”

F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby*

