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Fun home chapter 1 summary

Among the studies reviewed, there are three data sets that hold the greatest promise for informing these typology efforts. These data sets include the NSAF, Women’s Employment Study, and the Fragile Families and Child Well-being Study. The best prospect is the Fragile Families and Child Well-being Study, which has the following strengths: Contains a high-risk sample for homelessness (i.e., new parents); Is a longitudinal panel study that is national in scope; Measures residential moves, including homelessness, so it can provide a sensitive understanding of the dynamics of homelessness and housing instability; Has a number of questions for the prior year that measure incidence of risk factors for homelessness (e.g., being evicted; having utilities turned off), and the incidence of homelessness itself (e.g., staying for at least one night with others; staying at least one night in a literally homeless situation); Examines various other factors in their lives that can operate as either risk or protective factors, and can help differentiate those who become homeless from those who do not; and includes developmental information on a cohort of children from birth to 4 years old. The Fragile Families data set is readily available, free of charge, and has considerable documentation on the web. Given its potential and easy availability, reanalysis of the original data, presented in Chapter 5, has been conducted. The NSAF is a second data set that has potential for providing data about families at risk of homelessness, and families who are homeless by virtue of being doubled up. As a large national database, it offers the potential to provide a strong understanding of the at-risk population, however, since it is only a cross-sectional study, the data will be a snap-shot of the population. This data set is also readily available and is well documented on the web site. The Women’s Employment Study database is the final data set that appears useful to reanalyze with a focus on homelessness. This data set provides data on families on welfare, their struggles with income insufficiency, and the impact that welfare reform is having, especially on housing stability and affordability. In particular, the study has potential for explaining the dynamics of shelter use and residential instability among welfare families. The drawbacks of the study are that the data are currently not in the public domain, the study is concentrated in a single site, the study includes a relatively small sample, and the number of homeless families in the data set could be too small for analysis. However, as it is an active research team, additional analyses may be ongoing or may be solicited. Two other studies offer less information for the time and effort it would take to access, understand, review, and reanalyze the data. The Three-City Study, for example, could be useful to the typology development if there is a sufficient sample of families who reveal that they have used shelter or have been doubled up with others. However, the indirect nature of these questions suggests that this is unlikely to be the case. The CWHRS contains key information on housing affordability, residential mobility, and homelessness of women currently being abused. From a prior examination of this data set, significant subsets of families in the data set are currently homeless. A key analytic question would be if the help-seeking patterns of those who are homeless differ from individuals who are currently housed, and what other factors are related to their help-seeking behaviors. However, the fact that it is a single study, has only two waves of data (with the second wave only a year or less after the baseline), and focuses on only one subset of the overall homeless families population lowers its priority for reanalysis. In *The Great Gatsby*, Chapter 1, the table is set, both figuratively and literally. Figurative table setting includes meeting our narrator, Nick Carraway, and getting a sense of the wealthy Long Island neighborhood where the novel will take place. Literal table setting—well, that’s the dinner Nick has with his cousin Daisy, her husband Tom, and their friend (and Nick’s eventual love interest) Jordan Baker. Keep reading to learn more about what happens in this chapter, understand how it touches on the novel’s main themes, and see close readings of key quotations! Quick Note on Our Citations Our citation format in this guide is (chapter.paragraph). We’re using this system since there are many editions of *Gatsby*, so using page numbers would only work for students with our copy of the book. To find a quotation we cite via chapter and paragraph in your book, you can either eyeball it (Paragraph 1-50: beginning of chapter; 50-100: middle of chapter; 100-on: end of chapter), or use the search function if you’re using an online or eReader version of the text. *The Great Gatsby* Chapter 1 Summary Nick Carraway introduces himself as a nonjudgmental observer of other people who has recently returned to his home in a wealthy Midwestern family from the East Coast after a devastating disappointment. This disappointment is the story he is about to tell, which happened two years before. After graduating from Yale, and fighting in WWI, Nick decides to become a bond trader and moves near NYC. Nick rents a house in West Egg, a Long Island suburb that is less fashionable than East Egg, which lies across the Long Island Sound. His tiny, cheap bungalow is next to Gatsby’s enormous, tacky mansion. Nick goes to have dinner with his cousin Daisy and her extremely rich husband Tom Buchanan, whom he knows slightly from Yale. Their house is overwhelmingly decorated. Tom is gruff, aggressive, and physically intimidating. Daisy and her friend Jordan Baker are wearing white dresses that look like balloons in the breeze. Daisy laughs a lot and speaks in a low, extremely appealing voice. Their conversation is scattered and shallow, and everyone talks over each other. During dinner, Tom suddenly reveals himself to be a racist, influenced by a book that argues that the “dominant white race” is in danger of being overwhelmed by minorities. The phone rings for Tom. After he goes to answer it, Daisy seems upset and leaves the room. Jordan tells Nick that the phone call is from Tom’s mistress in New York. The rest of dinner is tense and awkward and makes Nick feel like he should call the police. After dinner, Daisy takes Nick aside and tells him that she has become cynical. Nick asks Daisy about her two-year-old daughter. Daisy doesn’t seem to have any maternal feelings. When she found out that she had given birth to a daughter, Daisy’s first reaction was to cry. She hopes her daughter will grow up to be a “beautiful fool” (1.118). Despite the fact that Daisy seems to be baring her soul to him, Nick thinks this display of misery is some kind of an act. Daisy and Nick rejoin Tom and Jordan, and Nick realizes that Jordan is a relatively famous professional golfer. He’s seen her in magazines and has heard an unpleasant story about her. After Jordan goes to bed, Daisy matter-of-factly tells Nick to start a romantic relationship with Jordan. Tom, meanwhile, tells Nick not to believe anything Daisy told him when she took him aside. Tom and Daisy ask Nick about a rumor that he was engaged. Nick denies it. This rumor is actually one of the reasons he has come East. Nick leaves the house confused about why Daisy doesn’t simply take her daughter and leave Tom. However, he can see that she has no intention of doing so. Back at his house, Nick sees the figure of Gatsby outside his mansion. Nick thinks about introducing himself, but refrains when he sees Gatsby stretching his arms out toward a green light on the opposite shore of the bay. The green light on Daisy’s dock: an aurora borealis only Gatsby can see. Key Chapter 1 Quotes In my younger and more vulnerable years my father gave me some advice that I’ve been turning over in my mind ever since. “Whenever you feel like criticizing any one,” he told me, “just remember that all the people in this world haven’t had the advantages that you’ve had.” (1.1-2) The opening lines of the book color how we understand Nick’s description of everything that happens in the novel. Nick wants to present himself as a wise, objective, nonjudgmental observer, but in the course of the novel, as we learn more and more about him, we realize that he is snobby and prejudiced . In fact, it is probably because he knows this about himself that he is so eager to start the story he is telling with a long explanation of what makes him the best possible narrator . Gatsby turned out all right at the end; it is what preyed on Gatsby, what foul dust floated in the wake of his dreams that temporarily closed out my interest in the abortive sorrows and short-winded elations of men. (1.4) This is how Nick sums up Gatsby before we have even met him, before we’ve heard anything about his life. As you read the book, think about how this information informs the way you’re responding to Gatsby’s actions. How much of what we see about Gatsby is colored by Nick’s predetermined conviction that Gatsby is a victim whose “dreams” were “preyed on”? It often feels like Nick is relying on the reader’s implicit trust of the narrator to spin Gatsby, make him come across as very sympathetic, and gloss over his flaws. “Well, it’s a fine book, and everybody ought to read it. The idea is if we don’t look out the white race will be—will be utterly submerged. It’s all scientific stuff; it’s been proved.” “Well, these books are all scientific,” insisted Tom, glancing at her impatiently. “This fellow has worked out the whole thing. It’s up to us who are the dominant race to watch out or these other races will have control of things.” (1.78-80) Tom says this at dinner about a book he’s really into. Tom is introduced as a bully and a bigot from the very beginning , and his casual racism here is a good indicator of his callous disregard for human life. We will see that his affinity for being “dominant” comes into play whenever he interacts with other people. At the same time, however, Tom tends to surround himself with those who are weaker and less powerful—probably the better to lord his physical, economic, and class power over them. “I’m glad it’s a girl. And I hope she’ll be a fool—that’s the best thing a girl can be in this world, a beautiful little fool.” (1.118) Daisy tells Nick that these are the first words she said after giving birth to her daughter. This funny and depressing take on what it takes to succeed as a woman in Daisy’s world is a good lens into why she acts the way she does. Because she has never had to struggle for anything, because of her material wealth and the fact that she has no ambitions or goals, her life feels empty and meaningless to her. In a way, this wish for her daughter to be a “fool” is coming from a good place. Based on her own experiences, she assumes that a woman who is too stupid to realize that her life is pointless will be happier than one (like Daisy herself) who is restless and filled with existential ennui (which is a fancy way of describing being bored of one’s existence). But I didn’t call to him for he dreams a sudden intimation that he was content to be alone—he stretched out his arms toward the dark water in a curious way, and far as I was from him I could have sworn he was trembling. Involuntarily I glanced seaward—and distinguished nothing except a single green light, minute and far away, that might have been the end of a dock. (1.152) The first time Nick sees him, Gatsby is making this half-prayerful gesture to the green light at the end of Daisy’s dock . This is our first glimpse of his obsession and his quest for the unobtainable. Gatsby makes this reaching movement several times throughout the book , each time because something he has strived for is just out of his grasp. I guess what I’m saying is that Jay Gatsby is a walking, talking demotivational poster. Chapter 1 Analysis Now, let’s discuss the way this chapter works with the novel’s themes, and also which major character events are key to take away from it. Themes and Symbols Society and Class . Right away, we see the difference between West Egg, the town of the vulgar nouveau riche and those driven by ambition to become them, and East Egg, the place where the old money elite lives in more classy luxury. Nick is hyper-aware of class differences when he has lunch with Daisy and Tom. Everything about them, from their house and its decor, to the way Daisy and Jordan flop on the furniture in carefree boredom, shows how incredibly wealthy and pampered they are. At the same time, Daisy’s half-joking remarks about her boredom and her cynicism show the darker side of having whatever you want whenever you want it—there stops being much point to life. Love and Relationships . Nick has several insights into Tom and Daisy’s dysfunctional marriage. First, that Tom is having an affair so indiscreet that everyone including Jordan knows about it. Second, that Daisy is clearly miserable about Tom’s cheating. But finally—and most importantly—that Daisy simply will not leave no matter how terrible she feels about his behavior. Their relationship, however flawed, works for the two of them —something Nick figures out almost immediately when he sees them standing next to each other as he leaves. This foreshadowing is crucial to keep in mind as we watch Gatsby’s attempt to win Daisy over. The Green Light . This chapter marks our first encounter with one of the most important symbols in the novel : the green light at the end of Daisy’s dock to which Gatsby assigns almost indescribable value. This light stands for everything that has been driving him over the past five years: the desire to be with Daisy, the quest for enough money to marry her, and the delusion that she has been as obsessed with him as he has been with her. The American Dream . More universally, this desire to obtain something that is forever just out of reach—and arguably can never actually be reached—is true for many of the novel’s characters as they pursue their versions of the American Dream (the idea that hard work alone will guarantee success). Reach exceeds grasp? Check. Unrealistic—nay, delusional—goal? Check. Yup, that pretty much sums up the American Dream as described by this novel. Crucial Character Beats Nick moves from the Midwest to West Egg, next door to Gatsby. He’s sick of his boring Midwestern life and wants to recapture some of the excitement of fighting in WWI. Nick has dinner with Daisy and Tom. They are rich, and their lives seem totally meaningless. Tom displays his racist ideas and Daisy displays a total lack of maternal feelings. Nick learns that Tom is having an affair, he figures out that Daisy is unhappy but will never leave Tom, and he meets Jordan Baker, who will become his romantic interest. What’s Next? Wondering why the book starts the way it does? For example, what does Nick’s dad’s advice mean? And what’s with that strange poem Fitzgerald uses as an epigraph? Check out the explanation of the novel’s beginning . Did you know that this wasn’t Fitzgerald’s first choice of title? Learn more about the history and meaning of the title . Move on to the summary of Chapter 2 or go back to the overview of the whole novel . Want to improve your SAT score by 160 points or your ACT score by 4 points? We’ve written a guide for each test about the top 5 strategies you must be using to have a shot at improving your score. Download it for free now:

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