

Truth and Lies

Lying and deceit are both major factors in the novel: few of the characters we learn about are completely honest. This is particularly ironic in a story which seems to imply that its eponymous hero is the embodiment of the American Dream which has as its fundamental idea that an honest day's work is what leads to wealth, empowerment and success.

Look through the following list of characters and decide in what ways they lie, deceive or tell only half truths either to other characters in the novel or to the reader. For many of them there is more than one example. Find relevant quotations for each one and explore the significance of each example both for the plot and for our understanding of the story.

Jay Gatsby
Nick Carraway
Daisy Buchanan
Tom Buchanan
Jordan Baker
Myrtle Wilson
George Wilson
Meyer Wolfshiem
Gatsby's party guests
Tom and Myrtle's guests at the apartment