ETS 4U1 Mrs.Tate

**Supporting Character (Antagonist) Group Activity**

The central character in a work of literature is called the *protagonist*. The protagonist usually initiates the main action of the story and often overcomes a flaw, such as weakness or ignorance, to achieve a new understanding by the work’s end. A protagonist who acts with great honour or courage may be called a hero. An antihero is a protagonist lacking these qualities. Instead of being dignified, brave, idealistic, or purposeful, the antihero may be cowardly, self-interested, or weak. The protagonist’s journey is enriched by encounters with characters who hold differing beliefs. One such character type, a foil, has traits that contrast with the protagonist’s and highlight important features of the main character’s personality. **The most important foil, the antagonist, opposes the protagonist, barring or complicating his or her success**. Nick Carraway narrates the story, but it is Jay Gatsby who is the novel’s protagonist. Gatsby’s love affair with Daisy, her marriage to Tom, and Gatsby’s quest to regain Daisy’s affection provide the story’s narrative arc.

In groups of 3-4 you are going to choose one-two secondary characters (basically anyone who is not Gatsby or Nick): Daisy, Jordan, Tom, Myrtle, Wilson, Mrs. McKee, Catherine, Mr. McKee, Owl-Eyes, or Gatsby’s party–goers. Review the first three chapters of the novel with a focus on your characters. Then:

1. List key attributes/characteristics of your chosen characters.
2. Discuss moments when these characters bring out reactions from Nick. What do these characters teach Nick about himself?
3. What do we learn about Gatsby due to these secondary characters?
4. How these characters help to drive the plot?

Post your group’s information on to the chart paper provided. You will be conducting an informal presentation based on the information your group has discussed.

Once you have heard the rest of your classmate’s presentations write one-two pages on the character you believe to be an antagonist to Nick, to Gatsby, or to both men. What qualities does this character have that make him or her an opposing force? How might encounters with the antagonist change Nick or Gatsby?