

THE FITZGERALDS – A PEEK INTO THEIR POCKETBOOK

MONTHLY EXPENDITURE, 1923

For the following questions, compute the answers into today's dollars. Use this figure, based on a recent check of the calculator at the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics website:

$\$1.00$ in 1923 = $\$15.25$ today

1. Grab a calculator and figure out how much money, in today's dollars, the Fitzgeralds spent each month on the following:

Rent?

Food?

Servants?

Clothes for Zelda?

Clothes for F. Scott?

Clothes for their daughter, Scotty?

"House liquor" and "wild parties" combined?

Ice? (Why so much?)

Plumber? (Why so much?)

Total monthly expenses?

Charity?

2. What word did Fitzgerald misspell twice?
(Take comfort in knowing that even great writers aren't necessarily good spellers.)

3. On the back of this paper, write a summary of what you learned about the Fitzgeralds' lifestyle. What sounds good? What sounds bad? What do their purchases say about their priorities? Do you think people today have similar or different priorities? Explain your answers. (Yes, I'm looking for at least five sentences here.)

Household/Family:

\$200.00	Taxes
\$300.00	Rent
\$200.00	Food
\$35.00	Coal & Wood
\$8.50	Ice
\$27.00	Gas
\$14.50	Light
\$25.00	Phone
\$5.00	Water
\$295.00	Servants
\$42.50	Doctors
\$32.50	Drug Store
\$105.50	Club
\$5.00	Newspapers
\$14.50	Books
\$9.00	Flowers
\$23.00	Auto
\$13.50	Plumber
\$1.50	Electric
\$4.00	Comutation
\$33.00	Scott's Clothes
\$100.00	Zelda's Clothes
\$25.00	Baby's Clothes
\$81.00	Household/Missclaneous Charges
\$12.00	Typing

Trips, Pleasure, & Parties:

\$80.00	House Liquor
\$26.50	Plaza
\$33.00	Alabama
\$10.00	Atlantic City
\$20.00	Theatre
\$10.00	Barber
\$15.00	Hair Dressing
\$4.00	Charity
\$100.00	Wild Parties
\$15.00	Taxis
\$33.00	Gambling
\$25.00	Lunches (N.Y.)
\$29.00	Subway
\$276.00	Miscelaeneous Cash

\$2288.50 Total

Information from F. Scott Fitzgerald's personal budget/ledger. The data has been reformatted here for clarity, but the figures, categories and spellings are exactly as Fitzgerald wrote them. Source: University of Southern Carolina Libraries, Irvin Department of Special Collections. <https://digital.library.sc.edu/collections/f-scott-fitzgeralds-ledger-1919-1938/>