

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST

OSCAR WILDE

STAGE 6
C2
YOUNG ADULT READERS

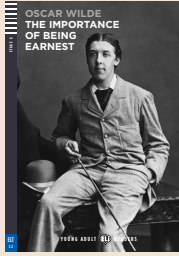
ACTIVITIES

Chose the word you think best fits in each space.

Gwendolen. Oh! It is strange he never 1 _____ mentioned to me 2 _____ that he had a ward. How 3 _____ secretive of him! He grows more interesting 4 _____ hourly. I am not sure, however, that the news 5 _____ inspires me with feelings of unmixed delight. [Rising and going to her.] I am very fond of you, Cecily; I have liked you 6 _____ ever since I met you! But I am 7 _____ bound to state that now that I know that you are Mr Worthing's ward, I cannot help 8 _____ expressing a wish you were—well, just a little older than you seem to be—and not quite so very alluring in appearance. In fact, if I may speak candidly—

Cecily. Pray do! I think that 9 _____ whenever one has anything unpleasant to say, one should always be quite 10 _____ candid.

- | | | | | |
|----|--------------|--------------|------------|----------------|
| 1 | A told | B spoke | C admitted | D mentioned |
| 2 | A that | B if | C although | D when |
| 3 | A secretive | B suspicious | C closed | D hidden |
| 4 | A now | B hourly | C then | D here |
| 5 | A gives | B improves | C provides | D inspires |
| 6 | A when | B ever | C then | D even |
| 7 | A have | B forced | C bound | D told |
| 8 | A expressing | B telling | C speaking | D holding |
| 9 | A sometime | B whenever | C always | D occasionally |
| 10 | A rude | B open | C candid | D clear |



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TEST YOURSELF

Which character said the following?

Lady Bracknell - Cecily Cardew - Canon Chasuble
Gwendolen Fairfax - Algernon Moncrieff
Miss Prism - Jack Worthing

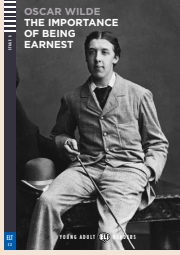
- 1 When one is in town one amuses oneself. When one is in the country one amuses other people. It is excessively boring.

- 2 Both? ... To lose one parent, Mr Worthing, may be regarded as a misfortune; to lose both looks like carelessness.

- 3 In a moment of mental abstraction, for which I never can forgive myself, I deposited the manuscript in the bassinette, and placed the baby in the handbag. _____
- 4 Well, in the first place girls never marry the men they flirt with. Girls don't think it right. _____
- 5 Personally I cannot understand how anybody manages to exist in the country, if anybody who is anybody does. The country always bores me to death. _____
- 6 To save my poor, innocent, trusting boy from the machinations of any other girl there are no lengths to which I would not go.

- 7 My sermon on the meaning of the manna in the wilderness can be adapted to almost any occasion, joyful, or, as in the present case, distressing. _____

ANSWERS: 1 Jack Worthing; 2 Lady Bracknell; 3 Miss Prism; 4 Algernon Moncrieff; 5 Gwendolen Fairfax; 6 Cecily Cardew; 7 Canon Chasuble



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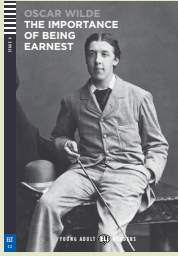
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Cambridge Proficiency-Style Writing Activity

Write a short essay (200-240 words) about the society that Oscar Wilde is describing, criticising and making us laugh at.

Include information and ideas on

- class;
- social structure;
- the position of women;
- social mobility;
- ways in which the society Wilde describes is changing.



THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST OSCAR WILDE

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FOCUS ON...

Kisses on Oscar Wilde's funeral tomb



Oscar Wilde was and is loved by literature enthusiasts. His verses and his novel have developed passion for all generations. One of the most interesting curiosity about this famous 19th century Irish writer and poet is on his memorial in Paris, precisely in Père Lachaise cemetery. Composed by a 20-tonne block of stone, the tomb shows a winged figure resembling the Sphinx on a forward flight with vertically outstretched wings. It is supposed to represent the statue in the British Museum's Assyrian figures and be based on Wilde's poem *The Sphinx*. The cemetery has had many tourists who have come to pay homage to the Irish playwright and left their mark in red lipstick. Over thousands of lipstick kisses and graffiti messages cover the bottom

half of the tomb. This practice on the tomb started in the late 1990s. Since then lipstick kisses and hearts have been joined by a rash of red graffiti containing expressions of love, such as: "Wilde child we remember you", "Keep looking at the stars" and "Real beauty ends where intellect begins". Kissing Oscar's tomb on the Paris tourist circuit has become a cult pastime. Now you can be fined through the nose.