

English 12 AP Summer Reading Assignment

The Importance of Being Earnest by Oscar Wilde: 4 Step Assignment

STEP 1: Read Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest*

The play should be fairly easy to find, either in a bookstore or online.

STEP 2: Quotes

Locate 15 direct quotes (5 from each of the 3 acts) that are meaningful sentences or phrases that support any of the following comedic themes within the play:

- The nature of marriage
- The constraints of morality
- The quest for truth and beauty
- Hypocrisy

Type each quote, using quotation marks, and act and line citations. Organize the quotes based on Act I, Act II, and Act III. (Please use the document on Google Classroom for this assignment).

STEP 3: Comedic Devices

First provide a definition of the term. Next, using the play, find and record examples of the following comedic devices. (Please use the document on Google Classroom for this assignment).

1. Satire
2. Exaggeration
3. Pun
4. Understatement
5. Hyperbole

STEP 4: Free Response Prompt and Thesis Justification

- Read the following prompts from the AP College Board.
- Choose 3.
- For your chosen 3, justify why *The Importance of Being Earnest* is an appropriate text for each prompt, including examples and commentary as proof. Please refrain from too much summary and/or paraphrase.
- Create a formal thesis for each prompt. Think about how you would structure an argument for each one.
- Please note that you are not writing an essay for the prompt; at least, not yet.

Some novels and plays seem to advocate changes in social or political attitudes or in traditions. Choose such a novel or play and note briefly the particular attitudes or traditions that the author apparently wishes to modify. Analyze the techniques the author uses to influence the reader's or the audience's views.

Many plays and novels use contrasting places (for example, two countries, two cities or towns, two houses, or the land and the sea) to represent opposed forces or ideas that are central to the meaning of the work. Choose a novel or a play that contrasts two such places. Write an essay on how the places differ, what each place represents, and how their contrast contributes to the meaning of the work.

"The true test of comedy is that it shall awaken thoughtful laughter." Choose a novel or a play, or a long poem in which a scene or character awakens "thoughtful laughter" in the reader. Write an essay in which you show why this laughter is "thoughtful" and how it contributes to the meaning of the work.

Many works of literature contain a character who intentionally deceives others. The character's dishonesty may be intended either to help or to hurt. Such a character, for example may choose to mislead others for personal safety or to spare someone's feelings, or to even carry out a crime. Choose a novel or a play in which a character deceives others. Then, analyze the motives for that character's deception and discuss how the deception contributes to the meaning of the work as a whole.

Choose a character from a novel or a play and write an essay in which you (a) briefly describe the standards of the fictional society in which the character exists and (b) show how the character is affected by and responds to those standards. Avoid plot summary.

Date Due: August 15, 2019

Please have all of the work ready to turn in on the first day of class. There are specific Google docs for each part of the assignment attached as PDFs. Follow the instructions that accompany each section. Please email either Mr. Durney at ldurneycghsnc.org or Mrs. Rokita at arokitacghsnc.org for specific questions about the assignment.

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STEP 2: Quotes

Directions: Locate 15 direct quotes from the play (5 from each act). The quotes need to be meaningful phrases or sentences that support any of the following comedic themes within the play.

Please use the chart below. Use bullets to separate each quote within the text box.

Make sure that you include the correct parenthetical documentation for the quote, including the speaker of the line(s).

Comedic Theme	Act I	Act II	Act III
The Nature of Marriage			
The Constraints of Morality			
The Quest for Truth and Beauty			
Hypocrisy			

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STEP 3: Comedic Devices

Directions: Define and locate examples of the following comedic devices found within the play.
Please be sure to include appropriate parenthetical citations.

Comedic Device	Definition	Example from Play
Satire		
Exaggeration		
Pun		
Understatement		
Hyperbole		

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STEP 4: Justification and Thesis

Directions: Read the prompts from the AP College Board (on your Summer Reading Assignment Page) and choose only 3 to work with on for this part of the assignment. ***Your tasks are to (1) justify WHY *The Importance of Being Earnest* is an appropriate text for the 3 prompts you have chosen. You will need to provide examples and commentary as proof and (2) draft a formal thesis for each of the 3 prompts you have chosen (consider how you would structure an argument for each one).*** Please refrain from plot summary and/or paraphrases.

Prompt #:

Prompt	Justification (Reasons)	Thesis

Prompt #:

Prompt	Justification (Reasons)	Thesis

Prompt #:

Prompt	Justification (Reasons)	Thesis

