### Oscar Wilde

The Importance of Being Earnest

### A Reading Quiz

1. Algernon has concocted an imaginary story about (A) a non existent brother (B) a perpetually ill friend (C) his family background (D) his cousin (E) a pet.
2. Jack is known as “Ernest” (A) in Shropshire (B) by his family (C) in London (D) in the country (E) abroad.
3. When Algernon says to Jack, “I have always suspected you of being a confirmed and secret Bunburyist,” he means he suspects Jack of (A) wanting to marry his cousin (B) wanting Lady Bracknell’s fortune (C) keeping part of his life secret (D) being an orphan (E) being often ill.
4. Algernon tells Jack he is “afraid Aunt Augusta won’t quite approve of your being here” because he knows his aunt objects to (A) family (B) appetite (C) flirting with Gwendolyn (D) taste in ties. (E) greed.
5. The first evidence the audience has that Lady Bracknell does not approve of Jack’s presence comes when she (A) glares at him when she enters (B) orders him out of the house (C) threatens to call Merriman (D) threatens to disinherit Algernon (E) lies to him.
6. One of Lady Bracknell’s requirements for a proper suitor for Gwendolyn is that he must (A) be knowledgeable (B) be a non smoker (C) have two parents (D) have a good income (E) like dogs and children
7. Lady Bracknell serves the blocking figure in the play by (A) upstaging the younger women (B) using an overly refined vocabulary (C) flirting with the canon (D) standing between Jack and Gwendolyn (E) appearing only seldom on stage.
8. The character someone said would have to “choose between this world, the next world, and Australia.” is (A) Algernon (B) Jack (C) Cecily (D) Ernest (E) Dr. Chausable.
9. The character who has written a three volume novel is (A) Algernon (B) Miss Prism (C) Cecily (D) Lady Bracknell (E) Dr. Chausable.
10. The line that comes closest to suggesting a major theme of the play is (A) “In matters of grave importance, style, not sincerity, is the vital thing.” (B) “I hope, Cecily, you are not inattentive.” (C) “I’m in love with Cecily, and that is everything.” (D) Everything is quite ready for the christenings.” (E) “The Brighton line.”
11. Miss Prism is (A) Jack’s mother (C) Gwendolyn’s confident (B) Letitia’s sister (D) Cecily’s governess (E) Jack’s mistress.
12. Jack first appears at the country house (A) dressed in mourning (B) in christening clothes (C) with Lane (D) with Moncrieff (E) with Gwendolyn.
13. When Algernon professes his passion for Cecily, she tells him she (A) loves Jack (B) is engaged to Ernest (C) taken vows against marriage (D) cannot marry until Miss Prism dies (E) hates him.
14. At their first meeting Cecily serves Gwendolyn (A) muffins (B) bread and butter (C) cake (D) scones (E) Rice Crispies.
15. Lady Bracknell comes to admire Cecily more when she hears that the girl (A) is engaged (B) comes from an admirable family (C) is a lawyer (D) is a good housekeeper (E) has lots of money.
16. Lady Bracknell turns out to be (A) Gwendolyn’s sister (B) Jack‘s aunt (C) Jack’s mother (D) Miss Prism’s sister (E) Chausable’s wife.
17. Jack turns out to be (A) Lord Bracknell’s son (B) the son of Lane and “a young person” (C) Gwendolyn’s brother (D) Algernon’s brother (E) Cecily’s uncle.
18. Miss Prism’s abandoned manuscript turns out to have been (A) a best seller (B) a school German grammar book (C) love letters to clergymen (D) a play actually by Oscar Wilde (E) Jack.
19. As the play ends, Gwendolyn discovers that she is (A) Lady Bracknell’s sister (B) Cecily’s sister (C) Lane’s daughter (D) Jack’s sister (E) engaged to Ernest.
20. Dr Chausable is (A) an Anglican priest (B) a pediatrician (C) a dentist (D) an orthopedist (E) a veterinarian.
21. The mentions of “the lower orders” refer to (A) people living on lower floors (B) Church law (C) the underworld (D) angels (E) the lower social classes.
22. Algernon’s reference to Jack’s ever getting married as “problematic” indicates that he finds the idea (A) doubtful (B) annoying (C) certain (D) tasteless (E) unworthy.
23. When Jack asks Algernon not to be cynical, he implies that he thinks that Algernon believes that people are motivated primarily by (A) greed for money (B) love (C) selfishness (D) desire for social status (E) fear of death.
24. When Miss Prism speaks of the modern mania for turning bad people into good people at a moment’s notice, her use of the word ‘mania’ indicates that she finds the idea (A) admirable (B) madness (C) trendy (D) unconscionable (E) irresistible.
25. Cecily’s reference to Algernon’s reformation as “Quixotic” means that she finds the idea (A) idealistic and rash (B)  commendable (C) corrupt and depraved (D) exasperating (E) utilitarian.

### Identify the speaker of each of the following lines:

1. “I don’t play [the piano] accurately anyone can play accurately but I play with wonderful expression.” (A) Algernon (B) Jack (C) Lady Bracknell (D) Lane (E) Gwendolyn.
2. “And, speaking of the science of life, have you got the cucumber sandwiches cut for Lady Bracknell?” (A) Algernon (B) Jack (C) Lady Bracknell (D) Lane (E) Gwendolyn.
3. “Really, if the lower orders don’t set us a good example, what on earth is the use of them? They seem, as a class, to have absolutely no sense of moral responsibility.” (A) Algernon (B) Jack (C) Lady Bracknell (D) Lane (E) Gwendolyn.
4. “It is very vulgar to talk like a dentist when one isn’t a dentist. It produces a false impression.” (A) Algernon (B) Jack (C) Lady Bracknell (D) Lane (E) Gwendolyn.
5. “To lose one parent... may be regarded as a misfortune; to lose both looks like carelessness.” (A) Algernon (B) Jack (C) Lady Bracknell (D) Lane (E) Gwendolyn.
6. “I keep a diary in order to enter the wonderful secrets of my life. If I didn’t write them down, I should probably forget all about them.” (A) Algernon (B) Jack (C) Lady Bracknell (D) Miss Prism (E) Cecily.
7. “Memory, Cecily, is the diary that we all carry about with us.” (A) Algernon (B) Miss Prism (C) Cecily (D) Gwendolyn (E) Dr.Chausable.
8. “I spoke metaphorically. My metaphor was drawn from bees.” (A) Algernon (B) Jack (C) Cecily (D) Gwendolyn (E) Dr.Chausable.
9. “I never have any appetite unless I have a buttonhole first.” (A) Algernon (B) Jack (C) Cecily (D) Gwendolyn (E) Dr.Chausable.
10. “Three addresses always inspire confidence, even in tradesmen.” (A) Algernon (B) Lady Bracknell (C) Cecily (D) Gwendolyn (E) Dr.Chausable.