Senior English

Spring 1992

The Picture of Dorian Gray

Review topics

1. In the preface to the novel Wilde writes that “vice and virtue are to the artist the materials for art.” In what way is *The Picture of Dorian Gray* a study of vice and virtue?
2. What exactly is the role of Lord Henry in the novel? Does he represent a devil who leads Dorian into evil? Is he a likable character with whom the reader at times agrees? or is he some combination of both? Justify your opinion with specific references.
3. Consider the roles played by the women characters in the novel. Explain how Wilde wants a reader to react to two or three of the women by explaining how they are affected by Dorian and how they affect him.
4. Discuss the statements made about beauty and art in the novel. Consider the statements and actions of the characters, comments by the author, and meanings of the novel as a whole.
5. To what extent are two or three of the characters in the novel projections of “us regular people”? Which of our own vices and virtues appear in either exaggerated or understated form in the novel, and what does the novel say about them?