

AP English Literature and Composition spring break 2011 BONUS assignment

Literary Analysis:

The Importance of Being Earnest is a satire and, as a representative of that genre, directs light upon the weaknesses of humanity. Through humor, the play forces us to examine our own lives and contemplate necessary changes to society.

1. Record ten quotations that are **satirical**. Explain how each quotation reveals a weakness of humanity and humorously mocks human beings.
2. Compose two different **theme statements** for the play following our format. Provide two supporting quotations for each statement.

Vocabulary Application:

You have learned over 120 words that will allow you to precisely describe tone and character. As the AP Exam looms, you need to practice using those words so that your writing is rich and detailed.

1. Write a one-paragraph analysis of one of the main characters in the play; your aim is to reveal the **character's complexity**. Use at least six vocabulary words in your writing.
2. Write a well-organized **synopsis of the plot**, highlighting **conflict, climax, and resolution**. Use at least ten vocabulary words in your summary.

Essay Topics:

Choose one of the following prompts, and compose a well-written essay (including a minimum of four supporting quotations) in response.

1. "The true test of comedy is that it shall awaken thoughtful laughter." (George Meredith)

Choose a scene, recurring scene, character, or idea from *The Importance of Being Earnest* that 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.

2. In a literary work, a minor character, often known as a foil, possesses traits that emphasize, by contrast or comparison, the distinctive characteristics and qualities of the main character. For example, the ideas or behavior of the minor character might be used to highlight the weaknesses or strengths of the main character. Choose a minor character from *The Importance of Being Earnest* who serves as a foil to a main character. Then write an essay in which you analyze how the relation between the minor character and the major character illuminates the meaning of the work.