

THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY

3rd and 4th ESO
Teacher's Guide





BEFORE GOING TO THE THEATRE

1. The Story

The aristocrat Dorian Gray is a handsome young man living in nineteenth-century England. He greatly enjoys life and wants to experience everything it has to offer. However, his soul is not as beautiful as his appearance, and he does whatever he wants without thinking about the consequences of his actions. He often hurts people's feelings, even causing one of his lovers to take her own life. One of his best friends, Basil, paints a portrait of him.

Dorian is amazed by how magnificent he looks in the painting and wishes that he could remain young and beautiful forever. His wish comes true, and as the years pass, it is the portrait—not Dorian himself—that grows old. However, the portrait does more than show the effects of ageing: it also reflects the growing evil in Dorian's soul.

In the end, Dorian can no longer bear to look at the terrible portrait. He tries to destroy it, but in doing so, he kills himself. When his servants find him, they discover an old, ugly man lying dead on the floor, while the portrait has returned to its original image of a young and beautiful Dorian.

Answer the following questions related to the text:

a) Who is Dorian Gray? And where does he live? When?

He is a young and handsome aristocrat. He lives in England in the 19th century.

b) Is he a good person? Why or why not?

No, he isn't. He hurts people's feeling all the time and he doesn't mind the consequences of his actions.

c) What does his friend Basil do for him?

He paints his portrait.

d) What's Basil's profession?

He is a painter.

e) Why is the present special?

Because the painting itself gets older and not Dorian.

f) Is Dorian's ending a happy one? Why?

No, it isn't. Because in the end he kills himself.



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- g) Why do you think Dorian's portrait gets older? Why did the author make this story up?
Student's ideas.
- h) Is there any symbology in doing this?
Student's ideas.

Define the following words appearing in the text: Suggested definitions of Merriam-webster

- **Portrait:** A pictorial representation of a person usually showing the face.
- **Century:** A period of 100 years.
- **Suicide:** The act or an instance of taking one's own life voluntarily and intentionally.
- **Eternity:** A seemingly endless or immeasurable time.
- **Evilness** Arising from actual or imputed bad character or conduct.
- **Feeling** An emotional state or reaction.

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Find all the adjectives appearing in the text and build their comparative and superlative forms.

- Young – younger – the youngest
- Handsome – more handsome – the most handsome
- Attractive – more attractive – the most attractive
- Magnificent – more magnificent – the most magnificent
- Old – older – the oldest

Change the following sentences from the Present Simple to the Past Simple.

- a) Dorian Gray lives in London.
Dorian lived in London.
- b) Basil paints a portrait of Dorian.
Basil painted a portrait of Dorian.
- c) Henry influences Dorian's ideas about life.
Henry influenced Dorian's ideas about life.
- d) Dorian looks at his beautiful portrait.
Dorian looked at his beautiful portrait.
- e) Dorian wishes that the portrait grows old instead of him.
Dorian wished that the portrait grew old instead of him.
- f) Dorian returns home and sees a change in the portrait.
Dorian returned home and saw a change in the portrait.
- g) Dorian treats Sibyl cruelly.
Dorian treated Sibyl cruelly.



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2. The characters

DORIAN GRAY is the main character. He is a person with a lot of money and who does not care about the consequences of his actions. He would like to be handsome and young forever.

HENRY WOTTON is Dorian's best friend. He loves to enjoy his youth and parties a lot. He is the one who encourages friends not to worry about problems and to spend time enjoying small pleasures.

BASIL HALLWARD is an artist. He is the one who paints Dorian's portrait. Unlike Henry, Basil is a good-natured person. He believes in the good qualities of people, although he does not talk too much.

SIBYL VANE is an artist who sings in a theater where Dorian likes to hang out. Henry thinks she doesn't have much talent, and describes her as cute but not beautiful

JAMES VANE is Sibyl's brother. He is aggressive and very protective of people who want to approach his sister. He doesn't seem to like Dorian very much.

3. Oscar Wilde



As you may know, The Picture of Dorian Gray was written by Oscar Wilde.

What do you know about Oscar Wilde?

In groups of four, do some research on the internet about the author. Find the correct answer to the following questions. Then share them with the whole class.

- Oscar Wilde lived during the Victorian Era of the late 19th century. Can you list three interesting things about Victorian society?

1.
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2.
.....
3.
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- Oscar Wilde wrote plenty of short tales and plays. Do some research to find the right title for each description. You can use your dictionary if there are words that you don't know.

h) "A collection of short stories for children which contains five stories [...]".

The Happy Prince and Other Tales

i) "Wilde's only full length novel, which brought critical scrutiny in his time, but endured to become a classic work of fiction, and an icon in the author's cannon of literary works".

The Picture of Dorian Gray

j) "A farcical comedy in which the protagonists maintain fictitious personae to escape burdensome social obligations. Working within the social conventions of late Victorian London, the play's major themes are the triviality with which it treats institutions as serious as marriage, and the resulting satire of Victorian ways".

The Importance of Being Earnest

As you may know, Oscar Wilde is worldwide famous for his quotes. Read the following ones and answer the questions:

- What do they mean to you?
- Do you agree with these messages?
- Why? Why not? Write and discuss them in open class.

The answer is open and free. Please encourage students to discuss their ideas in English and with the whole class.

"Life is much too important a thing ever to talk seriously about it."
— Lady Windermere's Fan, 1892, Act I

"To love oneself is the beginning of a life-long romance."
— "An Ideal Husband"

"The public have an insatiable curiosity to know everything, except what is worth knowing."
— "The Soul of Man Under Socialism"



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4. Put the following words in order to create coherent sentences. You have to add the necessary articles and prepositions:

a) going/parties/Dorian/likes

Dorian likes going to parties.

b) Dorian/Basil/friends/best/one/is/'s

Basil is one of Dorian's best friends.

c) works/Basil/painter/as

Basil works as a painter.

d) forever/Dorian/like/young/would/be

Dorian would like to be young forever.

e) year/Dorian/portrait/'s/every/older/gets

Dorian's portrait gets older every year.

f) portrait/finally/destroyed/is/owner/its

The portrait is finally destroyed by its owner.

5. Vocabulary

Look at the vocabulary from the play and learn it.

PAINTING
SPOTLIGHT
AWFUL
REVENGE
TO GO OUT

TO WASTE
PERFORMANCE
TO BOTHER
HEARTBROKEN
SNOB

PORTRAIT
PROTECTIVE
BLIND
PARANOID
TO OWE

SHOULDER
TO CHARM
MERMAID
PERSISTENT

WEAK
MARRIAGE
TO DROWN
SELFISH



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6. In the play there are some colour idioms or expressions.

Look at these idioms using colours and match them to the correct meaning. If you don't know the answer, have a guess!

1. To be tickled **pink**.
2. To be **black** and **blue**.
3. To be in the **red**.
4. To have a **green** thumb.
5. To be the **black** sheep.
6. To be **blue**.
7. To go as **white** as a ghost.
8. To be **purple** with rage.

- A. To be skillful in the garden.
- B. To be sad.
- C. To be in debt.
- D. To be the odd or bad member of a group.
- E. To be extremely angry.
- F. To be very shocked.
- G. To be extremely pleased.
- H. To be badly bruised all over.

Answers:

1 - G 2 - H 3 - C 4 - A 5 - D 6 - B 7 - F 8 - E

7. Odd one out

Choose the odd one out and give a reason. Careful! There may be more than one answer.

- | | | | | |
|------------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------------|
| a) Want | Hot | What | How | Watch |
| b) Cow | Kitten | Puppy | Lamb | Cub |
| c) Bra | T-shirt | Vest | Knickers | Underpants |
| d) Swim | Sail | Dive | Fly | Waterski |
| e) Wanted | Landed | Waited | Wished | Painted |
| f) Pop | Classical | Drum | Rock | Jazz |
| g) Pound | Cent | Euro | Peseta | Dollar |
| h) Teacher | Lawyer | Policeman | Doctor | Traffic Warden |
| i) Sea | Real | Still | Steal | Steel |
| j) Paris | London | Rome | New York | Brussels |

In this exercise, as long as the student has a valid reason for their choice, more than one answer could be right:



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- How – doesn't have the o sound as in pot.
- Cow – is not a baby animal.
- T-shirt – is not underwear.
- Fly – not a verb related to water.
- Wished – has /t/ sound. (all other verbs have /Id/ sound).
- Drum – is not a type of music.
- Peseta – no longer exists as a form of money.
- Policeman – is a job that changes form in the feminine (policewoman).
- Still – has the /I/ sound (all other words have /I:/ sound as in meet).
- New York isn't a capital city (Washington D.C. is the capital of U.S.A.).

8. Listening

Listen to Scene 1, 2 and 3 and answer the following questions:

- What is Basil doing?
He is painting Dorian's portrait.
- What does Henry think about Basil? What does he think the portrait is going to look like before seeing it finished?
He thinks Basil is the best painter in England. He thinks the portrait will be amazing.
- When Dorian sees the portrait, what does he think?
He thinks he looks handsome, beautiful and perfect.
- According to Henry, what is going to happen to Dorian in twenty or thirty years?
He is going to be old and his beauty will be gone.
- What is Dorian's wish?
He wishes to never grow old. He wishes he could keep looking like this forever. He wishes the portrait would grow old instead of him.



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- Why does Henry think they should enjoy the night?
He says they won't be young forever and they can't waste their time.
- What happens when Dorian sees Sibyl for the first time?
She captivates Dorian's heart.
- Why can't Sibyl be sure that she can have dinner with Dorian?
She thinks that her brother probably won't like the idea. He's very protective of her.
- Why does Sibyl finally agree to have dinner with Dorian?
She thinks that someone like Dorian could never hurt her.
- How long have Dorian and Sibyl been together?
They have been together for three months.
- Why does Dorian bring Sibyl to the portrait room?
He wants to show her the portrait and ask her to marry him.
- What does Sibyl imagine about their future together?
They'll live together in a beautiful house, and they'll have lots of children.
- Why does Dorian wonder if marrying Sibyl is a mistake?
Because Henry always says marriage is a prison and that a man is only truly free as long as he belongs to no one.



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9. Writing

You like painting and you would like to take painting lessons. Write a formal letter to an academy asking for information about lessons, timetable, prices, levels... (About 200 words).

[illegible][illegible]This image shows a full page of white paper with horizontal blue dashed lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, providing a guide for handwriting practice. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.[illegible]



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10. Speaking

Work in pairs. Imagine one of you is Dorian Gray and you see your portrait for the first time. The other one is Basil, the painter. Make up the dialogue.





AFTER GOING TO THE THEATRE

11. Questions about the show

- What did you think of the play?

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- Describe the set and costumes.

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- Who was your favourite character and why? Who was your least favourite character and why?

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12. True or False

Look at these sentences about the story and say if they are true or false.

T

F

☐☒

Henry paints Dorian's portrait and Dorian thinks he looks handsome.
False: Basil paints Dorian's portrait.

☒☐

Dorian likes Sibyl from the moment he sees her on stage. True.

☐☒

Sibyl thinks Dorian looks more handsome in the portrait than he is.
False: Sibyl likes the real Dorian better.

☐☒

After twenty years, everybody looks better than Dorian. His lifestyle is not good and he looks terrible. False: After twenty years, Dorian is the one who looks as young and as beautiful as always.

☒☐

Dorian starts helping others when he realizes the portrait is getting uglier. But his good actions don't change anything. True.





13. Speaking

Now imagine the story happens in a different time or place. Describe your new version of the story. How does the new setting change the characters and the story?

Imagine Dorian is a famous influencer. His photos on social media always look perfect, but a secret AI avatar shows his real face and all the bad things he does.

- What happens in your story?
- Who are the main characters?
- What is different from the original story?
- How does the story end?

[illegible]



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14. Who said that?

Match the phrase to the character who says it: Dorian, Henry or Sibyl. And to whom it is said.

PHRASE	WHO SAYS IT?	TO WHOM?
But you'd better enjoy that beauty, because in twenty or thirty years, you'll be old... and your beauty... will be gone.	HENRY	
What does he have to protect you from? You're a free woman.	DORIAN	
Is this the famous portrait you never stop talking about? You were right, it's amazing.	SIBYL	
She's a wonderful woman. She makes me happy. And, as you always say... she makes me feel young.	DORIAN	
Life is full of tragedies, Dorian. But your life isn't over.	HENRY	
This is the perfect time to fall in love. Once, twice, three times... even fifty times if necessary.	HENRY	
The first time I saw you, I thought you were extraordinary. Today, I only saw... an ordinary actress.	DORIAN	
For the first time, you're finally seeing what you've been running away from for so many years. You've grown old inside...but you've learned nothing.	SIBYL	

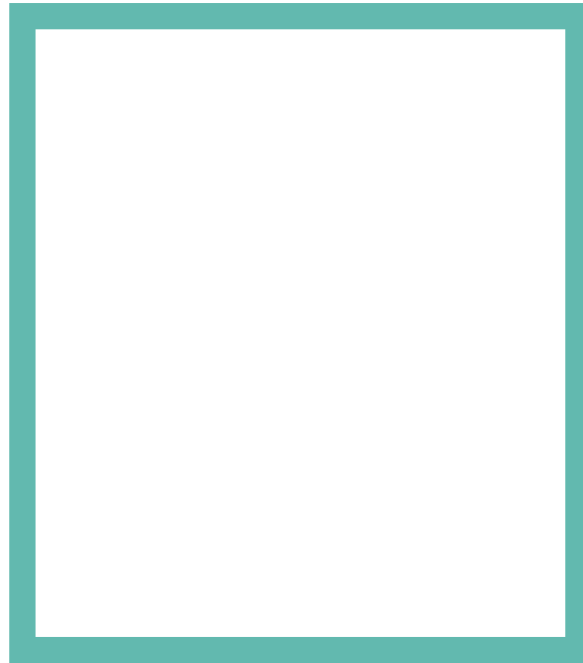


15. Your review

[illegible]



16. Draw your own portrait in the frame below.



a) Now imagine your portrait changes every time you do something good or bad. Write 5 things that happened this week and explain how they would change your portrait.

Example:

I helped my friend. → My portrait would have a big smile.

I argued with my brother. → My portrait would look angry.

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b) Would your portrait look better or worse? Why?

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