

## ESSAY # 3 : THEATRE ( COMEDY )

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**Final Draft Due Date:**

**Rough Draft/Peer Edit:**

**TASK:** Critically analyze *The Importance of Being Earnest*. Choose one topic below

- 1) Using appropriate quotations and paraphrases from the play, show how Wilde treats serious issues and conflicts that existed within Victorian society with humor and wit. You might wish to demonstrate how the play deals with at least one of the following matters: marriage and courtship, sexual double standards, the class structure, money and property, and attitudes towards illness and death.
- 2) Algernon and Jack represent two figures Wilde might have admired. Discuss the characterization of these two and explain how they are important to the plot, how their characterization is developed, how they accomplish their goals, and why Wilde might have written them as he did. How might their goals have mirrored Wilde's own? Do you suppose they were much like other men of that period in Victorian England?
- 3) Despite Wilde's affection for men and the use of dual male protagonists, *The Importance of Being Earnest* is full of powerful and memorable female characters. These characters are written quite well, with equal gusto and intelligence. How are the female characters important to the play? What "type" of person does each represent? Finally, are there any parallels you can find to women in today's world?

### **Writing Goals**

- Strict focus
- Tight organization
- Thorough analysis
- Sufficient and effective support
- Appropriate outside sources
- Properly formatted citation, both in-text and works cited

**SPECS** (If your paper fails to meet any of the required specifications, I will not accept it.)

- Minimum of 5 double-spaced, STAPLED, **proofread** pages MLA format.
- Minimum of three outside sources (must be academic), two must be print sources (databases and ebooks okay).
- Works Cited page (not part of the 5 page requirement).