

Oscar Wilde

THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY



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Readers



Young Adult

Classic

Book brief

- 1 *The Picture of Dorian Gray* is a Gothic and philosophical novel by poet and playwright, Oscar Wilde, first published in book form in 1891.
- 2 It's the only novel written by Oscar Wilde but was an immediate success.
- 3 Set in Victorian England, it tells the story of Dorian Gray who's the subject of a full-length oil portrait.
- 4 Dorian decides to sell his soul so that he'll stay young and handsome and only the picture will become old and change over time.
- 5 Main themes include the purpose of art, youth and beauty, and the superficial nature of society.

Oscar Wilde

The Picture of Dorian Gray

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For Review Only

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Main Characters



Dorian Gray

We first meet Dorian when he's about twenty. He's young, handsome and very rich.



Basil Hallward

A successful and talented artist who paints the picture mentioned in the title.



Lord Henry Wotton

A young lord, very rich and only interested in himself. His influence isn't always positive.



Sibyl Vane

*Dorian falls in love
with this young actress who's
only seventeen years old.*



James Vane

*Sibyl's brother, a sailor
who's leaving for Australia
to earn lots of money.*



Sibyl and James Vane's mother

*An ex actress who lives with her children.
She believes she's wonderful, never thinks
about serious problems and is very
ambitious for Sibyl and James.*



Alan Campbell

*A doctor who was a friend
of Dorian's in the past.*

Vocabulary

- 1** Complete the table below with the corresponding noun. Use a dictionary to help you.

intelligent	1
decorate	2
invite	3
beautiful	4
young	5
laugh	6
friendly	7
silent	8
express	9

- 2** Complete the sentences below about the story with a word from the box.

ugly - old - fascinated - young - portrait - influence

- 1 Lord Henry thinks the of Dorian Gray is Basil Hallward's best work of art.
- 2 Basil Hallward thinks it's better to be and not beautiful.
- 3 Basil Hallward is afraid Lord Henry will have a bad on his friend Dorian.
- 4 Dorian is by Lord Henry.
- 5 Dorian is frightened of becoming and horrible.
- 6 Dorian wishes he could stay forever, like the way he is in the picture.



Speaking

21st Century Skills

3 Discuss the following questions with a partner.

- 1 How often do you look at yourself in the mirror?
- 2 How long do you take to choose what to wear in the morning?
- 3 When you take a selfie do you change it to make it look better?
- 4 Is there anything about the way you look that you don't like?
- 5 How much do you follow fashion?
- 6 In your opinion, how important is it to look good?



Listening

2 4 Read these sentences. Then listen to Chapter 1 and decide if they're true (T) or false (F).

- 1 We first meet Basil Hallward sitting in front of the picture of Dorian Gray.
- 2 He met Dorian Gray at an interesting party.
- 3 Basil sees Dorian every Saturday.
- 4 Lord Henry is happy to miss lunch at Aunt Agatha's house.
- 5 Dorian Gray is sitting on the sofa.
- 6 Lord Henry thinks Dorian Gray is very handsome.
- 7 Lord Henry tells Dorian to sit in the sun.
- 8 Dorian feels very happy when he first sees the portrait.
- 9 Dorian then becomes angry.
- 10 The butler brings coffee for the men.

T	F
☐	☐
☐	☐
☐	☐
☐	☐
☐	☐
☐	☐
☐	☐
☐	☐
☐	☐

The Wish

- ▶ 2 The studio was filled with the rich perfume of flowers. Lord Henry Wotton lay smoking. Everything was still.

The Grosvenor Gallery, a place of art in Victorian London, was famous for the works of progressive artists who didn't follow the traditional tastes in art of that time.

Adonis is the Greek god of beauty. If you call a man an Adonis you're saying he's very handsome.

In the centre of the room was a portrait* of a beautiful young man. The artist, Basil Hallward, was sitting in front of it, smiling.

'It's your best work,' said Lord Henry. 'Show it at the Grosvenor.'

'No, I can't. There's too much of me in it,' answered Hallward.

'You don't look like the picture!' said Lord Henry. 'You have an intellectual* face but this young man is an Adonis. He's beautiful. He never thinks, I'm sure. You aren't like him at all.'

'You don't understand,' replied Hallward. 'I know I don't look like him, I'd be sorry to. Dorian Gray's beauty will disappear. It's better to be ugly and stupid, and live in peace.'

'Is that his name?' asked Lord Henry.

'Yes,' answered Hallward. 'I didn't want to tell you. I prefer secrets, they're more romantic.'

'I agree,' said Lord Henry. 'I know nothing about my wife, and she knows nothing about me.'

The two young men laughed and went into the garden where they sat in the shade.

portrait a picture of a person, especially of his/her face

intellectual using your mind and not how you feel to think about things

The artist Basil Hallward and Lord Henry in the garden.





‘Why do you refuse to show the painting?’ asked Lord Henry.

‘I told you,’ replied Hallward. ‘There’s too much of me in it. A good portrait is a portrait of the artist, not the sitter. I’m afraid I show my soul in this painting. You see, two months ago I went to a party at Lady Brandon’s house. Her parties are boring, but it’s important to keep society* contacts. As you say, even a stockbroker* in smart clothes looks cultured. I spoke to boring people for ten minutes and then I saw Dorian Gray. I was terrified. I wanted to escape, but I asked Lady Brandon to introduce us.’

‘What did she say about him?’ asked Lord Henry.

‘She said: *He plays the piano*,’ answered Hallward. Dorian and I laughed.

‘Laughter is a good start and the best ending for a friendship,’ said Lord Henry. ‘I choose my friends for their beauty, my acquaintances* for their character and my enemies for their intelligence. My enemies all respect me.’

‘Do you really believe that?’ asked Hallward.

‘How English you are!’ answered Lord Henry. ‘The English think you must believe what you say, but that isn’t important. If an idea isn’t sincere*, but totally intellectual, it’s an excellent idea. Do you see Dorian Gray often?’

‘Every day,’ answered Hallward.

‘Extraordinary,’ said Lord Henry. ‘I thought you only loved art.’

‘He’s my art,’ replied Hallward. ‘I draw, paint, sketch* from him. My work with him is the best of my life. I see things differently. I paint in a new way.’

society the upper, rich class of people

stockbroker someone who buys and sells on the world markets for other people

acquaintance a person you know, but not well enough to be a friend

sincere from the heart

sketch draw quickly and not in great detail

The Picture of Dorian Gray

‘Basil, I must meet Dorian Gray,’ said Lord Henry. ‘And you must show his portrait.’

‘I can’t,’ said Hallward. ‘I’m afraid people will see my soul. Art must be beautiful but not personal.’

‘And does Dorian Gray like you?’ asked Lord Henry.

‘I think so,’ replied Hallward. ‘Sometimes he’s horrible to me. I feel I’ve given my soul to someone who treats* it like a flower on a summer’s day, a bit of a decoration.’

‘Summer days are long,’ said Lord Henry. ‘You’ll tire* first. Genius lasts longer than Beauty. One day you’ll become cold and he’ll be angry. What a pity.’

‘You’re wrong,’ said Hallward.

It was pleasant in the garden. Lord Henry found Hallward’s emotions* more interesting than his invitation to a boring lunch at Aunt Agatha’s house. He was happy to miss the lunch.

‘Basil!’ he said, ‘I know where I’ve heard Dorian Gray’s name! Aunt Agatha knows him. He helps her with the poor. She didn’t say he’s beautiful.’

‘I don’t want you to meet him,’ said Hallward.

The butler* came into the garden.

‘Mr Dorian Gray is in the studio, sir,’ he said to Hallward.

‘Thank you. Ask him to wait for a moment,’ answered Hallward.

‘I must meet him!’ said Lord Henry.

‘Dorian Gray is my best friend,’ said Hallward. ‘You’re a bad influence, don’t take away my friend.’

treat behave towards something in a certain way
tire become bored with

emotion strong feeling
butler the man who’s head of all the people who look after a person’s house



They went into the house together.

Dorian Gray was at the piano. He caught sight of Lord Henry.

‘I’m sorry, Basil. I didn’t know you had company,’ he said.

‘Pleased to meet you, Mr Gray,’ said Lord Henry. ‘You’re a favourite of my aunt, Lady Agatha.’

Lord Henry thought Dorian Gray was very handsome.

Hallward was worried. ‘Henry,’ he said, ‘I’m sorry to be rude, but I must work. Could you leave us?’

‘Must I go?’ Lord Henry asked Dorian.

‘Oh no,’ said Dorian.

‘Can I stay?’ Lord Henry asked Hallward.

‘If Dorian wants,’ replied Hallward. ‘Dorian, Lord Henry is a bad influence.’

‘Are you really?’ asked Dorian.

‘All influence is immoral*,’ said Lord Henry. ‘If you influence a person, he doesn’t think his natural thoughts. People are afraid of themselves. Fear of society, or morals*, and fear of God, or religion, govern* us.’

Hallward saw a new expression* on Dorian’s face.

‘We must have the courage to be ourselves,’ continued Lord Henry.

Dorian stood in silence. His eyes were bright. He felt something new inside himself. Sometimes music disturbed him like that, but this was different. Words! So clear, so vivid*, so cruel!

Lord Henry watched, fascinated*. Hallward painted in silence.

‘I’m tired of standing!’ said Dorian suddenly. ‘I want to go into the garden.’

immoral bad, wrong

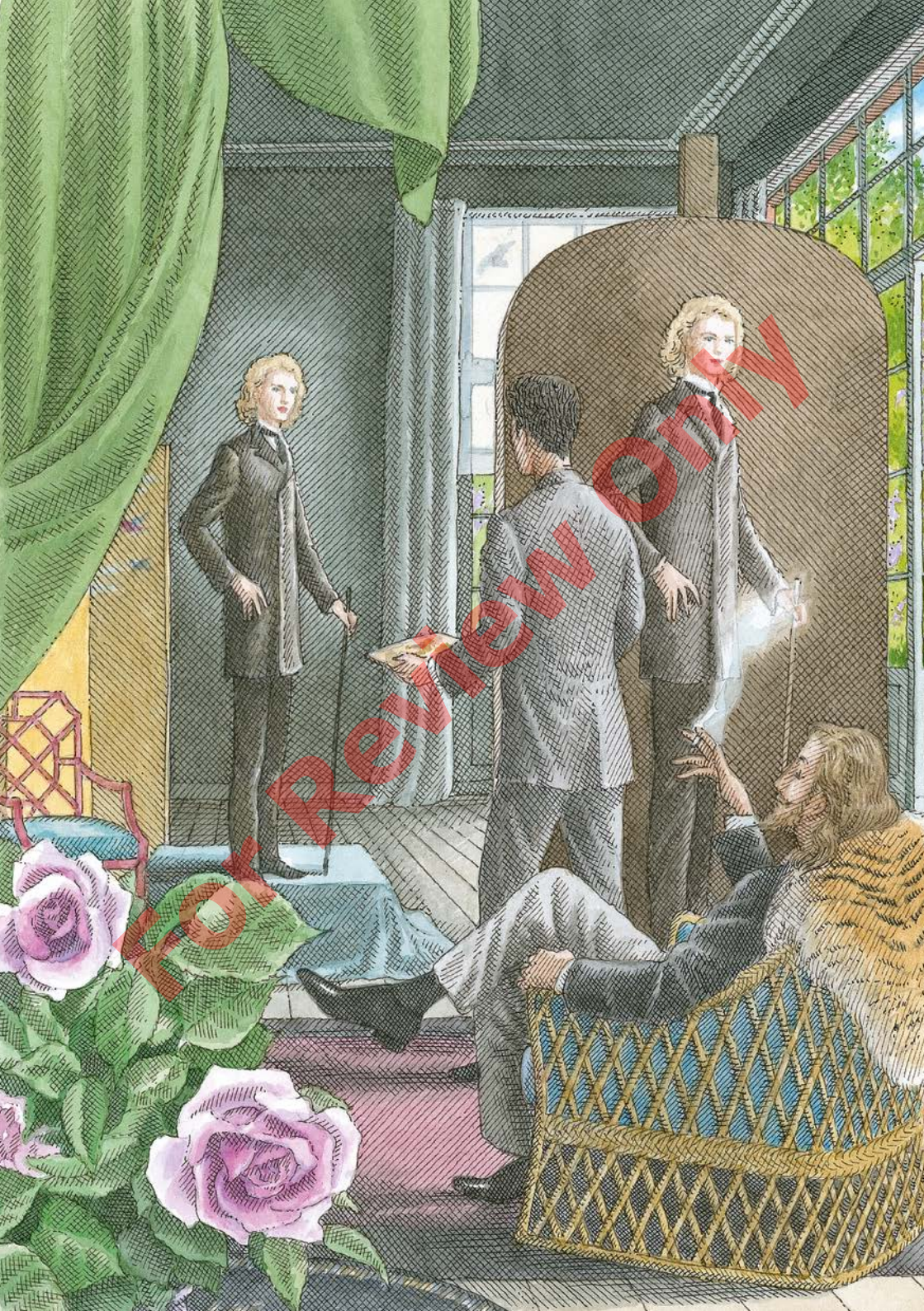
morals how people think they should behave, what they believe is right or wrong

govern control

expression when what your face looks like shows what you’re feeling

vivid that gives you a strong feeling

fascinated strongly attracted and interested



‘I’ll come with you,’ said Lord Henry.

Dorian was fascinated by Lord Henry. Much more than by Basil Hallward. Why was he frightened?

‘Only the senses cure the soul,’ said Lord Henry, ‘only the soul cures the senses. Don’t sit in the sun. You’ll get sunburnt*. You have youth and beauty, they’re important. You smile? One day you won’t smile. People love you because you’re beautiful. One day you’ll lose that, you’ll become ugly. Then you’ll suffer horribly. Live! Live now! The world is yours for a season. You don’t realise that, you don’t understand. There’s absolutely nothing in the world but youth!’

Dorian listened. He felt a new emotion.

Basil Hallward called them from the door. Dorian and Lord Henry went into the studio. Hallward painted for about fifteen minutes. Then he stopped. He looked at Dorian for a long time, then he looked at the painting for a long time.

‘It’s finished,’ he said.

‘Really?’ asked Dorian. He looked at the painting. His eyes filled with joy*. He didn’t move. For the first time, he saw his beauty. He never really believed Basil Hallward’s compliments*, but Lord Henry’s words about youth were disturbing. And now he realised they were true.

‘I’ll be ugly, hideous*,’ he thought and tears filled his eyes.

‘Don’t you like it?’ asked Hallward.

‘It’s sad,’ said Dorian. ‘I’ll grow old and horrible but this painting will stay young. If only I could stay young forever and the painting grow old, not me. I’d give my soul for that!’

sunburnt (adj) describes people who turn red when burned by the sun
joy great pleasure and happiness

compliment something nice you say to show you admire someone
hideous terrible, awful

The Picture of Dorian Gray

'I object*!' answered Hallward.

Dorian looked at him. 'You like your painting more than your friends!' he said.

Hallward was amazed. Dorian seemed quite angry.

'How long will you like me?' asked Dorian. 'Till I have my first wrinkle* I suppose. When I start to grow old, I'll kill myself!'

'Dorian, don't talk like that,' cried Hallward. 'I've never had such a friend as you!'

'I'm jealous of everything whose beauty doesn't die,' said Dorian.

'You've made me hate my finest piece of work,' said Hallward. 'I'll destroy it.' He took a knife. Dorian ran to him and took it.

'Don't, Basil!' he shouted. 'It's murder! I'm in love with the painting.'

'It's yours,' said Hallward coldly. 'Would you like tea?'

'Yes,' said Lord Henry, 'and let me have the painting too.'

'No!' cried Dorian. 'It's mine!'

The butler entered with the tea.

'Let's go to the theatre tonight,' said Lord Henry.

'I must work this evening,' said Hallward. 'Stay for dinner, Dorian.'

'No,' said Dorian, 'I want to go to the theatre with Lord Henry.'

Hallward walked to the painting. 'I'll stay with the real Dorian,' he said sadly. 'Lord Henry, remember what I said in the garden this morning.'

Lord Henry laughed. 'I've forgotten it. Good bye, Basil. Come Mr Gray, my carriage* is outside, I can take you home.' He and Dorian left.

As the door closed behind them, the painter threw himself onto the sofa, and a look of pain came into his eyes.

object disagree

wrinkle a line on your skin that comes with age

carriage



Reading

1 Look at the descriptions below from Chapter One and say if each one describes Basil Hallward, Lord Henry Wotton or Dorian Gray.

- 1 He's beautiful.
- 2 He has an intellectual face.
- 3 His enemies respect him.
- 4 He plays the piano.
- 5 His emotions were more interesting than an invitation to lunch.
.....
- 6 He's a bad influence.
- 7 His eyes were bright.
- 8 He was amazed.
- 9 He seemed quite angry.
- 10 A look of pain came into his eyes.

2 Read the questions and choose the correct answer.

- 1 Where's the portrait of the beautiful young man?
☐ **A** In the garden.
☐ **B** To the left of the studio.
☐ **C** In the centre of the studio.
- 2 Why does Basil Hallward refuse to show the painting?
☐ **A** It has no soul.
☐ **B** It shows too much of Basil's soul.
☐ **C** It shows too much of Dorian's soul.
- 3 How does Basil paint after meeting Dorian?
☐ **A** In a new way.
☐ **B** Every day.
☐ **C** With great soul.
- 4 Where did Lord Henry first hear Dorian Gray's name?
☐ **A** From Basil.
☐ **B** From the butler.
☐ **C** From his Aunt Agatha.

Grammar

3 Complete the sentences about Chapter One with the past simple of the verbs in the box.

sit - be - meet - lie - find - not want - see - know - think - feel

- 1 Lord Henry Wotton smoking.
- 2 Basil Lord Henry to know Dorian's name.
- 3 Lord Henry said he nothing about his wife.
- 4 The two men in the shade in the garden.
- 5 Basil Dorian at a party.
- 6 Lord Henry Basil's emotions very interesting.
- 7 Lord Henry Dorian was very handsome.
- 8 Basil a new expression on Dorian's face.
- 9 Dorian something new inside himself.
- 10 Dorian fascinated by Lord Henry.

Writing

4 Write a dialogue between Dorian Gray and Lord Henry Wotton where the two men arrange to meet to go to the theatre. Remember to include where, at what time, how to arrive (on foot or by carriage?).

.....
.....
.....
.....

5 Expand the notes to write a short summary of Chapter One. The first sentence is completed as an example.

Lord Henry Wotton / go / Basil Hallward / studio.

Lord Henry Wotton went to Basil Hallward's studio.

Hallward / be / famous artist. Two men / speak / new friend of Hallward's.
Lord Henry / want / meet. They / sit / garden and when / they / go / house,
Lord Henry / meet / Dorian. Dorian and Lord Henry / speak / garden.
Lord Henry / say / Dorian / 'you / become old and ugly.' Hallward / finish /
painting. First / Dorian / be / happy / then / he / be / angry.
He / want / stay young and beautiful. He / offer / soul / exchange / for
eternal youth and beauty. He / want / painting / to grow old.