

Drama, Writing, and Speech

Assignment 3

1. Read Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest*. There is no study guide material for the play, but I will quiz you on the details in class. If you do not have the play, you can find it on the assignment page under "Materials Needed." Oscar Wilde is pictured on the right.



2. We have spent a lot of class time talking about *Our Town* and the various themes and dramatic techniques it contains. Choose a theme or dramatic technique to write about from your study guide questions or class discussion and write a very basic 5-point outline, which will include a thesis statement, three supporting points, and a concluding statement. For example, you may discuss the theme of the specialness of the ordinary; the brevity of life; how death informs us how to live; etc. You may also talk dramatic techniques, such as using an omniscient Stage Manager that breaks the fourth wall; the "telescoping effect"; the use of nature in the poetry; the commonplace dialog; and the minimalist stage. If you choose a theme, talk about what techniques Wilder uses to express it. If you choose a dramatic technique, discuss in full the effects created by the technique.
3. Start working on your one-act play featuring a family.

Long-Term Assignments

- Your Thornton Wilder essay will be due the **second Friday in October**.
- Your play will be due right before the winter break.
- Remember to plan for **Friday night, the third week in November**, as we watch a production of the play. Please let me know whether you can come or not. Feel welcome to bring desserts or savory foods (if you wish) and name them to indicate themes or any other aspects of the play. I personally will be baking something. Also, we will have a little "charade" of sorts that we will be playing on that Friday—details forthcoming.