

The Importance Of Being Earnest Sparknotes



The Importance of Being Earnest SparkNotes: A Comprehensive Guide

Are you facing a mountain of homework, desperately needing a concise and insightful understanding of Oscar Wilde's witty masterpiece, *The Importance of Being Earnest*? Look no further! This

comprehensive guide offers a thorough SparkNotes-style breakdown of the play, covering its key themes, characters, and comedic brilliance. We'll delve into the complexities of Victorian society, explore the satire embedded within the narrative, and provide you with the essential information you need to ace your next essay or simply appreciate this enduring comedic classic. Get ready to unlock the secrets of Bunburyism and the importance of being – well, earnest (or not!).

H2: A Quick Synopsis: The Lies We Tell (and Why)

The Importance of Being Earnest follows two charming young men, Jack Worthing and Algernon Moncrieff, who both lead double lives. Jack, a responsible guardian to his ward Cecily Cardew in the country, invents a fictitious “wicked” brother, Ernest, to escape his duties and pursue Gwendolen Fairfax in London. Algernon, meanwhile, invents a sickly friend named Bunbury to excuse himself from unwanted social obligations. Their elaborate deceptions intertwine hilariously as both men fall in love with women who, unbeknownst to them, are connected in unexpected ways. The play culminates in a series of witty misunderstandings and revelations, culminating in surprising marriages and the unveiling of long-hidden secrets.

H2: Key Characters and Their Roles

Understanding the characters is crucial to grasping the play's humor and social commentary.

H3: Jack Worthing (Ernest Worthing): The Responsible Rebel

Jack, the seemingly upstanding guardian, embodies a duality – the responsible gentleman in the country and the charming “Ernest” in the city. His invention of Ernest reveals his desire for freedom and a life unburdened by responsibility. His earnestness, ironically, masks a deeper desire for love and acceptance.

H3: Algernon Moncrieff: The Cynical Playboy

Algernon is the epitome of the witty, cynical dandy. His creation of Bunbury highlights the societal pressure to conform and his rebellion against its constraints through calculated leisure. His intelligence and sharp wit serve as a foil to Jack's more earnest (though equally deceptive) nature.

H3: Gwendolen Fairfax: The Determined Romantic

Gwendolen is a captivating woman obsessed with the name "Ernest." Her unwavering conviction showcases the power of societal expectations and the superficiality of Victorian romantic ideals. She is driven by her desire for a husband named Ernest, regardless of his character.

H3: Cecily Cardew: The Ingenious Country Cousin

Cecily, Jack's ward, mirrors Gwendolen's romantic ideals but with a dash of playful mischief. She,

too, desires an "Ernest," showcasing the play's theme of the power of names and social expectations. Her intelligence and wit allow her to participate in and even orchestrate the play's farcical events.

H3: Lady Bracknell: The Gatekeeper of Society

Lady Bracknell, Gwendolen's formidable mother, is a figure of authority who embodies the rigid social norms of Victorian society. Her sharp wit and judgment are directed at those who fail to meet her exacting standards, serving as a powerful satirical representation of societal snobbery.

H2: Unpacking Wilde's Wit: Themes and Satire

The Importance of Being Earnest isn't just a farce; it's a brilliant satire of Victorian society. Wilde masterfully employs wit and irony to critique the superficiality, hypocrisy, and rigid social structures of the era.

H3: The Importance (or Lack Thereof) of Earnestness

The play's title is itself ironic. The characters' pursuit of "earnestness" is ultimately revealed as a facade, a performance designed to fit into societal expectations. True earnestness is less important than the clever pursuit of love and happiness, even if that pursuit involves deception.

H3: Marriage and Social Expectations

Marriage is presented as a social contract governed by appearances and wealth. Lady Bracknell's interrogation of Jack highlights the absurd lengths to which Victorian society went to uphold its standards. The play subverts these expectations by showcasing the triumph of love (however unconventional).

H3: Identity and Deception

The central theme revolves around the constructed nature of identity. The characters' deceptions expose the hypocrisy of a society that values appearances over authenticity. The play questions the very notion of a fixed identity, suggesting that it's fluid and changeable.

H2: Why The Importance of Being Earnest Still Matters

Despite its Victorian setting, the play's themes of love, identity, and social critique remain remarkably relevant today. Wilde's wit and insightful satire continue to resonate with audiences, reminding us of the enduring power of human folly and the importance of questioning societal norms. The play's enduring popularity is a testament to its timeless appeal and enduring comedic genius.

Conclusion

The Importance of Being Earnest is more than just a lighthearted comedy; it's a sharp social commentary wrapped in brilliant wit. By understanding its characters, themes, and satirical targets, you can appreciate its enduring significance and enjoy the delightful chaos of its comedic genius. This SparkNotes-style guide provides the essential insights needed to fully grasp Wilde's masterpiece, whether for academic purposes or simply for the sheer pleasure of reading a truly great play.

FAQs

1. What is Bunburyism? Bunburyism is a term coined in the play, referring to the practice of inventing a fictitious invalid friend to escape unwanted social obligations. It represents a rebellion against societal expectations and the constraints of Victorian life.
2. What is the significance of the name "Ernest"? The name "Ernest" is central to the plot, representing a desirable and socially acceptable identity. Both Jack and Algernon adopt the name to pursue romantic interests, highlighting the importance of appearances in Victorian society.
3. How does the play satirize Victorian society? Wilde satirizes Victorian society by exposing its hypocrisy, superficiality, and rigid social structures through exaggerated characters and farcical situations. The play's witty dialogue underscores the absurdity of societal norms.
4. What is the significance of Lady Bracknell's role? Lady Bracknell embodies the rigid social norms of Victorian society and acts as a gatekeeper, judging prospective partners based on superficial criteria. She is a powerful satirical figure, representing the absurdity of societal expectations.
5. What is the overall message of the play? The overall message is complex, but it suggests the fluidity of identity, the absurdity of societal expectations, and the triumph of love (even if it involves a little deception). The play ultimately celebrates wit, intelligence, and the human capacity for self-invention.

the importance of being earnest sparknotes: The Importance of Being Earnest Oscar Wilde, 2014-08-01 Jack Worthing gets antsy living at his country estate. As an excuse, he spins tales of his rowdy brother Ernest living in London. When Jack rushes to the city to confront his brother, he's free to become Ernest and live a different lifestyle. In London, his best friend, Algernon, begins to suspect Ernest is leading a double life. Ernest confesses that his real name is Jack and admits the ruse has become tricky as two women have become enchanted with the idea of marrying Ernest. On a whim, Algernon also pretends to be Ernest and encounters the two women as they meet at the estate. With two Ernests who aren't really earnest and two women in love with little more than a name, this play is a classic comedy of errors. This is an unabridged version of Oscar Wilde's English play, first published in 1899.

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the importance of being earnest sparknotes: The Importance of Being Earnest Oscar Wilde, 2009-01-01 The Importance of Being Earnest is the last play Oscar Wilde ever wrote, and remains his most enduringly popular. It makes fun of social graces in the late Victorian era. Two seemingly unrelated parties are thrown into ridiculous entanglement when their fake identities, maintained in order to escape social responsibilities, grow ever more complicated to uphold.

the importance of being earnest sparknotes: Fun Home Alison Bechdel, 2007 A fresh and brilliantly told memoir from a cult favorite comic artist, marked by gothic twists, a family funeral home, sexual angst, and great books. This breakout book by Alison Bechdel is a darkly funny family tale, pitch-perfectly illustrated with Bechdel's sweetly gothic drawings. Like Marjane Satrapi's *Persepolis*, it's a story exhilaratingly suited to graphic memoir form. Meet Alison's father, a historic preservation expert and obsessive restorer of the family's Victorian home, a third-generation funeral home director, a high school English teacher, an icily distant parent, and a closeted homosexual who, as it turns out, is involved with his male students and a family babysitter. Through narrative that is alternately heartbreaking and fiercely funny, we are drawn into a daughter's complex yearning for her father. And yet, apart from assigned stints dusting caskets at the family-owned fun home, as Alison and her brothers call it, the relationship achieves its most intimate expression through the shared code of books. When Alison comes out as homosexual herself in late adolescence, the denouement is swift, graphic -- and redemptive.

the importance of being earnest sparknotes: Girl in Pieces Kathleen Glasgow, 2018-04-10 #1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER A haunting, beautiful, and necessary book.—Nicola Yoon, #1 New York Times bestselling author of *Everything, Everything* Charlotte Davis is in pieces. At seventeen she's already lost more than most people do in a lifetime. But she's learned how to forget. The broken glass washes away the sorrow until there is nothing but calm. You don't have to think about your father and the river. Your best friend, who is gone forever. Or your mother, who has nothing left to give you. Every new scar hardens Charlie's heart just a little more, yet it still hurts so much. It hurts enough to not care anymore, which is sometimes what has to happen before you can find your way back from the edge. A deeply moving portrait of a girl in a world that owes her nothing, and has taken so much, and the journey she undergoes to put herself back together. Kathleen Glasgow's debut is heartbreakingly real and unflinchingly honest. It's a story you won't be able to look away from. And don't miss Kathleen Glasgow's novels *You'd Be Home Now* and *How to Make Friends with the Dark*, both raw and powerful stories of life.

the importance of being earnest sparknotes: Travesties Tom Stoppard, 1975 Satire on politics, literature and art. James Joyce, Lenin, and Dadaist Tristan Tzara come together in the memories of an obscure English diplomat (Henry Wilfred Carr) in Zürich. (Song and dance routines. Prologue, 2 acts, 5 men, 3 women, 2 interiors).

the importance of being earnest sparknotes: Lady Windermere's Fan Oscar Wilde, 1893 Lady Windermere's Fan, A Play About a Good Woman is a four-act comedy by Oscar Wilde, first produced 22 February 1892 at the St James's Theatre in London. The play was first published in 1893. Like many of Wilde's comedies, it bitinglly satirizes the morals of society. The story concerns Lady Windermere, who suspects that her husband is having an affair with another woman. She confronts him with it but although he denies it, he invites the other woman, Mrs Erlynne, to his wife's birthday ball. Angered by her husband's supposed unfaithfulness, Lady Windermere decides to leave her husband for another lover. After discovering what has transpired, Mrs Erlynne follows

Lady Windermere and attempts to persuade her to return to her husband and in the course of this, Mrs Erlynne is discovered in a compromising position. It is then revealed Mrs Erlynne is Lady Windermere's mother, who abandoned her family twenty years before the time the play is set. Mrs Erlynne sacrifices herself and her reputation to save her daughter's marriage. The best known line of the play sums up the central theme.

the importance of being earnest sparknotes: *Sigh, Gone* Phuc Tran, 2020-04-21 For anyone who has ever felt like they don't belong, *Sigh, Gone* shares an irreverent, funny, and moving tale of displacement and assimilation woven together with poignant themes from beloved works of classic literature. In 1975, during the fall of Saigon, Phuc Tran immigrates to America along with his family. By sheer chance they land in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, a small town where the Trans struggle to assimilate into their new life. In this coming-of-age memoir told through the themes of great books such as *The Metamorphosis*, *The Scarlet Letter*, *The Iliad*, and more, Tran navigates the push and pull of finding and accepting himself despite the challenges of immigration, feelings of isolation, and teenage rebellion, all while attempting to meet the rigid expectations set by his immigrant parents. Appealing to fans of coming-of-age memoirs such as *Fresh Off the Boat*, *Running with Scissors*, or tales of assimilation like Viet Thanh Nguyen's *The Displaced* and *The Refugees*, *Sigh, Gone* explores one man's bewildering experiences of abuse, racism, and tragedy and reveals redemption and connection in books and punk rock. Against the hairspray-and-synthesizer backdrop of the '80s, he finds solace and kinship in the wisdom of classic literature, and in the subculture of punk rock, he finds affirmation and echoes of his disaffection. In his journey for self-discovery Tran ultimately finds refuge and inspiration in the art that shapes—and ultimately saves—him.

the importance of being earnest sparknotes: *Utopia* Thomas More, 2019-04-08 *Utopia* is a work of fiction and socio-political satire by Thomas More published in 1516 in Latin. The book is a frame narrative primarily depicting a fictional island society and its religious, social and political customs. Many aspects of More's description of *Utopia* are reminiscent of life in monasteries.

the importance of being earnest sparknotes: *Intentions* Oscar Wilde, 1913

the importance of being earnest sparknotes: *Trifles* Susan Glaspell, 1916

the importance of being earnest sparknotes: *Sexual Personae* Camille Paglia, 1990-09-10 From ancient Egypt through the nineteenth century, *Sexual Personae* explores the provocative connections between art and pagan ritual; between Emily Dickinson and the Marquis de Sade; between Lord Byron and Elvis Presley. It ultimately challenges the cultural assumptions of both conservatives and traditional liberals. 47 photographs.

the importance of being earnest sparknotes: *Krik? Krak!* Edwidge Danticat, 2004-01-01 Arriving one year after the Haitian-American's first novel (*Breath, Eyes, Memory*) alerted critics to her compelling voice, these 10 stories, some of which have appeared in small literary journals, confirm Danticat's reputation as a remarkably gifted writer. Examining the lives of ordinary Haitians, particularly those struggling to survive under the brutal Duvalier regime, Danticat illuminates the distance between people's desires and the stifling reality of their lives. A profound mix of Catholicism and voodoo spirituality informs the tales, bestowing a mythic importance on people described in the opening story, *Children of the Sea*, as those in this world whose names don't matter to anyone but themselves. The ceaseless grip of dictatorship often leads men to emotionally abandon their families, like the husband in *A Wall of Fire Rising*, who dreams of escaping in a neighbor's hot-air balloon. The women exhibit more resilience, largely because of their insistence on finding meaning and solidarity through storytelling; but Danticat portrays these bonds with an honesty that shows that sisterhood, too, has its power plays. In the book's final piece, *Epilogue: Women Like Us*, she writes: Are there women who both cook and write? Kitchen poets, they call them. They slip phrases into their stew and wrap meaning around their pork before frying it. They make narrative dumplings and stuff their daughter's mouths so they say nothing more. The stories inform and enrich one another, as the female characters reveal a common ancestry and ties to the fictional Ville Rose. In addition to the power of Danticat's themes, the book is enhanced by an element of suspense (we're never certain, for example, if a rickety boat packed with refugees

introduced in the first tale will reach the Florida coast). Spare, elegant and moving, these stories cohere into a superb collection.

the importance of being earnest sparknotes: Killers of the Flower Moon David Grann, 2018-04-03 #1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • A twisting, haunting true-life murder mystery about one of the most monstrous crimes in American history, from the author of *The Wager* and *The Lost City of Z*, “one of the preeminent adventure and true-crime writers working today.”—*New York Magazine* • NATIONAL BOOK AWARD FINALIST • NOW A MARTIN SCORSESE PICTURE “A shocking whodunit...What more could fans of true-crime thrillers ask?”—*USA Today* “A masterful work of literary journalism crafted with the urgency of a mystery.” —*The Boston Globe* In the 1920s, the richest people per capita in the world were members of the Osage Nation in Oklahoma. After oil was discovered beneath their land, the Osage rode in chauffeured automobiles, built mansions, and sent their children to study in Europe. Then, one by one, the Osage began to be killed off. The family of an Osage woman, Mollie Burkhart, became a prime target. One of her relatives was shot. Another was poisoned. And it was just the beginning, as more and more Osage were dying under mysterious circumstances, and many of those who dared to investigate the killings were themselves murdered. As the death toll rose, the newly created FBI took up the case, and the young director, J. Edgar Hoover, turned to a former Texas Ranger named Tom White to try to unravel the mystery. White put together an undercover team, including a Native American agent who infiltrated the region, and together with the Osage began to expose one of the most chilling conspiracies in American history. Look for David Grann’s latest bestselling book, *The Wager*!

the importance of being earnest sparknotes: The Circle Dave Eggers, 2013-10-08 INTERNATIONAL BESTSELLER • A bestselling dystopian novel that tackles surveillance, privacy and the frightening intrusions of technology in our lives—a “compulsively readable parable for the 21st century” (*Vanity Fair*). When Mae Holland is hired to work for the Circle, the world’s most powerful internet company, she feels she’s been given the opportunity of a lifetime. The Circle, run out of a sprawling California campus, links users’ personal emails, social media, banking, and purchasing with their universal operating system, resulting in one online identity and a new age of civility and transparency. As Mae tours the open-plan office spaces, the towering glass dining facilities, the cozy dorms for those who spend nights at work, she is thrilled with the company’s modernity and activity. There are parties that last through the night, there are famous musicians playing on the lawn, there are athletic activities and clubs and brunches, and even an aquarium of rare fish retrieved from the Marianas Trench by the CEO. Mae can’t believe her luck, her great fortune to work for the most influential company in the world—even as life beyond the campus grows distant, even as a strange encounter with a colleague leaves her shaken, even as her role at the Circle becomes increasingly public. What begins as the captivating story of one woman’s ambition and idealism soon becomes a heart-racing novel of suspense, raising questions about memory, history, privacy, democracy, and the limits of human knowledge.

the importance of being earnest sparknotes: That Will Never Work Marc Randolph, 2019-09-17 In the tradition of Phil Knight's *Shoe Dog* comes the incredible untold story of how Netflix went from concept to company—all revealed by co-founder and first CEO Marc Randolph. Once upon a time, brick-and-mortar video stores were king. Late fees were ubiquitous, video-streaming unheard of, and widespread DVD adoption seemed about as imminent as flying cars. Indeed, these were the widely accepted laws of the land in 1997, when Marc Randolph had an idea. It was a simple thought—leveraging the internet to rent movies—and was just one of many more and far worse proposals, like personalized baseball bats and a shampoo delivery service, that Randolph would pitch to his business partner, Reed Hastings, on their commute to work each morning. But Hastings was intrigued, and the pair—with Hastings as the primary investor and Randolph as the CEO—founded a company. Now with over 150 million subscribers, Netflix's triumph feels inevitable, but the twenty first century's most disruptive start up began with few believers and calamity at every turn. From having to pitch his own mother on being an early investor, to the motel conference room that served as a first office, to server crashes on launch day, to the now-infamous

meeting when Netflix brass pitched Blockbuster to acquire them, Marc Randolph's transformational journey exemplifies how anyone with grit, gut instincts, and determination can change the world—even with an idea that many think will never work. What emerges, though, isn't just the inside story of one of the world's most iconic companies. Full of counter-intuitive concepts and written in binge-worthy prose, it answers some of our most fundamental questions about taking that leap of faith in business or in life: How do you begin? How do you weather disappointment and failure? How do you deal with success? What even is success? From idea generation to team building to knowing when it's time to let go, *That Will Never Work* is not only the ultimate follow-your-dreams parable, but also one of the most dramatic and insightful entrepreneurial stories of our time.

the importance of being earnest sparknotes: Lying On The Couch Irvin D. Yalom, 2014-03-25 From the bestselling author of *Love's Executioner* and *When Nietzsche Wept* comes a provocative exploration of the unusual relationships three therapists form with their patients. Seymour is a therapist of the old school who blurs the boundary of sexual propriety with one of his clients. Marshal, who is haunted by his own obsessive-compulsive behaviors, is troubled by the role money plays in his dealings with his patients. Finally, there is Ernest Lash. Driven by his sincere desire to help and his faith in psychoanalysis, he invents a radically new approach to therapy -- a totally open and honest relationship with a patient that threatens to have devastating results. Exposing the many lies that are told on and off the psychoanalyst's couch, *Lying on the Couch* gives readers a tantalizing, almost illicit, glimpse at what their therapists might really be thinking during their sessions. Fascinating, engrossing and relentlessly intelligent, it ultimately moves readers with a denouement of surprising humanity and redemptive faith.

the importance of being earnest sparknotes: *Living Your Dying* Stanley Keleman, 1975 This book is about dying, not about death. We are always dying a big, always giving things up, always having things taken away. Is there a person alive who isn't really curious about what dying is for them? Is there a person alive who wouldn't like to go to their dying full of excitement, without fear and without morbidity? This books tells you how. -- Front cover.

the importance of being earnest sparknotes: *The Book of Will* Lauren Gunderson, 2018-06-18 Without William Shakespeare, we wouldn't have literary masterpieces like *Romeo and Juliet*. But without Henry Condell and John Heminges, we would have lost half of Shakespeare's plays forever! After the death of their friend and mentor, the two actors are determined to compile the First Folio and preserve the words that shaped their lives. They'll just have to borrow, beg, and band together to get it done. Amidst the noise and color of Elizabethan London, *THE BOOK OF WILL* finds an unforgettable true story of love, loss, and laughter, and sheds new light on a man you may think you know.

the importance of being earnest sparknotes: Rhythm of War Brandon Sanderson, 2020-11-17 An instant #1 New York Times Bestseller and a USA Today and Indie Bestseller! The Stormlight Archive saga continues in *Rhythm of War*, the eagerly awaited sequel to Brandon Sanderson's #1 New York Times bestselling *Oathbringer*, from an epic fantasy writer at the top of his game. After forming a coalition of human resistance against the enemy invasion, Dalinar Kholin and his Knights Radiant have spent a year fighting a protracted, brutal war. Neither side has gained an advantage, and the threat of a betrayal by Dalinar's crafty ally Taravangian looms over every strategic move. Now, as new technological discoveries by Navani Kholin's scholars begin to change the face of the war, the enemy prepares a bold and dangerous operation. The arms race that follows will challenge the very core of the Radiant ideals, and potentially reveal the secrets of the ancient tower that was once the heart of their strength. At the same time that Kaladin Stormblessed must come to grips with his changing role within the Knights Radiant, his Windrunners face their own problem: As more and more deadly enemy Fused awaken to wage war, no more honorspren are willing to bond with humans to increase the number of Radiants. Adolin and Shallan must lead the coalition's envoy to the honorspren stronghold of Lasting Integrity and either convince the spren to join the cause against the evil god Odium, or personally face the storm of failure. Other Tor books by Brandon Sanderson *The Cosmere* *The Stormlight Archive* ● *The Way of Kings* ● *Words of Radiance*

● Edgedancer (novella) ● Oathbringer ● Dawnshard (novella) ● Rhythm of War The Mistborn Saga The Original Trilogy ● Mistborn ● The Well of Ascension ● The Hero of Ages Wax and Wayne ● The Alloy of Law ● Shadows of Self ● The Bands of Mourning ● The Lost Metal Other Cosmere novels ● Elantris ● Warbreaker ● Tress of the Emerald Sea ● Yumi and the Nightmare Painter ● The Sunlit Man Collection ● Arcanum Unbounded: The Cosmere Collection The Alcatraz vs. the Evil Librarians series ● Alcatraz vs. the Evil Librarians ● The Scrivener's Bones ● The Knights of Crystallia ● The Shattered Lens ● The Dark Talent ● Bastille vs. the Evil Librarians (with Janci Patterson) Other novels ● The Rithmatist ● Legion: The Many Lives of Stephen Leeds ● The Frugal Wizard's Handbook for Surviving Medieval England Other books by Brandon Sanderson The Reckoners ● Steelheart ● Firefight ● Calamity Skyward ● Skyward ● Starsight ● Cytonic ● Skyward Flight (with Janci Patterson) ● Defiant At the Publisher's request, this title is being sold without Digital Rights Management Software (DRM) applied.

the importance of being earnest sparknotes: *The Milkweed Ladies* Louise McNeill, 1988-08-19 *The Milkweed Ladies*, the memoirs of poet Louise McNeill, is written out of deep affection for and intimate knowledge of the lives of rural people and the rhythms of the natural world. It is a personal account of the farm in southern West Virginia where her family has lived for nine generations. Born in 1911, McNeill tells the story of her own growing years on the farm through the circadian rhythms of rural life. She presents the farm itself, its level fields, its fence row, and hilly pastures . . . some two hundred acres of trees and bluegrass, running water, and the winding, dusty paths that cattle and humans have kept open through the years. She writes movingly of the harsh routines of the lives of her family, from spring ploughing to winter sugaring, and of the hold the farm itself has on them and the earth itself on all of us. By the 1930s, the farm and the surrounding community had been drastically changed by the destruction left by the lumber companies, by the increased access to the outside world resulting from railway and automobile, and by war. McNeill herself left the farm in 1937 to complete her college education and to pursue her literary career. Throughout *The Milkweed Ladies*, McNeill juxtaposes the life of the farm with the larger world events that impinge on it. But the larger world moves closer and closer to the world of the farm as McNeill herself moves away from it. The book concludes with McNeill's perspective on the events of August 5, 1945. As she sits in the Commodore Hotel in New York City, reading the headlines about Hiroshima, she understands that she can never see the farm in the same way again. *The Milkweed Ladies* is filled with memorable characters - an herb-gathering Granny, McNeill's sailor father, her patient, flower-loving mother, and Aunt Malindy in her black sateen dress who never did a lick of work. With her poet's gift for detail and language, McNeill creates a world, forgotten by many of us, to some of us never known.

the importance of being earnest sparknotes: *The Refugees* Viet Thanh Nguyen, 2017-02-07 "Beautiful and heartrending" fiction set in Vietnam and America from the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *The Sympathizer* (Joyce Carol Oates, *The New Yorker*) In these powerful stories, written over a period of twenty years and set in both Vietnam and America, Viet Thanh Nguyen paints a vivid portrait of the experiences of people leading lives between two worlds, the adopted homeland and the country of birth. This incisive collection by the National Book Award finalist and celebrated author of *The Committed* gives voice to the hopes and expectations of people making life-changing decisions to leave one country for another, and the rifts in identity, loyalties, romantic relationships, and family that accompany relocation. From a young Vietnamese refugee who suffers profound culture shock when he comes to live with two gay men in San Francisco, to a woman whose husband is suffering from dementia and starts to confuse her with a former lover, to a girl living in Ho Chi Minh City whose older half-sister comes back from America having seemingly accomplished everything she never will, the stories are a captivating testament to the dreams and hardships of migration. "Terrific." —Chicago Tribune "An important and incisive book." —The Washington Post "An urgent, wonderful collection." —NPR

the importance of being earnest sparknotes: *The Fifth Risk: Undoing Democracy* Michael Lewis, 2018-10-02 *The New York Times* Bestseller, with a new afterword [Michael Lewis's]

most ambitious and important book. —Joe Klein, New York Times Michael Lewis's brilliant narrative of the Trump administration's botched presidential transition takes us into the engine rooms of a government under attack by its leaders through willful ignorance and greed. The government manages a vast array of critical services that keep us safe and underpin our lives from ensuring the safety of our food and drugs and predicting extreme weather events to tracking and locating black market uranium before the terrorists do. The Fifth Risk masterfully and vividly unspools the consequences if the people given control over our government have no idea how it works.

the importance of being earnest sparknotes: Ghost Boys Jewell Parker Rhodes, 2018-04-17 A heartbreaking and powerful story about a black boy killed by a police officer, drawing connections through history, from award-winning author Jewell Parker Rhodes. Only the living can make the world better. Live and make it better. Twelve-year-old Jerome is shot by a police officer who mistakes his toy gun for a real threat. As a ghost, he observes the devastation that's been unleashed on his family and community in the wake of what they see as an unjust and brutal killing. Soon Jerome meets another ghost: Emmett Till, a boy from a very different time but similar circumstances. Emmett helps Jerome process what has happened, on a journey towards recognizing how historical racism may have led to the events that ended his life. Jerome also meets Sarah, the daughter of the police officer, who grapples with her father's actions. Once again Jewell Parker Rhodes deftly weaves historical and socio-political layers into a gripping and poignant story about how children and families face the complexities of today's world, and how one boy grows to understand American blackness in the aftermath of his own death.

the importance of being earnest sparknotes: *How to Have Impossible Conversations* Peter Boghossian, James Lindsay, 2019-09-17 From politics and religion to workplace negotiations, ace the high-stakes conversations in your life with this indispensable guide from a persuasion expert. In our current political climate, it seems impossible to have a reasonable conversation with anyone who has a different opinion. Whether you're online, in a classroom, an office, a town hall—or just hoping to get through a family dinner with a stubborn relative—dialogue shuts down when perspectives clash. Heated debates often lead to insults and shaming, blocking any possibility of productive discourse. Everyone seems to be on a hair trigger. In *How to Have Impossible Conversations*, Peter Boghossian and James Lindsay guide you through the straightforward, practical, conversational techniques necessary for every successful conversation—whether the issue is climate change, religious faith, gender identity, race, poverty, immigration, or gun control. Boghossian and Lindsay teach the subtle art of instilling doubts and opening minds. They cover everything from learning the fundamentals for good conversations to achieving expert-level techniques to deal with hardliners and extremists. This book is the manual everyone needs to foster a climate of civility, connection, and empathy. This is a self-help book on how to argue effectively, conciliate, and gently persuade. The authors admit to getting it wrong in their own past conversations. One by one, I recognize the same mistakes in me. The world would be a better place if everyone read this book. —Richard Dawkins, author of *Science in the Soul* and *Outgrowing God*

the importance of being earnest sparknotes: *All But My Life* Gerda Weissmann Klein, 1995-03-31 *All But My Life* is the unforgettable story of Gerda Weissmann Klein's six-year ordeal as a victim of Nazi cruelty. From her comfortable home in Bielitz (present-day Bielsko) in Poland to her miraculous survival and her liberation by American troops—including the man who was to become her husband—in Volary, Czechoslovakia, in 1945, Gerda takes the reader on a terrifying journey. Gerda's serene and idyllic childhood is shattered when Nazis march into Poland on September 3, 1939. Although the Weissmanns were permitted to live for a while in the basement of their home, they were eventually separated and sent to German labor camps. Over the next few years Gerda experienced the slow, inexorable stripping away of all but her life. By the end of the war she had lost her parents, brother, home, possessions, and community; even the dear friends she made in the labor camps, with whom she had shared so many hardships, were dead. Despite her horrifying experiences, Klein conveys great strength of spirit and faith in humanity. In the darkness of the camps, Gerda and her young friends manage to create a community of friendship and love. Although

stripped of the essence of life, they were able to survive the barbarity of their captors. Gerda's beautifully written story gives an invaluable message to everyone. It introduces them to last century's terrible history of devastation and prejudice, yet offers them hope that the effects of hatred can be overcome.

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the importance of being earnest sparknotes: *A Farewell to Arms* Ernest Hemingway, 2025-01-01T00:00:00Z "A Farewell to Arms" is Hemingway's classic set during the Italian campaign of World War I. The book, published in 1929, is a first-person account of American Frederic Henry, serving as a Lieutenant (Tenente) in the ambulance corps of the Italian Army. It's about a love affair between the expatriate American Henry and Catherine Barkley against the backdrop of the First World War, cynical soldiers, fighting and the displacement of populations. The publication of "A Farewell to Arms" cemented Hemingway's stature as a modern American writer, became his first best-seller, and is described by biographer Michael Reynolds as the premier American war novel from that debacle World War I.

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the importance of being earnest sparknotes: *Let Your Life Speak* Parker J. Palmer, 2015-06-22 PLEASE NOTE: Some recent copies of *Let Your Life Speak* included printing errors. These issues have been corrected, but if you purchased a defective copy between September and December 2019, please send proof of purchase to josseybaseducation@wiley.com to receive a replacement copy. Dear Friends: I'm sorry that after 20 years of happy traveling, *Let Your Life Speak* hit a big pothole involving printing errors that resulted in an unreadable book. But I'm very grateful to my publisher for moving quickly to see that people who received a defective copy have a way to receive a good copy without going through the return process. We're all doing everything we can to make things right, and I'm grateful for your patience. Thank you, Parker J. Palmer With wisdom, compassion, and gentle humor, Parker J. Palmer invites us to listen to the inner teacher and follow its leadings toward a sense of meaning and purpose. Telling stories from his own life and the lives of others who have made a difference, he shares insights gained from darkness and depression as well as fulfillment and joy, illuminating a pathway toward vocation for all who seek the true calling of their lives.

the importance of being earnest sparknotes: *Difference Matters* Brenda J. Allen, 2010-07-19 Allens proven ability and flare for presenting complex and oftentimes sensitive topics in nonthreatening ways carry over in the latest edition of *Difference Matters*. Her down-to-earth analysis of six social identity categories reveals how communication establishes and enacts identity and power dynamics. She provides historical overviews to show how perceptions of gender, race, social class, sexuality, ability, and age have varied throughout time and place. Allen clearly explains pertinent theoretical perspectives and illustrates those and other discussions with real-life experiences (many of which are her own). She also offers practical guidance for how to communicate difference more humanely. While many examples are from organizational contexts, readers from a wide range of backgrounds can relate to them and appreciate their relevance. This eye-opening, vibrant text, suitable for use in a variety of disciplines, motivates readers to think about valuing difference as a positive, enriching feature of society. Interactive elements such as Spotlights on Media, I.D. Checks, Tool Kits, and Reflection Matters questions awaken interest, awareness, and

creative insights for change.

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the importance of being earnest sparknotes: Just Mercy Bryan Stevenson, 2014-10-21 #1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • NOW A MAJOR MOTION PICTURE STARRING MICHAEL B. JORDAN AND JAMIE FOXX • A powerful true story about the potential for mercy to redeem us, and a clarion call to fix our broken system of justice—from one of the most brilliant and influential lawyers of our time. “[Bryan Stevenson’s] dedication to fighting for justice and equality has inspired me and many others and made a lasting impact on our country.”—John Legend NAMED ONE OF THE MOST INFLUENTIAL BOOKS OF THE DECADE BY CNN • Named One of the Best Books of the Year by The New York Times • The Washington Post • The Boston Globe • The Seattle Times • Esquire • Time Bryan Stevenson was a young lawyer when he founded the Equal Justice Initiative, a legal practice dedicated to defending those most desperate and in need: the poor, the wrongly condemned, and women and children trapped in the farthest reaches of our criminal justice system. One of his first cases was that of Walter McMillian, a young man who was sentenced to die for a notorious murder he insisted he didn’t commit. The case drew Bryan into a tangle of conspiracy, political machination, and legal brinksmanship—and transformed his understanding of mercy and justice forever. Just Mercy is at once an unforgettable account of an idealistic, gifted young lawyer’s coming of age, a moving window into the lives of those he has defended, and an inspiring argument for compassion in the pursuit of true justice. Winner of the Carnegie Medal for Excellence in Nonfiction • Winner of the NAACP Image Award for Nonfiction • Winner of a Books for a Better Life Award • Finalist for the Los Angeles Times Book Prize • Finalist for the Kirkus Reviews Prize • An American Library Association Notable Book “Every bit as moving as *To Kill a Mockingbird*, and in some ways more so . . . a searing indictment of American criminal justice and a stirring testament to the salvation that fighting for the vulnerable sometimes yields.”—David Cole, *The New York Review of Books* “Searing, moving . . . Bryan Stevenson may, indeed, be America’s Mandela.”—Nicholas Kristof, *The New York Times* “You don’t have to read too long to start cheering for this man. . . . The message of this book . . . is that evil can be overcome, a difference can be made. Just Mercy will make you upset and it will make you hopeful.”—Ted Conover, *The New York Times Book Review* “Inspiring . . . a work of style, substance and clarity . . . Stevenson is not only a great lawyer, he’s also a gifted writer and storyteller.”—*The Washington Post* “As deeply moving, poignant and powerful a book as has been, and maybe ever can be, written about the death penalty.”—*The Financial Times* “Brilliant.”—*The Philadelphia Inquirer*

the importance of being earnest sparknotes: The Well of Loneliness Radclyffe Hall, 2015-04-24 This early work by Radclyffe Hall was originally published in 1928 and we are now republishing it with a brand new introductory biography. 'The Well of Loneliness' is a novel that follows an upper-class Englishwoman who falls in love with another woman while serving as an ambulance driver in World War I. Marguerite Radclyffe Hall was born on 12th August 1880, in Bournemouth, England. Hall's first novel *The Unlit Lamp* (1924) was a lengthy and grim tale that proved hard to sell. It was only published following the success of the much lighter social comedy *The Forge* (1924), which made the best-seller list of John O'London's Weekly. Hall is a key figure in lesbian literature for her novel *The Well of Loneliness* (1928). This is her only work with overt lesbian themes and tells the story of the life of a masculine lesbian named Stephen Gordon.

the importance of being earnest sparknotes: A Lesson Before Dying Ernest J. Gaines, 2004-01-20 NATIONAL BOOK CRITICS CIRCLE AWARD WINNER • A deep and compassionate novel about a young man who returns to 1940s Cajun country to visit a Black youth on death row for a crime he didn't commit. Together they come to understand the heroism of resisting. An instant

classic. —Chicago Tribune A “majestic, moving novel...an instant classic, a book that will be read, discussed and taught beyond the rest of our lives (Chicago Tribune), from the critically acclaimed author of *A Gathering of Old Men* and *The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman*. *A Lesson Before Dying* reconfirms Ernest J. Gaines's position as an important American writer. —Boston Globe Enormously moving.... Gaines unerringly evokes the place and time about which he writes. —Los Angeles Times “A quietly moving novel [that] takes us back to a place we've been before to impart a lesson for living.” —San Francisco Chronicle

the importance of being earnest sparknotes: *The Swerve* Stephen Greenblatt, 2012 One of the world's most celebrated scholars, Greenblatt has crafted both an innovative work of history and a thrilling story of discovery, in which one manuscript, plucked from a thousand years of neglect, changed the course of human thought and made possible the world as we know it.

the importance of being earnest sparknotes: *April Morning* Howard Fast, 2011-12-13 Howard Fast's bestselling coming-of-age novel about one boy's introduction to the horrors of war amid the brutal first battle of the American Revolution On April 19, 1775, musket shots ring out over Lexington, Massachusetts. As the sun rises over the battlefield, fifteen-year-old Adam Cooper stands among the outmatched patriots, facing a line of British troops. Determined to defend his home and prove his worth to his disapproving father, Cooper is about to embark on the most significant day of his life. The Battle of Lexington and Concord will be the starting point of the American Revolution—and when Cooper becomes a man. Sweeping in scope and masterful in execution, *April Morning* is a classic of American literature and an unforgettable story of one community's fateful struggle for freedom. This ebook features an illustrated biography of Howard Fast including rare photos from the author's estate.

the importance of being earnest sparknotes: *Barking Up the Wrong Tree* Eric Barker, 2017-05-16 Wall Street Journal Bestseller Much of the advice we've been told about achievement is logical, earnest...and downright wrong. In *Barking Up the Wrong Tree*, Eric Barker reveals the extraordinary science behind what actually determines success and most importantly, how anyone can achieve it. You'll learn: • Why valedictorians rarely become millionaires, and how your biggest weakness might actually be your greatest strength • Whether nice guys finish last and why the best lessons about cooperation come from gang members, pirates, and serial killers • Why trying to increase confidence fails and how Buddhist philosophy holds a superior solution • The secret ingredient to “grit” that Navy SEALs and disaster survivors leverage to keep going • How to find work-life balance using the strategy of Genghis Khan, the errors of Albert Einstein, and a little lesson from Spider-Man By looking at what separates the extremely successful from the rest of us, we learn what we can do to be more like them—and find out in some cases why it's good that we aren't. *Barking Up the Wrong Tree* draws on startling statistics and surprising anecdotes to help you understand what works and what doesn't so you can stop guessing at success and start living the life you want.

the importance of being earnest sparknotes: *A Discovery of Witches* Deborah Harkness, 2011-02-08 Book one of the New York Times bestselling All Souls series, from the author of *The Black Bird Oracle*. “A wonderfully imaginative grown-up fantasy with all the magic of Harry Potter and Twilight” (People). Look for the hit series “*A Discovery of Witches*,” now streaming on AMC+, Sundance Now, and Shudder! Deborah Harkness's sparkling debut, *A Discovery of Witches*, has brought her into the spotlight and galvanized fans around the world. In this tale of passion and obsession, Diana Bishop, a young scholar and a descendant of witches, discovers a long-lost and enchanted alchemical manuscript, Ashmole 782, deep in Oxford's Bodleian Library. Its reappearance summons a fantastical underworld, which she navigates with her leading man, vampire geneticist Matthew Clairmont. Harkness has created a universe to rival those of Anne Rice, Diana Gabaldon, and Elizabeth Kostova, and she adds a scholar's depth to this riveting tale of magic and suspense. The story continues in book two, *Shadow of Night*, book three, *The Book of Life*, and the fourth in the series, *Time's Convert*.

the importance of being earnest sparknotes: *The Poisonwood Bible* Barbara Kingsolver,

2009-10-13 New York Times Bestseller • Finalist for the Pulitzer Prize • An Oprah's Book Club Selection "Powerful . . . [Kingsolver] has with infinitely steady hands worked the prickly threads of religion, politics, race, sin and redemption into a thing of terrible beauty." —Los Angeles Times Book Review The Poisonwood Bible, now celebrating its 25th anniversary, established Barbara Kingsolver as one of the most thoughtful and daring of modern writers. Taking its place alongside the classic works of postcolonial literature, it is a suspenseful epic of one family's tragic undoing and remarkable reconstruction over the course of three decades in Africa. The story is told by the wife and four daughters of Nathan Price, a fierce, evangelical Baptist who takes his family and mission to the Belgian Congo in 1959. They carry with them everything they believe they will need from home, but soon find that all of it—from garden seeds to Scripture—is calamitously transformed on African soil. The novel is set against one of the most dramatic political chronicles of the twentieth century: the Congo's fight for independence from Belgium, the murder of its first elected prime minister, the CIA coup to install his replacement, and the insidious progress of a world economic order that robs the fledgling African nation of its autonomy. Against this backdrop, Orleanna Price reconstructs the story of her evangelist husband's part in the Western assault on Africa, a tale indelibly darkened by her own losses and unanswerable questions about her own culpability. Also narrating the story, by turns, are her four daughters—the teenaged Rachel; adolescent twins Leah and Adah; and Ruth May, a prescient five-year-old. These sharply observant girls, who arrive in the Congo with racial preconceptions forged in 1950s Georgia, will be marked in surprisingly different ways by their father's intractable mission, and by Africa itself. Ultimately each must strike her own separate path to salvation. Their passionately intertwined stories become a compelling exploration of moral risk and personal responsibility.

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