

level
B1.2

READING ACTIVITY 1/9



THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY

INTRODUCTION

The Picture of Dorian Gray is one of Oscar Wilde's (1854 – 1900) most celebrated works. It was published in 1891 and was immediately attacked by the critics because of its ambiguous morality.

When Dorian Gray, a very handsome young man, sees his portrait he makes a terrible wish: that the portrait will grow older and that he will remain young forever! What will happen to this portrait that no one ever sees? This is the complex story of a man who is willing to sell his soul for eternal youth, while he seeks pleasure and meets several people who will influence his life.

PREDICTION • WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. Are these predictions true (T) or false (F).

1. A portrait can actually grow older.
2. Dorian Gray will grow older.
3. Dorian Gray hides his portrait in a secret place.
4. Dorian Gray seeks pleasure but never grows older.
5. Certain people will have a bad influence on Dorian.
6. No one will ever see the portrait.

<input type="checkbox"/> T	<input type="checkbox"/> F
<input type="checkbox"/> T	<input type="checkbox"/> F
<input type="checkbox"/> T	<input type="checkbox"/> F
<input type="checkbox"/> T	<input type="checkbox"/> F
<input type="checkbox"/> T	<input type="checkbox"/> F
<input type="checkbox"/> T	<input type="checkbox"/> F

Mark your answers and when you finish reading the novel, check them to see if you predicted correctly.





READING ACTIVITY

Part 1 – Read the excerpt and then do the activities below.

Basil Hallward has been painting Dorian's portrait and now it is finished.

Lord Henry examined the picture. It certainly was a wonderful work of art.

'My dear fellow, this is the finest portrait of our times. Mr Gray, come over and look at yourself.'

Dorian looked at the picture and for a moment his cheeks flushed with pleasure. The sense of his own beauty came to him like a revelation. Then he remembered Lord Henry's words about the brevity of youth and beauty. Yes, he would become wrinkled¹ and old, and all the grace would disappear from his figure. He would become ugly. The thought froze his heart.

'Don't you like it?' cried Basil Hallward.

'Of course he likes it,' said Lord Henry. 'It's one of the greatest things in modern art. I'll pay any sum for it. I must have it.'

'It is not my property, Harry.'

'Whose property is it?'

'Dorian's, of course,' answered the painter.

'He's a very lucky fellow.'

'How sad it is!' murmured Dorian Gray, still staring at his portrait. 'I'll grow old and horrible. But this picture will always remain young. If it were only the other way. I wish I could stay young and the picture grow old. I'd give everything for that! I'd give my soul² for that!'

Lord Henry laughed. 'I don't think you'd like it, Basil.'

'No, I wouldn't,' agreed Basil.

'Of course, you like your art better than your friends,' said Dorian. 'How long will you like me? Only while I'm beautiful, I suppose. I'm jealous of the portrait, Basil. Its beauty will never die. Lord Henry is perfectly right. Youth is the most important thing in the world. I'll kill myself when I find that I'm growing old!'

(from Chapter 2)

1 **wrinkled** : with lines on the skin.

2 **soul** : (in religion) the part of the body that does not die; spirit.



READING ACTIVITY

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2. Are the following sentences true (T) or false (F).

1. Lord Henry was very enthusiastic about the portrait. T F
2. Dorian Gray was not pleased with the result of the portrait. T F
3. Lord Henry had told Dorian that his beauty and youth would not last long. T F
4. Lord Henry would like to buy the portrait for any sum of money. T F
5. The portrait belonged to Basil Hallward, the artist. T F
6. Dorian Gray stared at his portrait, saying that it was old and horrible. T F
7. Basil Hallward didn't like Dorian's strange wish. T F
8. Dorian Gray didn't agreed with Lord Henry's words regarding youth. T F

1 t 2 f 3 t 4 t 5 f 6 f 7 t 8 f

QUICK QUIZ!

3. Match the word with its opposite

- | | |
|-------------|-------------|
| 1. pleasure | a. aged |
| 2. beauty | b. lengthy |
| 3. youthful | c. ugliness |
| 4. brief | d. pain |





PART 2

Read the excerpt. Then do the activity below.

Dorian has fallen in love with a young actress called Sibyl, who is also deeply in love with him. However, one evening Sibyl does not perform well on stage at the theatre, and Dorian is very disappointed.

Dorian threw himself on the sofa and said coldly. 'You've killed my love.' She looked at him in wonder and laughed.

'Yes, you've killed my love,' he repeated. 'I loved you because you were marvelous, because you had genius and intellect. you've thrown it all away. you're shallow and stupid. My God! How mad I was to love! What a fool I've been! you're nothing to me now. I'll never see you again. Without your art you're nothing.'

The girl trembled. 'You aren't serious, Dorian?' she murmured. She put her hand on his arm.

'Don't touch me!' he cried.

She threw herself at his feet and lay there like a trampled¹ flower.

'Dorian! Dorian! Don't leave me!' she whispered. 'Can't you forgive me for tonight? I'll work so hard and try to improve. Don't be cruel to me, because I love you better than anything in the world. Oh, don't leave me!'

She crouched² on the floor like a wounded thing and Dorian, with his beautiful eyes, looked down at her in disdain.³ Her tears annoyed him.

'I'm going,' he said in his calm, clear voice. 'I don't want to be unkind, but I can't see you again. You've disappointed me.' He turned around and in a few moments he was out of the theatre.

He walked through dark streets and past dingy houses. At dawn he was near Covent Garden, from where he took a carriage home.

(from Chapter 5)

1 **trampled** : crushed with the feet.

2 **crouched** : bent her knees and lowered her body close to the ground.

3 **disdain** : a feeling of superiority over someone.



READING ACTIVITY
5/9**ODD ONE OUT!****4A. Choose the word that does not belong to the group.**

1. knowledge ignorance intellect genius
2. mad insane crazy calm
3. disdain kindness helpfulness support
4. annoyed bothered delighted disturbed
5. murmured shouted screamed cried
6. shallow profound empty superficial

4B. Now complete the sentences with the odd word.

1. She because she was very weak and upset.
2. Everyone liked the professor's lesson because it was
3. Lord Henry could not tolerate the of the servants who had never gone to school.
4. Dorian showed for the poor young actress.
5. The artist was with his beautiful painting.
6. Dorian's voice was always and clear.



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READING ACTIVITY 6/9



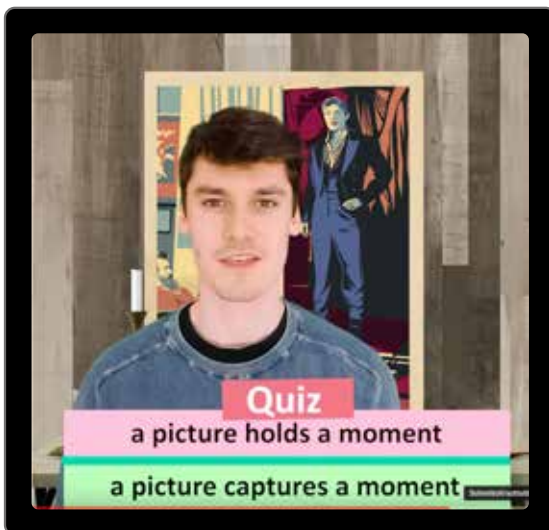
THE STORY OF A WORD: PICTURE

WATCH THE VIDEO (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UrwnxVGws6E>) about the word *picture*, related to Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, then read the text and do the activities.

An old saying says: *a picture is worth a thousand words!* This is very true because a picture can express many things that cannot be put into words. A picture communicates feelings, emotions and ideas that remain in your mind a long time. A picture captures a moment of life and allows you to relive that moment in the future.

When the film industry started in 1910, the word “moving pictures” was used to talk about films, because they were pictures that moved on the screen! Then the word “movies” was born, and we still use it today to talk about films and the cinema. In the United States people say, “We’re going to the movies!”. In the UK, they say, “We’re going to the cinema!”

The word *picture* can be a noun or a verb, because “to picture something/ someone” means to see it, to imagine it, to visualize it.



READING ACTIVITY

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5. Look at these sentences and say if the word *picture* is used as a noun or a verb.

- | | NOUN | VERB |
|---|-------|-------|
| 1. Can you picture Sally getting married to Ted?
..... | | |
| 2. The tourists took pictures of the waterfalls.
..... | | |
| 3. They were pictured riding horses in the forest.
..... | | |
| 4. The artist pictured her with long blonde hair.
..... | | |
| 5. I tried to picture that castle, but I couldn't remember it.
..... | | |
| 6. After talking to him, I got the picture of the situation.
..... | | |

