

Oscar Wilde

Beauty in Literature

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1. Before you read

Match each word (a-f) to the correct definition (1-6).

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|------------------|---|
| a. poem | 1. The story of your life, as told by you |
| b. short story | 2. A long story which is not true |
| c. play | 3. A collection of words that express an idea and which are chosen for their beauty and/or sound |
| d. novel | 4. The story of another person's life, written by a third person |
| e. autobiography | 5. A story that is written for the theatre |
| f. biography | 6. A story that is not true lasts only a few pages. Some books are a collection of these stories. |

2. Read

Do you like beautiful things? Do you like having a good time? Do your friends think you are funny? Yes, yes, yes? Then you have a lot in common with Oscar Wilde. Oscar Wilde was a famous Irish writer. He was born in 1854, in Dublin. His father was a doctor. His mother was a poet. Oscar was very clever and very funny. He lived an exciting life; he wore bright flamboyant clothes and did not follow the rules. He wrote a lot of poems and plays but it was his novel, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, that made Oscar Wilde very famous. The book is about a man who never gets older and never loses his good looks; he has a 'magic' painting of himself that gets older and uglier every year. It is a book that makes the reader question their own values and morals.

Oscar Wilde was a pioneer of the idea that beautiful things can exist just to be beautiful, they don't need a purpose. Oscar and some of his contemporaries believed that art is a form of expression, it doesn't need to send a message or to teach people anything. This was a new way of considering art. It was the first time in history that art was synonymous with freedom of expression.



3. Complete the sentences.

1. Oscar Wilde..... a lot of poems.
2. *The Picture of Dorian Gray* is about a man who never..... older or uglier.
3. Beautiful things don't a reason to exist.
4. Oscar Wilde flamboyant clothes.
5. Hethe rules.

4. Talk to a partner.

Can you define 'beauty'?

What is 'beautiful' for you? Think of a painting, a statue, a place or an object.

Example:

Beauty issubjective. Everyone has their own idea of 'beautiful'. This depends on personal and cultural values.

I think Kandinsky's paintings are beautiful. I like the bold colours.

