

“The Importance of Being Earnest”

On 26th September, as part of Bexley Grammar's Culture Club, a few other peers and I went to the Vaudeville Theatre on the Strand to watch Oscar Wilde's "The Importance of Being Earnest". The play is based on the idea that the main character, John Worthing, is an inventor of a fictitious brother (Earnest), and uses this brother as a disguise to go wherever he pleases, doing whatever he wants without judgement from upper class society on his own person for the sole reason that he can blame it all on his brother.



Having been first performed in 1895 and set in the late Victorian era, one could assume the play to be very dated and unsuitable for an audience of sixth formers in some ways. However, the incredibly witty dialogue and satirical take on such an era makes the play timeless in its comedy, and refreshing in its triviality - it's not meant to be taken seriously, and Wilde pushes this to its extremity, blatantly foreshadowing, throughout, how the play will eventually end.

Having never read any of Wilde's books, or seen any of his plays, I am certain that this was the ideal introduction to Wilde's work, due to the fact that it gives an incredible insight into Wilde's wit, and having been one of his less meaningful of plays, the play is very easy to watch as nothing really is ever on the line. Moreover, the fact that the stakes are so low for the characters increases the comedy, as the dramatic irony of the characters worrying about what they think is everything - and that the audience knows as meaning nothing - emphasises how meaningless Victorian society essentially was, creating in some ways a dark humour that is reconciled delightfully with the obvious but perfect, happy ending that alludes to - again - the frivolity of everything that was taken as sacred. You get an almost fictitious and false feeling of happiness at the end as it all works out so well for everyone, due to the small and reckless mistakes of the characters, meaning that nobody really deserves any of the ending content. But, this isn't a problem; Wilde only wants to show that it doesn't, and that nothing really does, matter. And, for that, it is hilarious.

Theo Taylor, Year 12



Culture club: Much Ado about Nothing!

It has been an eventful year for Culture Club and we have seen such a wide range of shows from Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo to Frankenstein, The Glass Menagerie to Fela! Shakespeare's globe was the destination of our latest Culture Club trip. Having seen such a wide variety of shows, it was, of course, only right that we went to see one of the plays of our most famous playwright. The play was, in my opinion, the best thing we have seen so far, though I do feel like I say this after every show that we see (however, this time, I promise it is true). The reason for my great appreciation for this particular performance is due to the hilarious performance of Beatrice and Benedict. These two characters really carried the play through. The costumes were beautiful and the set for the play transported you into an Old Italian town. The play was a great mix of comedy and suspense and the most memorable part of the play was the hysterical dance routine at the end, that was both quite unexpected and danced miraculously well for a bunch of actors. It was, of course, mandatory that the tallest person in the theatre stood in front of us but we gradually edged forward. Thankfully the weather was perfect and we were all set for a few hours of standing... four hours later and the journey back to the station seemed to have astonishingly doubled. Overall, it was a very enjoyable experience and it was great to see a part of our national heritage. It was another evening well spent!

By Zoë Mills, 12 DMG