



35 you seem to want to throw it away. It is silly of you, for there is only one thing in the world worse than being talked about, and that is not being talked about. A portrait like this would set you far above all the young men in England, and make the old men quite jealous, if old men are ever capable of any emotion.'

40 'I know you will laugh at me,' he replied, 'but I really can't exhibit it. I have put too much of myself into it.'

Lord Henry stretched himself out on the divan and laughed.

COMPREHENSION

2 READ the extract and answer the following questions.

- 1 What elements of the room's furnishings are described?
- 2 What connects the room to the outside?
- 3 What are the characters doing?
- 4 What are they speaking about?

4 FILL IN the table with the words referring to the senses.

Hearing	Touch	Sight	Smell	Taste

What atmosphere is conveyed?

5 LIST the typical elements of Aestheticism you have found in this extract.

ANALYSIS

3 DESCRIBE Lord Henry's attitude.



YOUR TURN

6 DISCUSS in pairs. May the exaggerated cult of beauty of contemporary men in show business be linked to the 19th-century Aesthetic Movement?

WARM-UP

1 LOOK at this statement spoken by Dorian Gray and discuss it with the rest of the class.

'For that – for that – I would give everything!'

Would you be willing to give everything for anyone or anything?

I would give my soul

Oscar Wilde

The Picture of Dorian Gray (1891)

Chapter 2

In the following passage, Lord Henry Wotton meets Dorian Gray, and he finds him to be totally unselfconscious about his beauty. They are both enthralled by the beauty that the painter Basil has captured in the finished portrait of Dorian.



7.6 'Some day, when you are old and wrinkled¹ and ugly, when thought has seared² your forehead with its lines, and passion branded³ your lips with its hideous fires, you will feel it, you will feel it terribly. Now, wherever you go, you charm the world. Will it always be so? ... You have a wonderfully beautiful face, Mr Gray. Don't frown⁴. You have. And beauty is a form of genius – is higher, indeed, than genius, as it needs no explanation. It is of the great facts of the world, like sunlight, or spring-time, or the reflection in dark waters of that silver shell we call the moon.

- 1 wrinkled. Grinzoso.
- 2 has seared. Avrà solcato.
- 3 branded. Bruciato, marchiato.
- 4 Don't frown. Non aggrottate le ciglia.