**COMMENT: I WOULD GIVE MY SOUL!**

**COMPREHENSION**

EX. 2

1. Lord Henry tells Dorian that beauty is a form of genius (l.4), a higher form of genius because it needs no explanation (l. 4-5). In fact, everyone recognizes beauty immediately
2. He says that youth is short (l. 14) and it will finish soon
3. He invites him to live his youth, to search for new sensations and not to be afraid of anything (l. 23-24).
4. He tells him not to give his life to the ignorant, the common and the vulgar (l. 21-22). Aesthetes refuse what is common and vulgar, they look for what is wonderful and extraordinary. The common people are also the Victorian gentlemen who want to improve the society. For Lord Henry, this is useless (hopeless in l. 21) and he calls these ideals “false” (l. 22).
5. This new age requires a new form of Hedonism, that is the pursuit of pleasure as the greatest goal in life (l.24-25). This new Hedonism will replace the moral values of the Victorian age.
6. Dorian could be the visible symbol of this new Hedonism (l.25) because he is so beautiful

EX. 3

1. Dorian realizes how beautiful he is and that Lord Henry is right (l. 45-55). When Basil spoke to him about his beauty, he didn’t believe him and he wasn’t influenced by him (l.46-48), but Lord Henry is different, he is more fascinating and convincing, he has a stronger personality and his words, together with the picture, convince Dorian that he is really beautiful and that he must use this beauty and youth until they last
2. When Dorian sees the painting, at first he is happy and even surprised by his beauty because he wasn’t aware of it; he loves the picture (l.41-45). However, later he feels desperate because he thinks that he will get old and ugly soon (l. 52-55) and so he will lose everything.
3. Dorian knows that he will get old, while the portrait will remain young and beautiful
4. He wants the picture to get old instead of him. He is so desperate that he is ready to give anything, even his soul, for this. And, even if it isn’t explained explicitly, this is exactly what happens: he loses his soul and he remains young while his picture grows old and horrible. And after every bad action that Dorian does, the picture becomes older and more horrible because it reflects his real nature

**ANALYSIS**

EX. 4

1. The **narrator** is third person, he doesn’t intervene in the story. In the first part (until l. 39) Lord Henry’s point of view is adopted and the text speaks about his ideas about beauty and youth. The second part is dedicated to Dorian’s reaction to the picture and to Lord Henry’s words and to his thoughts and feelings. Wilde uses some **imagery** to describe Dorian and his reaction, for ex. in l. 55-56 Dorian’s pain is compared to a knife, in l. 57-58 his eyes are compared to amethyst (a precious stone) to underline their beauty, in l. 59 his tears are compared to a mist and in l. 60-61 the writer speaks about a “hand of ice” on Dorian’s heart to underline how strong his pain is.

EX. 5

1. The characters belong to the upper class and they are different from the respectable Victorian gentlemen.
2. Lord Henry is a **typical dandy**. He doesn’t take anything seriously (apart from beauty and youth) and he uses **paradoxes**, for ex. in l. 11-12 he says that only empty people don’t judge by appearances. Usually people say the opposite, that is that you shouldn’t judge by appearances, but for Lord Henry beauty (that is appearance) is the first value, it’s more important than anything else.
3. Lord Henry convinces Dorian that beauty and youth are the most important values. He makes Dorian forget moral responsibilities
4. In the text youth and beauty are compared to flowers (lilies and roses, l. 18). However, while flowers wither and then they blossom again the following year, people are different: when they get old, they can’t recover their youth (l.31-34). Beauty is divine (l.7) and it transforms people into princes (l. 7-8). Old age is described in a terrible way, it’s linked with physical and mental decadence, it’s horrible (old people are wrinkled and ugly, l.1, they are compared to horrible puppets, l.35), it’s hopeless (there will be no more triumphs or happiness, l. 15, and even the memories of a happy past will only make the present sadder, l. 16-17); finally, it’s full of regrets for the people who didn’t have enough courage to live their life fully (l. 35-37).