



THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST



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Auditions: April 4, 1-4 pm & April 7, 6-8 pm ~ Performances: June 12-31
For auditions, prepare a 60 second monologue with a British accent

"The Importance of Being Earnest" is a razor-sharp comedy of manners that skewers the absurdity of Victorian social norms through a whirlwind of mistaken identities and secret double lives. The story follows two charming bachelors, Jack Worthing and Algernon Moncrieff, who have both invented fictional alter egos to escape their social duties. Jack creates a "wicked brother" named Ernest to justify his trips to London, while Algernon invents an invalid friend named Bunbury to slip away to the country. Chaos ensues when both men find themselves engaged to women who insist they can only love a man named Ernest. As their lies collide, they must contend with the formidable Lady Bracknell, a mysterious handbag, and the sudden realization that being "earnest" might be more important than they thought.

JACK WORTHING - a seemingly responsible and respectable young man who leads a double life. In Hertfordshire, where he has a country estate, Jack is known as Jack. In London he is known as Ernest. Jack is in love with his friend Algernon's cousin, Gwendolen Fairfax.

ALGERNON MONCRIEFF - a charming, idle, decorative bachelor, nephew of Lady Bracknell, cousin of Gwendolen Fairfax, and best friend of Jack Worthing, whom he has known for years as Ernest. Algernon is brilliant, witty, selfish, amoral, and given to making delightful paradoxical and epigrammatic pronouncements.

GWENDOLEN FAIRFAX - Algernon's cousin and Lady Bracknell's daughter. Gwendolen is in love with Jack, whom she knows as Ernest. She is sophisticated, intellectual, cosmopolitan, and utterly pretentious. Gwendolen is fixated on the name Ernest and says she will not marry a man without that name.

CECILY CARDEW - Jack's ward, the granddaughter of the old gentlemen who found and adopted Jack when Jack was a baby. Like Gwendolen, she is obsessed with the name Ernest, but she is even more intrigued by the idea of wickedness. This idea has prompted her to fall in love with Jack's brother Ernest in her imagination and to invent an elaborate romance and courtship between them.

LADY BRACKNELL (Can be played by a male or female actor) - Algernon's snobbish aunt and Gwendolen's mother. Lady Bracknell married well, and her primary goal in life is to see her daughter do the same. Lady Bracknell values ignorance, which she sees as "a delicate exotic fruit." She is cunning, narrow-minded, authoritarian, and possibly the most quotable character in the play.

MISS PRISM - Cecily's governess. She highly approves of Jack's presumed respectability and harshly criticizes his "unfortunate" brother. Despite her rigidity, Miss Prism seems to have a softer side. She speaks of having once written a novel whose manuscript was "lost" or "abandoned." Also, she entertains romantic feelings for Dr. Chasuble.

REV. CANON CHASUBLE D.D. - The rector on Jack's estate. Both Jack and Algernon approach Dr. Chasuble to request that they be christened "Ernest." Dr. Chasuble entertains secret romantic feelings for Miss Prism.

LANE - Algernon's manservant. When the play opens, Lane is the only person who knows about Algernon's practice of "Bunburying." Lane appears only in Act I.

MERRIMAN - The butler at the Manor House, Jack's estate in the country. Merriman appears in Acts II and III.

Note: Lane and Merriman will be played by the same actor

