

LITERATURE AT THE TURN OF XIX-XX CENTURIES

Образец презентации
(ENGLISH LITERATURE)

Oscar
Fingal
O'Flahert
ie Wills
Wilde
(16
October
1854 – 30
November
(1900))

- Oscar Wilde was a noted Irish playwright, novelist, poet and essayist, born in the middle of the nineteenth century into an intellectual family. While studying in Trinity, Dublin, he was influenced by the aesthetic movement, which advocated that art must be practiced only for the sake of art and soon became one of its ardent followers. Although his very first book, 'Poems' established him as an upcoming poet, he tasted real success only in the last decade of his relatively short life. But by then, despite being married with two sons, he had become entangled in a homosexual relationship and when that came into light, he was sentenced to two-year rigorous imprisonment. On coming out of prison, he went to France, where he spent the last years of his life, cut off from his family and shunned by most of his friends. By then, his books had also stopped selling and his plays were closed down. Thus he lived in poverty and ill-health till he died aged just forty-six.



The Picture of Dorian Gray



- The Picture of Dorian Gray is a Gothic and philosophical novel by Oscar Wilde, first published complete in the July 1890 issue of Lippincott's Monthly Magazine. This is a story of moral corruption. A gothic melodrama, it is full of subtle impression and epigram. It touches on many of Wilde's recurring themes, such as the nature and spirit of art, aestheticism and the dangers inherent in it.
- The novel raised quite a blizzard of scandal in its day, and had critics denouncing Wilde for what they perceived to be his own innate immorality – and as a result, he responded with the famous “Preface” to the novel (published in its second edition) that explained his artistic beliefs. Altogether, The Picture of Dorian Gray reveals Wilde’s philosophy more than any of his other works; reading it is an essential key to understanding his artistic mission as a whole.

The Preface

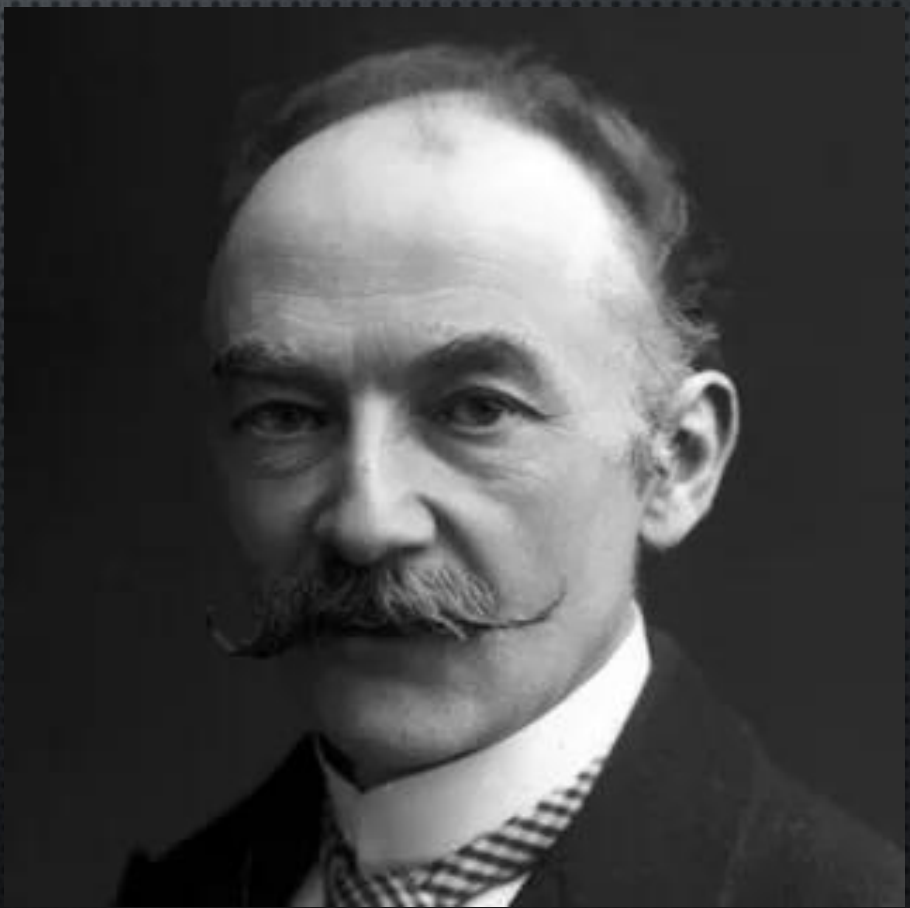
- The artist is the creator of beautiful things. To reveal art and conceal the artist is art's aim. The critic is he who can translate into another manner or a new material his impression of beautiful things. The highest as the lowest form of criticism is a mode of autobiography. Those who find ugly meanings in beautiful things are corrupt without being charming. This is a fault. Those who find beautiful meanings in beautiful things are the cultivated. For these there is hope. They are the elect to whom beautiful things mean only beauty. There is no such thing as a moral or an immoral book. Books are well written, or badly written. That is all. The nineteenth century dislike of realism is the rage of Caliban seeing his own face in a glass. The nineteenth century dislike of romanticism is the rage of Caliban not seeing his own face in a glass. The moral life of man forms part of the subject-matter of the artist, but the morality of art consists in the perfect use of an imperfect medium. No artist desires to prove anything. Even things that are true can be proved. No artist has ethical sympathies. An ethical sympathy in an artist is an unpardonable mannerism of style. No artist is ever morbid. The artist can express everything. Thought and language are to the artist instruments of an art. Vice and virtue are to the artist materials for an art. From the point of view of form, the type of all the arts is the art of the musician. From the point of view of feeling, the actor's craft is the type. All art is at once surface and symbol. Those who go beneath the surface do so at their peril. Those who read the symbol do so at their peril. It is the spectator, and not life, that art really mirrors. Diversity of opinion about a work of art shows that the work is new, complex, and vital. When critics disagree, the artist is in accord with himself. We can forgive a man for making a useful thing as long as he does not admire it. The only excuse for making a useless thing is that one admires it intensely. All art is quite useless.
- Образец текста
Второй уровень
Третий уровень
Четвертый уровень
Пятый уровень

- For greater emphasis, Wilde defines the artist as free of ethical sympathies and morbidity. Even books are seen as only "well written" or "badly written" and not as moral or amoral. Following this prelude on art and beauty, Wilde weaves a plot that explores the issue to its core.
- The plot of *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, if seen apart from the wit and epigrams of Lord Henry is serious and, at times, even somber. Dorian Gray is a young and handsome man whose well-off friend Lord Henry takes him to a young and handsome painter, Basil Hallward. The painter makes a picture of Dorian Gray, a fascinating piece that makes Dorian wish to stop aging. His wish is fulfilled and the picture starts aging instead of young Dorian. The consequence is a disaster. Oscar Wilde has created an amusing tale that does not end very happily but ends beautifully with our easy-going Lord Henry still chirping.

Thomas Hardy

Hardy
(2 June
1840 – 11
January
1928)

- Thomas Hardy was an English novelist and poet. A Victorian realist in the tradition of George Eliot, he was influenced both in his novels and in his poetry by Romanticism, especially William Wordsworth. He was highly critical of much in Victorian society, especially on the declining status of rural people in Britain, such as those from his native South West England.
- While Hardy wrote poetry throughout his life and regarded himself primarily as a poet, his first collection was not published until 1898. Initially, therefore, he gained fame as the author of such novels as *Far from the Madding Crowd* (1874), *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886), *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* (1891), and *Jude the Obscure* (1895). During his lifetime, Hardy's poetry was acclaimed by younger poets (particularly the Georgians) who viewed him as a mentor. After his death his poems were lauded by Ezra Pound, W. H. Auden and Philip Larkin.
- Many of his novels concern tragic characters struggling against their passions and social circumstances, and they are often set in the semi-fictional region of Wessex; initially based on the medieval Anglo-Saxon kingdom, Hardy's Wessex eventually came to include the counties of Dorset, Wiltshire, Somerset, Devon, Hampshire and much of Berkshire, in southwest and south central England. Two of his novels, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* and *Far from the Madding Crowd*, were listed in the top 50 on the BBC's survey "The Big Read".



Tess of the d'Urb erville s

- Tess of the d'Urbervilles: A Pure Woman Faithfully Presented is a novel by Thomas Hardy. It initially appeared in a censored and serialised version, published by the British illustrated newspaper The Graphic in 1891, then in book form in three volumes in 1891, and as a single volume in 1892.
- Though now considered a major nineteenth-century English novel and possibly Hardy's fictional masterpiece, Tess of the d'Urbervilles received mixed reviews when it first appeared, in part because it challenged the sexual morals of late Victorian England.

Symb olism and theme s

- Hardy's writing often illustrates the "ache of modernism", and this theme is notable in *Tess*, which, as one critic noted, portrays "the energy of traditional ways and the strength of the forces that are destroying them". Hardy describes modern farm machinery with infernal imagery; also, at the dairy, he notes that the milk sent to the city must be watered down because the townspeople cannot stomach whole milk. Angel's middle-class fastidiousness makes him reject Tess, a woman whom Hardy often portrays as a sort of Wessex Eve, in harmony with the natural world. When he parts from her and goes to Brazil, the handsome young man gets so sick that he is reduced to a "mere yellow skeleton." All these instances are typically interpreted as indications of the negative consequences of man's separation from nature, both in the creation of destructive machinery and in the inability to rejoice in pure nature.
 - Образец текста
 - Второй уровень
- Another important theme of the novel is the sexual double standard to which Tess falls victim; despite being, in Hardy's view, a truly good woman, she is despised by society after losing her virginity before marriage. Hardy plays the role of Tess's only true friend and advocate, pointedly subtitling the book "a pure woman faithfully presented" and prefacing it with Shakespeare's words from *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*: "Poor wounded name! My bosom as a bed/ Shall lodge thee." However, although Hardy clearly means to criticise Victorian notions of female purity, the double standard also makes the heroine's tragedy possible, and thus serves as a mechanism of Tess's broader fate. Hardy variously hints that Tess must suffer either to atone for the misdeeds of her ancestors, or to provide temporary amusement for the gods, or because she possesses some small but lethal character flaw inherited from the ancient clan.
 - Третий уровень
 - Четвертый уровень
 - Пятый уровень