Tasks for Act 1

Task 1
Up to the arrival of Lady Bracknell:
- How are the characters of Algernon and Jack/Ernest created for the audience?
- What is the effect of the interchange between Algernon and Lane?
- Give examples of different types of humour and how they work (quote and comment)

Task 2
Draw up a list of statements made about marriage by different characters and comment on the impressions given.

Task 3
‘A trivial comedy for serious people’- list words/phrases where trivial events are treated with overblown seriousness. Identify comic methods.

Task 4
How are women in Act 1 shown to have the upper hand? (Explore more than simply what happens on stage.)

Task 5
What ideas do you gain about ‘society’ from your reading of the first Act? Find quotations relating to status, behaviour and morality, and culture.

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