CLASS ACTIVITIES – ACT 1

First Activity:
Use Powerpoint presentation on AWONI to introduce the class to the kind of house and garden that Wilde envisaged when he wrote the play.

There could be some useful discussion with those who have visited stately homes and what they noticed about them. How do they compare with those in America?

What do the houses and gardens + their furnishings etc. tell us about the owners? What is the difference between the owners’ positions then and now?

First Reading Act 1  A
1. Ask for volunteers to read the first section of Act 1 up to just before Gerald Arbuthnot’s entrance (p. 3).
Ask class to work in pairs to find examples of the following in the first 2–3 pages:

• A put-down by Lady Caroline to Hester
• Nagging by Lady Caroline of Sir John
• Criticism by Lady Caroline of Lady Jane Hunstanton
• An implication by Lady Caroline that fame is equal to notoriety
• A criticism by Lady Caroline of Mrs. Allonby, disguised as support
• A criticism by Lady Caroline of Lord Illingworth
• A reproof by Lady Caroline to Hester
• A compliment by Lady Caroline to Lady Hunstanton that shows hypocrisy

What do the above suggest about the way that Wilde is presenting Lady Caroline? What effect does it have on the audience?

First reading Act 1  B
In their pairs, the class should re-read the first 2–3 pages and answer the following:

How is Hester Worsley presented to the audience here?
What does the audience learn about a) Mr. Kelvil  b) Mrs. Allonby and c) Gerald Arbuthnot in this opening passage?
What kind of opposition is Wilde setting up for the audience in the following exchange:

Lady Caroline. …In my young days, Miss Worsley, one never met anyone in society who worked for their living. It was not considered the thing.
Hester. In America those are the people we respect most.
### First reading Act 1

Ask volunteers to read parts for the next 3–4 page section, up to the entrance of Sir John and Mr. Kelvil (p.7). You may need some class discussion on a) the diplomatic service and the position of Ambassador and b) the meaning of a secretary in this context. Class then work in pairs to answer the following:

- Why is Gerald so happy with Lord Illingworth’s offer?
- What is Hester’s reaction to his news?
- What is Lady Caroline’s comment on Lord Illingworth possibly becoming Ambassador to Vienna? Why is it humorous?
- What is Lady Hunstanton’s comment on the above? Why is it humorous?
- How does Wilde satirise the Upper class in the conversation about the French governess between Lady Caroline and Lady Hunstanton?

Wilde is good at presenting character through witty dialogue. What do the following quotations suggest about the characters who say the lines? Note the sub-text!

**Mrs. Allonby.** I think to elope is cowardly. It’s running away from danger. And danger has become so rare in modern life.

**Lady Stutfield.** Ah! The world was made for men and not for women.

**Mrs. Allonby.** Oh, don’t say that, Lady Stutfield. We have a much better time than they have. There are far more things forbidden to us than are forbidden to them.

**Lady Stutfield.** Yes; that is quite, quite true. I had not thought of that.

### Drama Work

Divide the class into small groups of appropriate numbers and give each group a section of the first few pages of Act 1 to prepare for performance. They should consider how they will show status and character and bring out the humour in the lines, as well as appropriate moves and gestures.

Give them about ten to fifteen minutes to prepare and rehearse, then ask them to perform their sections in sequence.

Follow this by a class discussion on Wilde’s techniques for introducing the characters to the audience.

### HOMEWORK TASK

How successful is Oscar Wilde in introducing the characters in *A Woman of No Importance*? You should comment on what the characters say, what they do, and how other characters refer and react to them. Your personal response is important.
Reading Act 1   E
Class reading of next section up to the exit of Lord Illingworth with Mrs Allonby (p. 12)

1. Class discussion on Wilde’s presentation of Upper class attitudes to
   a) politics  b) the poor  c) morality.
2. What attitudes to America are shown here by
   a) Lady Caroline  b) Lady Hunstanton  c) Mr. Kelvil  d) Lord Illingworth.

Wilde himself once described America as ‘the only country to go from barbarity to
decadence without an intervening period of civilisation’. Can you find a remark of
Lord Illingworth’s that expresses a similar sentiment?

Reading Act 1   F
Class reading of next section up to the point where the company goes into tea (p.15).

Class discussion on Wilde’s techniques of revealing peoples’ characters by what they
say about others, as in the following speeches.

Lady Caroline. You believe good of everyone, Jane. It is a great fault.
Lady Stuffield. Do you really, really think, Lady Caroline, that one should believe evil
of everyone?

Kelvil. Lord Illingworth is, of course, a very brilliant man, but he seems to me to be
lacking in that fine faith in the nobility and purity of life which is so important in this
century.

How is Mr. Kelvil later revealed as a hypocrite in his protestations of the importance
of family life as ‘the mainstay of our moral system’?

Reading of Act 1   G
Class reading to end of Act 1.

1. Class discussion of Act 1 as a suitable introduction to the play.

2. Class work in pairs to complete character page (see page 4).

3. This final section shows the audience two couples: Mrs. Allonby and Lord
   Illingworth; Gerald and Hester.

   • What contrasts can you find between these pairs?
   • Why has Wilde set up this opposition, in your opinion?
   • What is the relationship here between the two men?
   • What is the relationship between the two women?
### ACT 1 – CHARACTERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Quotation</th>
<th>Character revelation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lady Caroline</td>
<td>John, the grass is too damp for you. You had better go and put on your overshoes at once.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lady Hunstanton</td>
<td>Poor Lord Belton died three days afterwards of joy, or gout. I forget which.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Allonby</td>
<td>The one advantage of playing with fire, Lady Caroline, is that one never gets even singed. It is the people who don’t know how to play with it who get burned up.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Kelvil</td>
<td>I find that the poorer classes of this country display a marked desire for a higher ethical standard.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lord Illingworth</td>
<td>It is perfectly monstrous the way people go about nowadays, saying things against one behind one’s back that are absolutely and entirely true.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hester</td>
<td>Mr. Arbuthnot has a beautiful nature! He is so simple, so sincere. He has one of the most beautiful natures I have ever come across. It is a privilege to meet him.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gerald</td>
<td>Lord Illingworth, everyone has been congratulating me, Lady Hunstanton and Lady Caroline, and … everyone. I hope I shall make a good secretary.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lady Stutfield</td>
<td>It must be terribly, terribly distressing to be in debt.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Re-read the verbal fencing match between Lord Illingworth and Mrs. Allonby at the end of Act 1.

What does it reveal about these two characters? Wilde gives them dialogue that shows a similar level of wit and intelligence, but the reactions this brings from the other characters is very different for each of them. Why do you think this might be? Is Wilde trying to make a point here? How are they both revealed as immoral characters in this conversation?
CLASS ACTIVITIES – ACT 2

First reading Act 2 A
Class or group reading of the women’s discussion about marriage up to Mrs. Allonby’s speech that ends ‘… We have always been picturesque protests against the mere existence of common sense. We saw its dangers from the first.’ (page 30)

In groups of 4, students take on the roles of Lady Caroline, Lady Hunstanton, Mrs. Allonby and Lady Stutfield. Re-read the extract and then do the following:
- summarise their character’s position on marriage and men
- say what it suggests about their own character
- comment on the way in which Wilde uses satire in this extract

First reading Act 2 B
Class or group reading of the small section up to Lady Hunstanton’s speech ‘Oh, my dear!’ (page 33).

1. Most of this section is a virtual monologue by Mrs. Allonby about ‘the Ideal Man’. How serious do you think she is being? Does her speech suggest anything about the kind of man she really admires? Why is the ideal man clearly not one’s husband? How do her apparent views here fit with her duologue with Lord Illingworth in Act 1? Do you think Lady Hunstanton is right when she says, ‘How clever you are, my dear! You never mean a single word you say.’? What does this suggest about a) Mrs. Allonby and b) Lady Hunstanton?

2. Imagine you are making a contribution to a book on Victorian etiquette, under the heading The Ideal Man According to a Woman and write a set of instructions for his behaviour, based on Mrs. Allonby’s comments. [NB ‘telegraph’ was a printed message sent by an early form of telephone; ‘hansom’ was a horse drawn taxi-cab.]

First reading of Act 2 C
Class or group reading of the next section up to the exit of Mrs. Allonby with Lady Stutfield (page 37/38)

1. How is the opposition between the old society of England and the new society of America set up by Wilde in Act 1 continued here?
2. Hester has been termed ‘a puritan’ in Act 1. How do her speeches in this section support that title?
3. Wilde presents Hester as self-righteous and lacking in wit or humour. Why do you think he has done this?
4. In your opinion, whose views on men and women are the most moral? Whose are the most amusing? Whose are the most realistic?
First reading Act 2  D
Class or group reading of the next short section up to the entrance of Dr. Daubeny and Sir John (page 40).

1. This is the first view the audience has of Mrs. Arbuthnot – the ‘woman of no importance’ of the title. How does Wilde present her in this section?
2. The conversation between Lady Caroline, Lady Hunstanton and Mrs. Arbuthnot establishes a number of facts about Lord Illingworth. Make a list of what the audience is told about him.
3. The conversation also establishes a clear difference between Lady Caroline and Lady Hunstanton on the one hand, and Mrs. Arbuthnot on the other. What is it?

First reading Act 2  E
Class or group reading up to the point where Lord Illingworth meets Mrs. Arbuthnot (page 42).

1. Dr. Daubeny is the Archdeacon, which means he has part of the responsibility for a diocese of which the Bishop is the head. How does he refer to a) Lord Illingworth, b) Mrs. Arbuthnot, c) his wife? The comment about Mrs. Daubeny is the start of what is known as a ‘running gag’ – that is, a joke that is repeated at intervals. Watch out for other mentions by the Archdeacon of his wife.
2. Look at the short conversation between Lord Illingworth and Mrs. Allonby. How does it build on their conversation in Act 1?
3. What stage directions has Wilde given for Mrs. Arbuthnot during this section? How might they be connected with her first words to her son, in the audience’s eyes?

First reading Act 2  F
Class or group reading to Lady Hunstanton’s exit, following the other guests to the music room.

1. In the exchange between Lord Illingworth, Mrs. Arbuthnot and Gerald there are several conflicting emotions, which are made clear at the end of the Act. How are these three characters presented in this short conversation?

First reading Act 2  G
Class or group reading to end of Act 2.

1. In groups of 2 or 3, prepare a small part of this section for performance. Be aware of how you wish the characters to appear to the audience – it would be very easy to ‘send it up’. Rehearse it, then perform the section in sequence.
2. Class debate. Half the class should argue in role as Lord Illingworth, the other half as Mrs. Arbuthnot. Should Gerald take the job or not?
3. Make a chart to show the way in which Lord Illingworth overcomes every objection that Mrs. Arbuthnot makes to end the scene with a triumphant exit with Gerald. What is the dramatic impact of Wilde’s ending to this Act?
4. Class work in pairs to complete character page (see page 7).
### ACT 2 – CHARACTERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Quotation</th>
<th>Character revelation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lady Stutfield</td>
<td>Oh, I think one can always know at once whether a man has home claims upon his life or not. I have noticed a very very sad expression in the eyes of so many married men.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Allonby</td>
<td>I don’t think we should ever be spoken of as other people’s property. All men are married women’s property.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lady Caroline</td>
<td>Might I, dear Miss Worsley, as you are standing up, ask you for my cotton that is just behind you? Thank you.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lady Hunstanton</td>
<td>When I knew Lord Illingworth first as plain George Harford, he was simply a very brilliant young man about town, with not a penny of money except what poor dear Lady Cecilia gave him. She was quite devoted to him. Chiefly, I fancy, because he was on bad terms with his father.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Daubeny</td>
<td>Her deafness is a great privation to her. She can’t even hear my sermons now. She reads them at home. But she has many resources in herself, many resources.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lord Illingworth</td>
<td>Don’t be deceived, Rachel. Children begin by loving their parents. After a time they judge them. Rarely, if ever, do they forgive them.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Arbuthnot</td>
<td>I have had twenty years of sorrow, and I have only had one thing to love me, only one thing to love. You have had a life of joy and pleasure and success…Don’t come now, and rob me of…of all I have, of all I have in the whole world.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gerald</td>
<td>But a man can’t always stay with his mother. No chap does. I want to make myself a position, to do something. I thought you would have been proud to see me Lord Illingworth’s secretary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How is Wilde using dramatic irony when Lord Illingworth says: ‘And I can only tell you that your son has all the qualifications I had hoped for. He has more in fact than I had even thought of. Far more.’?
CLASS ACTIVITIES – ACT 3

First reading Act 3  A
Class or paired reading of the conversation between Gerald and Lord Illingworth up to the entrance of Lady Hunstanton and Dr. Daubeney (page 58).

1. In pairs, students discuss the following questions:
   - how does Wilde use dramatic irony in this section?
   - how does Lord Illingworth manage to undermine Mrs. Arbuthnot, while seeming to praise her?
   - how does Wilde use bathos to comic effect in Lord Illingworth’s speech beginning ‘Don’t be afraid, Gerald.’?
2. Lord Illingworth says, ‘The future belongs to the dandy. It is the exquisites who are going to rule.’ What was a ‘dandy’ and an ‘exquisite’? Why might Wilde have reasons for wanting the future to be theirs?
3. Write a list of Lord Illingworth’s opinions about society, about women and about love. Discuss what the results reveal about his character. Comment on the way in which his views are expressed and why Wilde gives him such witty lines.

First reading Act 3  B
Class or group reading of next section up to Gerald’s exit (page 65).

1. What does the following comment from Lady Hunstanton suggest a) about her b) about the Archdeacon?
   ‘...I suppose I am too old now to learn. Except from you, dear Archdeacon, when you are in your nice pulpit. But then I always know what you are going to say, so I don’t feel alarmed.’
   How does this compare with her opinion of Lord Illingworth’s conversation?
2. This section of the play shows Wilde creating a joke from the situation between Sir John and Lady Caroline. How is Sir John presented in this section? How is Lady Caroline presented in this section? How is this contrasted with their previous presentations? Why is it amusing?
3. Lord Illingworth’s witticisms also contain character revelations. What might the audience learn from his comment, ‘Moderation is a fatal thing...Nothing succeeds like excess.’?
4. How might Lady Hunstanton be telling more about Lord Illingworth’s character than she realises, when she says, ‘You always find out that one’s most glaring fault is one’s most important virtue. You have the most comforting views of life.’?
5. The Archdeacon’s final exit provides the conclusion to the running gag about his wife. How does his final comment...‘She has nothing to complain of.’ provide a suitably ironic finish to her catalogue of chronic health problems?
6. What emotional blow does Gerald deal his mother at the end of this section, before he goes to say goodbye to Lord Illingworth?
Notes: ‘Dorcas’ was a charitable woman mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles who made clothes for widows and the poor. She was raised from the dead by St. Peter.

A ‘tambour frame’ was a circular frame for holding embroidery taut, while it was stitched.

The Humane Society refers to the Royal Humane Society which exists to encourage citizenship and rewards people who rescue others from dangerous situations. It is a typical misunderstanding of Lady Hunstanton to imagine the society itself doing the rescuing, although it continues the metaphor of her being out of her depth with Lord Illingworth’s conversation.

Bimetallism [historical] a system of allowing the unrestricted currency of two metals as legal tender at a fixed ratio to each other.

Patagonia A region of Argentina that had recently been colonised by Scottish and Welsh settlers when the play was written.

First reading Act 3  C

Class or group reading to end of Act 3.

1. How is Wilde using dramatic irony during the conversation between Hester and Mrs. Arbuthnot?

2. What do the two women have in common?

3. What are the differences between them?

4. Why does Wilde have Hester go in search of Gerald?

5. How does Wilde present Gerald in this Act? In what ways is it different from the way he was presented in Acts 1 and 2? Consider the following:
   • His conversation with Lord Illingworth at the start of Act 3
   • His conversation with his mother about going with Lord Illingworth to India
   • His reaction to his mother’s telling of her story in the third person
   • His reaction to Lord Illingworth’s behaviour to Hester

6. In small groups, act out the ending of the scene, making it as dramatic as possible, without sending it up.

7. In small groups perform the story of Mrs. Arbuthnot’s seduction and betrayal. One person reads her speech, while the others mime the actions.

8. It has been said that Lord Illingworth is made to behave in an uncharacteristically clumsy way by his assault on Hester. Is there another way in which Wilde could have made the truth public? Do you think he has sacrificed authenticity for the demands of a dramatic ending to the Act? What has he achieved by finishing Act 3 in this way?

9. Starting with the line, ‘She trusted in him all the while’ from Mrs. Arbuthnot’s story, write a poem or a monologue of your own about a betrayed woman.

10. Imagine that a journalist from a national paper was at Lady Hunstanton’s party and overheard what happened at the end of Act 3. Write the headline and the leading story that might appear the following morning. What angle would you take? Which revelations would you consider shocking?

11. Class work in pairs to complete character page (see page 10).
### ACT 3 – CHARACTERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Quotation</th>
<th>Character Revelation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lord Illingworth</td>
<td>But good women have such limited views of life, their horizon is so small, their interests are so petty, aren’t they?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gerald</td>
<td>It is very curious, my mother never talks to me about my father. I sometimes think she must have married beneath her.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lady Caroline</td>
<td>I think I had better look after John.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lady Hunstanton</td>
<td>Lady Stutfield is very sympathetic. She is just as sympathetic about one thing as she is about another. A beautiful nature.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Allonby</td>
<td>Savages seem to have quite the same views as cultured people on almost all subjects. They are excessively advanced.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lady Stutfield</td>
<td>The secret of life is to appreciate the pleasure of being terribly, terribly deceived.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Kelvil</td>
<td>The secret of life is to resist temptation, Lady Stutfield.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lord Illingworth</td>
<td>There is no secret of life. Life’s aim, if it has one, is simply to be always looking for temptations. There are not nearly enough.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hester</td>
<td>Yes, it is right that the sins of the parents should be visited on the children. It is a just law. It is God’s law.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Arbuthnot</td>
<td>After the child was born she left him, taking the child away, and her life was ruined, and her soul ruined, and all that was sweet and good and pure in her ruined also.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gerald</td>
<td>My dear mother, it all sounds very tragic, of course. But I dare say the girl was as much to blame as Lord Illingworth was – after all, would a really nice girl, a girl with any nice feelings at all, go away from her home with a man to whom she was not married and live with him as his wife?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CLASS ACTIVITIES – ACT 4

First reading Act 4 A
Class or group reading of Act 4 up to the exit of Lady Hunstanton with Mrs. Allonby (page 79). Class work in pairs/small groups on the tasks:

1. Design the stage set for this act, based on the comments made by Lady Hunstanton and Mrs. Allonby.
2. How does Wilde use dramatic irony in the exchange between the two women? How does he use it in their conversation with Gerald?
3. Although the audience does not see the Archdeacon in this Act, he is referred to by Lady Hunstanton in her speech beginning, ‘Well, tomorrow then.’ What is amusing about the reference, when related to our previous knowledge of Dr. and Mrs Daubeney?
4. What do their exit lines suggest about the characters of Lady Hunstanton and Mrs. Allonby?

First reading Act 4 B
Class or group reading of the next section up to the exit of Gerald with Hester to the garden (page 87). In pairs/small groups students do tasks:

1. Debate, in role, as Gerald and his mother. In students’ own words Gerald argues the necessity for marriage to his father, while Mrs. Arbuthnot argues against it. While you are preparing this, look carefully at the language used by each character; Gerald uses words like ‘must’, ‘should’ and ‘duty’, while his mother uses words like ‘love’, ‘honour’ and ‘shame’. Note also her biblical allusions.
2. Wilde has chosen to present the conventional social view through Gerald and the unconventional view through Mrs. Arbuthnot. Why do you think he does this?
3. What does the play gain from Wilde’s use of the dramatic device of Hester’s appearance during the exchange between Gerald and his mother? Where else has Wilde used this device previously in the play and why?
4. What effect does Mrs. Arbuthnot’s long speech have a) on Gerald b) on Hester? What, in your opinion, has caused Hester to change her views about women who sin?
5. How do the two women between them succeed in reducing Gerald to tears? How does Wilde ensure a happy ending for these three people? What is the difference between them and the rest of the characters?

First reading Act 4 C
Class or group reading to the end of the play.
1. Find quotations that suggest a) that Lord Illingworth feels no guilt for his behaviour towards Hester b) that he feels no guilt for his behaviour towards Mrs. Arbuthnot c) that he is determined to continue being a father to Gerald.
2. Find quotations that suggest Mrs. Arbuthnot will not give in to his demands.
3. Write the letter that Gerald was proposing to send Lord Illingworth.
4. How does Mrs. Arbuthnot triumph over Lord Illingworth? What does he imply in his final speech, about her and Gerald that makes her strike him?
5. Class work in pairs to complete character page (see page 12).
## ACT 4 – CHARACTERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Quotation</th>
<th>Character revelation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lady Hunstanton and Lord Hunstanton (deceased)</td>
<td>Well there is a good deal to be said for blushing, if one can do it at the proper moment. Poor dear Hunstanton used to tell me I didn’t blush nearly often enough. But then he was very particular. He wouldn’t let me know any of his men friends, except those who were over seventy, like poor Lord Ashton: who afterwards, by the way, was brought into the Divorce Court. A most unfortunate case.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Allonby</td>
<td>I delight in men over seventy. They always offer one the devotion of a lifetime. I think seventy an ideal age for a man.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gerald</td>
<td>But the marriage must take place first. It is a duty you owe, not merely to yourself, but to all other women – yes: to all the other women in the world, lest he betray more.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Arbuthnot</td>
<td>For though, day after day, at morn or evensong, I have knelt in God’s house, I have never repented of my sin. How could I repent of my sin when you, my love, were its fruit! Even now that you are bitter to me I cannot repent. I do not. You are more to me than innocence. I would rather be your mother – oh! much rather! – than have been always pure…</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hester</td>
<td>I was wrong. God’s law is only Love.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>But you have two children now. You’ll let me be your daughter?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A Woman of No Importance

CLASS ACTIVITIES – WHOLE PLAY

Characters
In pairs / small groups using a sheet of A3 paper: draw one of the main characters in the centre of the sheet. Surround the character with speech bubbles containing quotations that show something about your character, from their own speeches or those of others. You should design a suitable costume for them. Use a book of costumes from the period or look at the following websites:

Drama and stagecraft
1. Design a suitable stage set for the first three acts of the play.
2. Design a programme which contains details of the cast – your choice for each role can be drawn from anywhere you wish – and the setting. You should also include a set of notes for students who are studying the text for AS level.
3. Do a storyboard for a trailer advertising a new film that has been made of this play. Think about how you could make it appeal to a modern audience, not just to those who are studying it for English Literature.
4. Choose a section of the play that you would like to perform and rehearse it; then perform it for the rest of the class. Be prepared to explain your choice and ideas.

Class presentation
In small groups, an aspect of the context of the play is prepared for presentation. The following aspects are relevant:
The class system, occupations and relative earnings in Victorian Britain
The idea of ‘the fallen woman’ and illegitimate children in Victorian England
Love and Marriage in Victorian times
The place of religion in Victorian England
Melodrama and the theatre in Victorian society
Clothes and fashions in late Victorian times
19th century literature and Victorian society

The following websites are also helpful:
www.victorianweb.org
www.costumes.org
http://www.gober.net/victorian/reports/prostit.html
http://www.fathom.com/course/10701039/session4.html
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Women_in_the_Victorian_era
http://www.gober.net/victorian/reports/religion.html
http://www.sylviamilne.btinternet.co.uk/plucked/vic.htm