

# The Picture of Dorian Gray — Key Vocabulary

by Oscar Wilde

48 key English words, graded A2–C2 — each with a simple definition and an example. Learn them before you read, or review them after.

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## A2 words (10)

**abandon** /ə'bændən/

A2

the trait of lacking restraint or control

*“she danced with abandon”*

**absence** /'æbsəns/

A2

the state of being absent

*“he was surprised by the absence of any explanation”*

**absolutely** /,æbsə'lutli/

A2

completely and without qualification

*“an absolutely magnificent painting”*

**abuse** /ə'bjuz/

A2

cruel or inhumane treatment

*“the child showed signs of physical abuse”*

**accident** /'æksədənt/

A2

an unfortunate mishap

*“winning the lottery was a happy accident”*

**accompany** /ə'kəmpəni/

A2

be present or associated with an event or entity

*“French fries come with the hamburger”*

**accuse** /ə'kjuz/

A2

bring an accusation against

*“The neighbors accused the man of spousal abuse”*

**acknowledge** /æk'nɒlɪdʒ/

A2

declare to be true or admit the existence or reality or truth of

*"He admitted his errors"*

**active** /'æktɪv/

A2

chemical agent capable of activity

*"The boy threw the ball' uses the active voice"*

**actor** /'æktər/

A2

a theatrical performer

*"he's a principal actor in this affair"*

## B1 words (10)

**absolute** /'æbsə,lʊt/

B1

something that is conceived or that exists independently and not in relation to other things

*"no mortal being can influence the absolute"*

**abstract** /'æb,strækt/

B1

a concept or idea not associated with any specific instance

*"he loved her only in the abstract--not in person"*

**acceptance** /ək'septəns/

B1

the mental attitude that something is believable and should be accepted as true

*"he gave credence to the gossip"*

**accordance** /ə'kɔrdəns/

B1

concurrence of opinion

*"we are in accord with your proposal"*

**accurate** /'ækjərət/

B1

conforming exactly or almost exactly to fact or to a standard or performing with total accuracy

*"an accurate reproduction"*

**adventure** /əd'ventʃər/

B1

a wild and exciting undertaking (not necessarily lawful)

*"When you buy these stocks you are gambling"*

**alter** /'ɔltər/

B1

cause to change

*"The advent of the automobile may have altered the growth pattern of the city"*

**alternate** /'ɔltər,neɪt/

B1

someone who takes the place of another person

*"We take turns on the night shift"*

**amateur** /'æmə,tʃər/

B1

someone who pursues a study or sport as a pastime

*"an amateur painter"*

**ambassador** /æm'bæsədər/

B1

a diplomat of the highest rank

*"an ambassador of good will"*

## B2 words (10)

**abject** /'æbdʒekt/

B2

of the most contemptible kind

*"abject cowardice"*

**absorb** /əb'zɔrb/

B2

become imbued

*"The liquids, light, and gases absorb"*

**absorption** /əb'zɔrʃən/

B2

(chemistry) a process in which one substance permeates another

*"the absorption of photons by atoms or molecules"*

**absurd** /əb'sərd/

B2

a situation in which life seems irrational and meaningless

*"The absurd is the essential concept and the first truth"*

**accidental** /,æksə'dɛnəl/

B2

a musical notation that makes a note sharp or flat or natural although that is not part of the key signature

*"with an inadvertent gesture she swept the vase off the table"*

**accompaniment** /ə'kɔmpnɪmənt/

B2

an event or situation that happens at the same time as or in connection with another

*"a fine wine is a perfect complement to the dinner"*

**accumulate** /ə'kjʊmjə,leɪt/

B2

get or gather together

*"I am accumulating evidence for the man's unfaithfulness to his wife"*

**acid** /'æsəd/

B2

any of various water-soluble compounds having a sour taste and capable of turning litmus red and reacting with a base to form a salt

*"an acerbic tone piercing otherwise flowery prose"*

**acquaintance** /ək'weɪntəns/

B2

personal knowledge or information about someone or something

*"I have trouble remembering the names of all my acquaintances"*

**actuality** /,æktʃu'ælə,tɪ/

B2

the state of actually existing objectively

*"a hope that progressed from possibility to actuality"*

## C1 words (9)

**abdicate** /'æbdə,keɪt/

C1

give up, such as power, as of monarchs and emperors, or duties and obligations

*"The King abdicated when he married a divorcee"*

**abstruse** /əb'struːs/

C1

difficult to penetrate

*"the professor's lectures were so abstruse that students tended to avoid them"*

**absurdly** /əb'sɜːdli/

C1

in an absurd manner or to an absurd degree

*"an absurdly rich young woman"*

**accentuate** /æk'sentʃueɪt/

C1

to stress, single out as important

*"Dr. Jones emphasizes exercise in addition to a change in diet"*

**accustom** /ə'kʌstəm/

C1

make psychologically or physically used (to something)

*"She became habituated to the background music"*

**admirably** /'ædmərəbli/

C1

in an admirable manner

*"the children's responses were admirably normal"*

**aeon**

C1

(Gnosticism) a divine power or nature emanating from the Supreme Being and playing various roles in the operation of the universe

*"oh, that happened eons ago"*

**affluence** /'æfluəns/

C1

abundant wealth

*"they studied forerunners of richness or poverty"*

**agitate** /'ædʒə,teɪt/

C1

try to stir up public opinion

*"The speaker charged up the crowd with his inflammatory remarks"*

## C2 words (9)

**adjoin** /ə'dʒɔɪn/

C2

lie adjacent to another or share a boundary

*"Canada adjoins the U.S."*

**argot** /'ɑrɡət/

C2

a characteristic language of a particular group (as among thieves)

*"they don't speak our lingo"*

**bewilder** /bɪ'wɪldər/

C2

be a mystery or bewildering to

*"This beats me!"*

**blackball** /'blæk,bɔl/

C2

the act of excluding someone by a negative vote or veto

*"The President vetoed the bill"*

**carouse** /kə'raʊz/

C2

revelry in drinking

*"They were out carousing last night"*

**chirrup**

C2

a series of chirps

*"the birds were chirping in the bushes"*

**convulsively**

C2

with convulsions, in a convulsive way

*"her leg twitched convulsively"*

**corroborative** /kə'rəbərə,tɪv/

C2

serving to support or corroborate

*"collateral evidence"*

## daintily

C2

in a refined manner

*“she nibbled daintily at her cake”*

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Read it along with audio — tap any word to hear it and see it highlighted in the sentence:

<https://readingcorner.uk/books/the-picture-of-dorian-gray/vocabulary>