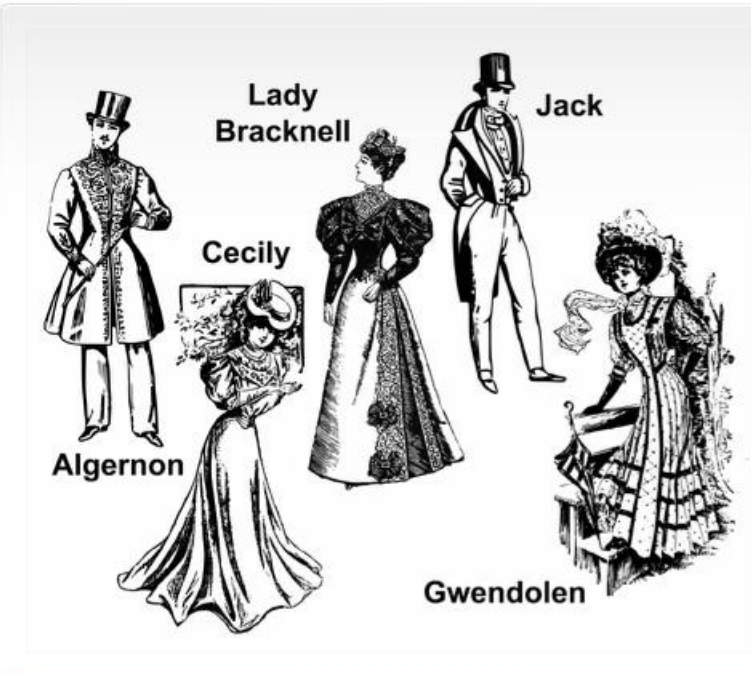


**Module 7: Balancing the Individual and Society**  
**Topic 5 Content: Main Characters in *The Importance of Being Earnest***

**Introduction**

**Main Characters in The Importance of Being Earnest**

Introduction



Algernon

Lady Bracknell

Cecily

Jack

Gwendolen

In this interactivity, click the **NEXT** button to explore the main characters of Oscar Wilde's play *The Importance of Being Earnest*.

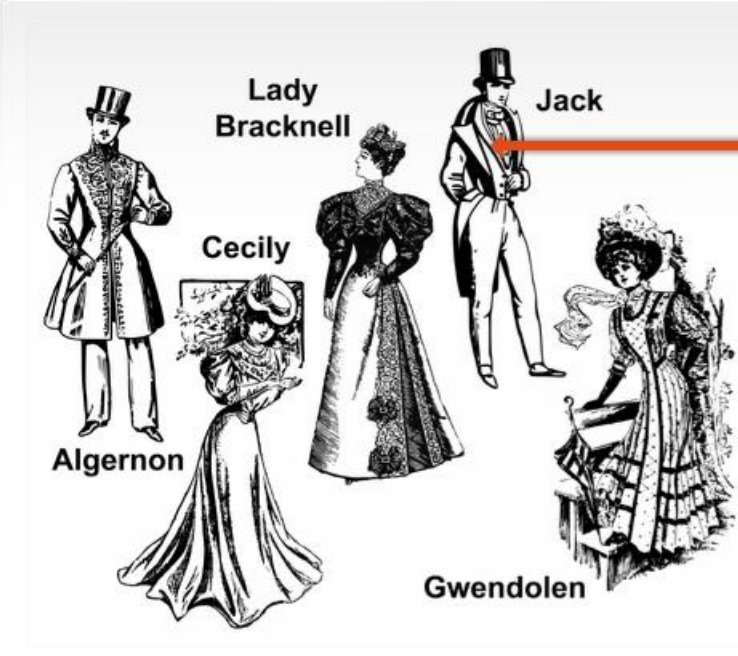
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**Module 7: Balancing the Individual and Society**  
**Topic 5 Content: Main Characters in *The Importance of Being Earnest***

**Jack**

**Main Characters in The Importance of Being Earnest**

Jack



The illustration shows five characters in Victorian attire. From left to right: Algernon, a man in a top hat and long coat; Lady Bracknell, a woman in a high-collared dress; Cecily, a young woman in a long dress and hat; Jack, a man in a top hat and long coat; and Gwendolen, a young woman in a long dress and hat. A red arrow points from the text 'Jack' to the character Jack.

Jack lives in his country estate with his niece, Cecily. Jack likes to get away to London to enjoy himself, so he lies that he must leave home in order to take care of his irresponsible brother, Ernest. Jack wants to marry Gwendolen, but her mother disapproves of Jack's mysterious lineage; he was left in a railway station when he was a baby.

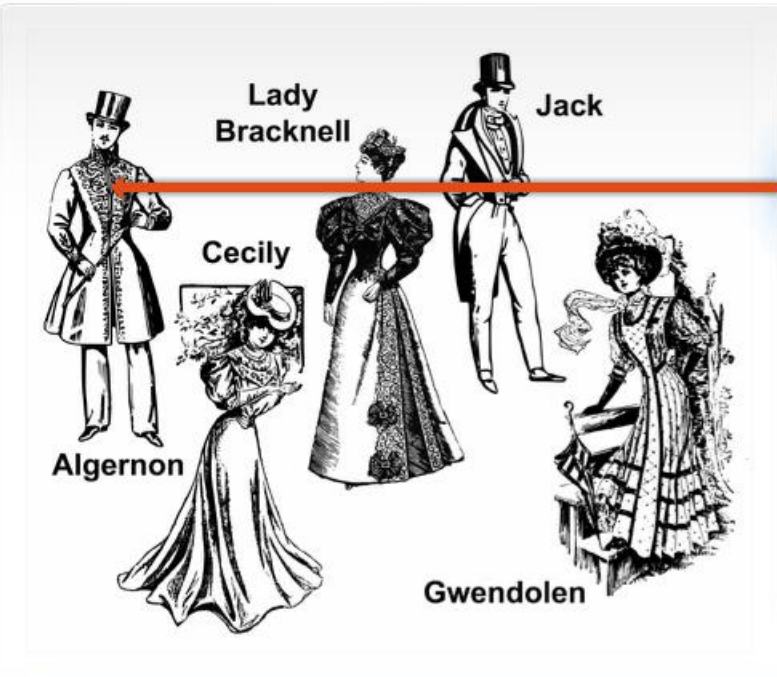
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**Module 7: Balancing the Individual and Society**  
**Topic 5 Content: Main Characters in *The Importance of Being Earnest***

**Algernon**

**Main Characters in The Importance of Being Earnest**

Algernon



Algernon lives in London but likes to escape to the countryside to avoid social obligations. He excuses himself by lying about visiting a fictitious friend named Bunbury. Algernon learns that his friend Ernest is actually named Jack, who has a niece named Cecily. Algernon courts Cecily by pretending to be Jack's fictitious brother, Ernest.

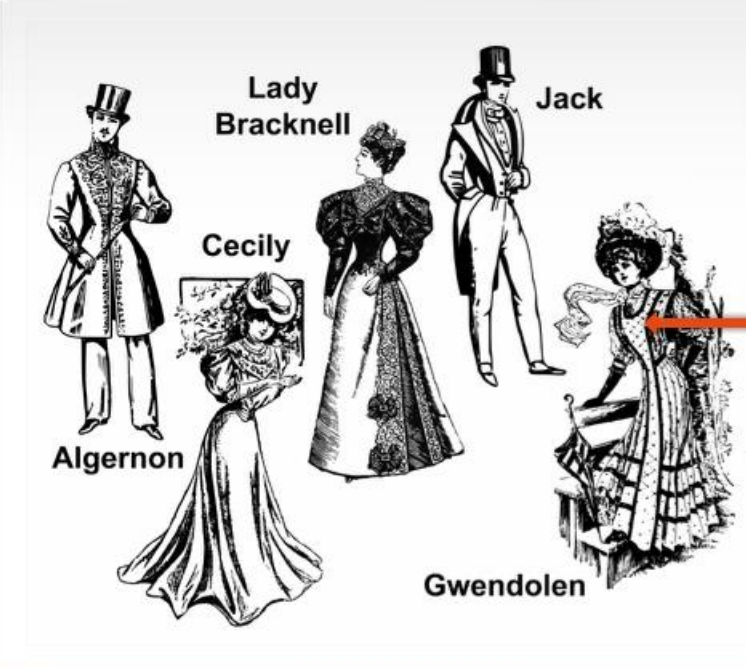
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**Module 7: Balancing the Individual and Society**  
**Topic 5 Content: Main Characters in *The Importance of Being Earnest***

**Gwendolen**

**Main Characters in The Importance of Being Earnest**

Gwendolen



Algernon

Lady Bracknell

Cecily

Jack

Gwendolen

Gwendolen lives in London with her wealthy mother, Lady Bracknell. Gwendolen wants to marry Jack because she believes his name is Ernest, but her mother disapproves of the match since Jack does not know who his parents were.

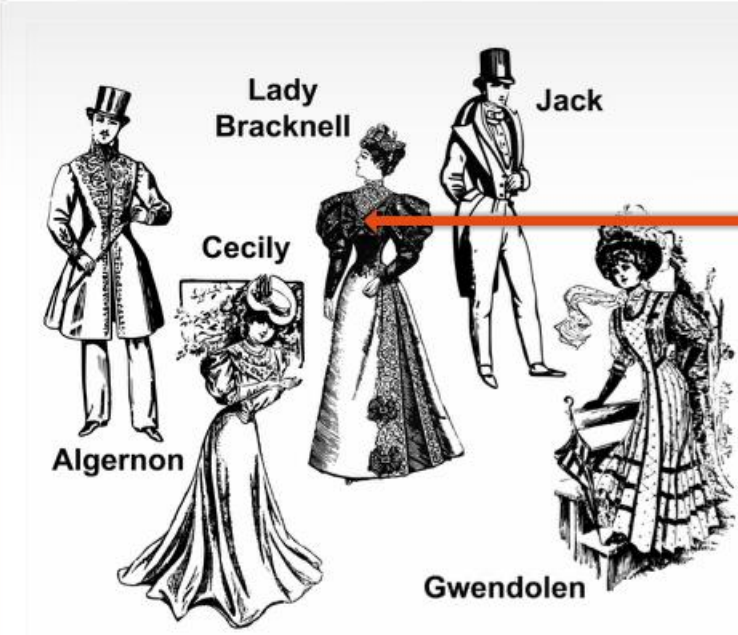
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**Module 7: Balancing the Individual and Society**  
**Topic 5 Content: Main Characters in *The Importance of Being Earnest***

**Lady Bracknell**

**Main Characters in The Importance of Being Earnest**

Lady Bracknell



Algernon

Lady Bracknell

Cecily

Jack

Gwendolen

Lady Bracknell is a wealthy aristocrat who lives in London. She believes that marriage is a duty and that it should offer social advancement. She forbids her daughter, Gwendolen, from marrying Jack. She also disapproves of a match between her nephew, Algernon, and Jack's niece, Cecily.

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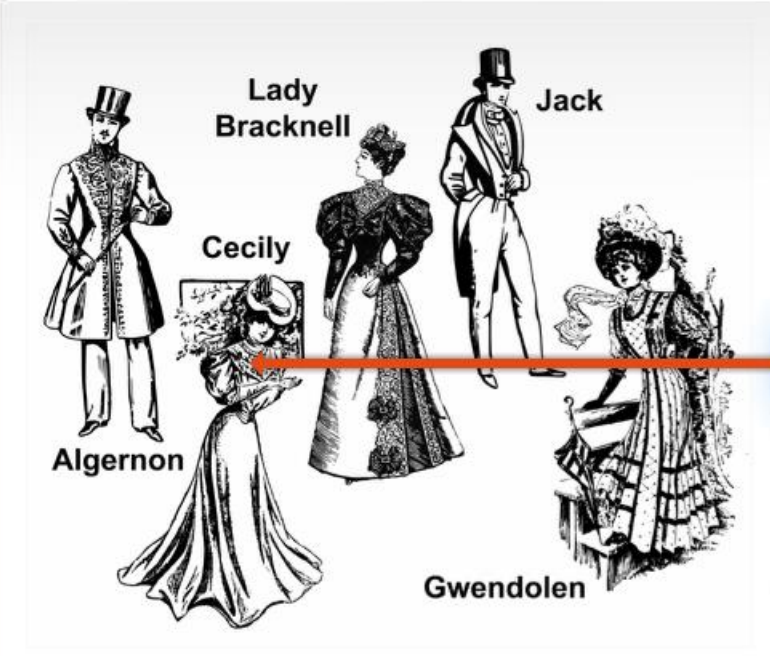


**Module 7: Balancing the Individual and Society**  
**Topic 5 Content: Main Characters in *The Importance of Being Earnest***

**Cecily**

**Main Characters in The Importance of Being Earnest**

Cecily



Algernon

Lady Bracknell

Jack

Cecily

Gwendolen

Cecily lives in the countryside with Jack, who is her uncle and guardian. Cecily believes in romantic love and quickly falls for Algernon, believing that he is Jack's brother named Ernest. She takes a strong dislike to Gwendolen because the two ladies have such different tastes.

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