

Lady Windermere's Fan
by Oscar Wilde

Reading Guide:
Acts 1-2

Windermere #1 - Acts 1-3

Reading Questions

The following reading questions will help you notice important aspects of your reading. The application questions will help you connect your reading to your own life. But don't let them get in the way of actually reading! If you don't have time to write out your answers, just answer them in your head and let them guide your reading.

Remember: the more you put into this, the more you'll get out of it!

Act 1

1. Who raised Lady Windermere? How was she raised??

2. What does Lord Darlington think of Lady Windermere??

3. What awful news does Lady Windermere receive about her husband? What does her husband ask her to do that night?

Application Questions: Several times in this act, Lady Windermere is called a "good woman." What does a "good woman" mean to her? In her conversation with Lord Darlington, she argues that a woman who has fallen should never be forgiven. How does this conviction shape her reaction to her husband's request? How have you been a "good" person in the way that Lady Windermere has been? What do you do about it?

Act 2

1. How does Lord Augustus feel about Mrs. Erlynne??
2. What confession does Lord Darlington make? How does it affect Lady Margaret Windermere?
3. How is Mrs. Erlynne connected to Lady Windermere?

Application Questions: By the end of this act, we realize that Lady Windermere has tragically misread her husband's actions. Yet she is ready to take drastic steps that violate the very moral principles she asserted in Act 1. Why does she do this? How has she become so self-deceived? Have you ever gone through a similar process—misread someone's actions, then used your anger to justify your own hypocritical reaction? What could Margaret have done to avoid self-deception?