



Wit and Wisdom: A Book of Quotations

Oscar Wilde

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"I have the simplest tastes," remarked Oscar Wilde. "I am always satisfied with the best." In this superlative collection of quotations by the great Irish playwright and wit, readers will find the very best of Wilde's scintillating comments on art, human nature, morals, society, politics, history, and numerous other subjects. Epigrams, aphorisms, and other bon mots gleaned from Wilde's enduringly popular plays, essays, and conversation offer amusing, thought-provoking observations that resonate with truth and profundity beneath their comic surface.

Widely acknowledged as the most brilliant talker of his age, Wilde once explained to André Gide, "I put all my genius into my life; I put only my talent into my works." This fine collection of nearly 400 quotes, organized by category, contains quotations from both his works and his conversation, including gems from his personal life with which even devotees may be unfamiliar. The result is a splendid introduction to Wilde's mind and personality, embodied in a feast of the English language's most brilliant and perceptive witticisms.

Wit and Wisdom: A Book of Quotations Details

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From Reader Review Wit and Wisdom: A Book of Quotations for online ebook

Aubrey says

Brittany bought this for me! Best present ever.

John says

Some of my absolute favourites are.....

"Either those curtains go or I do"

"A gentleman is one who never hurts anyone's feelings unintentionally"

"A true friend stabs you in the front"

"Always forgive your enemies - nothing annoys them so much"

"Experience is simply the name we give our mistakes"

Donna says

An absolute genius! I love this man! His extremely wise words miraculously work in today's societies. I will always re-read this handy little book. Granted, not all of his quotes are in this book, but a whole lot of them are. I do adore books, and love to keep them crease-free and in pristine condition, but perhaps with this one I will highlight the quotes I simply adore the most. And ones that I feel are relevant in my life. Oscar Wilde; I'm so glad I have discovered your genius, and only regret not finding out about you sooner. Having already read Dorian Gray (which I've removed from my Goodreads 'read' list as I want to re-visit it) I can't wait to read the rest of his works.

Ellen says

A wonderful collection of some of the best aphorisms ever spoken from one of the wittiest men who ever lived. I can't get enough of Oscar's quotations.

XX Sarah XX (former Nefarious Breeder of Murderous Crustaceans) says

A must-read for all Oscar Wilde fans.

Ammara Abid says

~To live is the rarest thing in the world. Most people exist__ that is all.
Irrespective of the fact, whether I agree with all his thoughts or not. But I love his writing style and
He's the wittiest writer of all times. :')

Cora says

charming and wise

Felisberto says

Com a leitura deste livro, compreende-se a vastidão de temas que este escritor, Oscar Wilde, tão aclamado, envolvia no seu trabalho, integrando toda a filosofia advinda desse mesmo trabalho na sua vida e vice-versa. Com muitas ideias iluminadas, outras também pouco racionais e mais moralistas, sente-se bem o génio que lemos.

Um único apontamento negativo a este livro é a repetição excessiva de citações para uma obra tão curta, de tão poucas páginas. O editor parece ter forçado a divisão de citações para que se encaixassem em vários temas, o que tira algum entusiasmo ao livro, pois faz o leitor, neste caso a mim, temer voltar a encontrar num curto espaço de folhas ideias que já tinha lido.

Huy says

Oscar Wilde is always my inspiration. He must have been witty, funny and wise back then. And I will re-read this again, and again :))

Nikoleta says

I adore Oscar Wilde, he had the most brilliant mind of his age! I love this book... all this beautiful quotes gathered in one place! Love it!

“Yes: I am a dreamer. For a dreamer is one who can only find his way by moonlight, and his punishment is that he sees the dawn before the rest of the world.”

Oscar Wilde

Kimberly says

This is my guide to life.

Ryan Stiller says

For all of you quote-alcoholics, this is the book for you. With quotes upon quotes from all of his novels, you will dive into this book whole heartily. With a subject by subject notion, this book is divided into subjects such as (women, men, politics, parents, smoking) etc. Fun book, quick, read, for all of you who love to quote authors.

PGR Nair says

The Wild Wit Of Oscar Wilde

More than a century after his death, Oscar Wilde still intrigues us. This poet, novelist, playwright, and essayist was also his era's leading aphorist. George Bernard Shaw called him "incomparably the greatest talker of his time -- perhaps of all time." The personality of Wilde as a consummate conversationalist was admired by everyone who encountered him. The smooth flowing utterance, sedate and self-possessed, oracular in tone, whimsical in substance, carried on without halt, or hesitation or change of word with the queer zest of a man perfect at the game.

This book an excellent one for anyone to understand and appreciate the impromptu wacky wit of Oscar Wilde. Once in a while, it is good to pick up a book like this and let your hair down (Ideal for bathroom reading too).

So perfect were Wilde's verbal thrusts that his victims were often flattered to have been the cause of them. Wilde claimed he could discuss any subject at any time prepared or not. A companion once took him up on this claim, asking that he discourse on the subject of "The Queen." Wilde retorted instantly- "The queen is not a subject.' Another time a journalist told him, 'I never discuss subjects on which I don't know the facts.' Wilde quickly observed, "That must limit your conversation frightfully."

William Gilbert (of Gilbert and Sullivan) met Wilde at a dinner party. As usual, Wilde dominated the gathering with his stories and wit. 'I wish I could talk like you', said Gilbert during a rare pause. 'I would keep my mouth shut and claim it a virtue!'

'Ah!, That would be selfish', responded Wilde.' I could deny myself the pleasure of talking, but not to others the pleasure of listening.'

Now and again Wilde found himself bested at banter. One occasion took place in America when a lady told him something was 'awfully nice'.

'But 'nice' is a such a nasty word ,' said a bored- looking Wilde

'Really, Mr. Wilde?', she responded. 'But is 'nasty' such a nice word?'

Wilde once watched one of his old professors give a lecture in London. The man was painfully soft spoken. Afterward, he asked some of the members of the audience if they had heard him. 'Overheard, now and then', said Wilde.

The French actor Coquelin once invited Oscar Wilde to visit him at his home. Wilde asked when he would be there.

'I am always home about nine o'clock', said Coquelin

'very well, then I shall come one evening'

'But, Monsieur Wilde, it is nine o'clock in the morning I meant.'

'Oh! Monsieur Coquelin', said Wilde who routinely slept until mid-day, "you are a remarkable man indeed. I am much more bourgeois than you are. I always go to bed about four or five o'clock. I have never been able to stay awake until that hour.'

Before leaving London for a lecture tour to USA in 1882, Wilde took elocution lessons from a friend. 'I want a natural style ', Wilde told his teacher, 'with a touch of affectation'.

'Well', said the teacher, 'Haven't you got that, Oscar?'

One of his favorites story about America involved those the southern states whose older citizens dated the important events before the Civil war. 'How beautiful the moon is tonight', remarked Wilde to a Southerner. 'Yes', the old southerner replied, 'but you should have seen it before the War'.

While touring in USA, he lingered in New York thinking that someone might produce his play 'Vera'. When a theater manager offered him advance on condition he makes some changes in his script'. He replied demurely, 'Who am I to tamper with a masterpiece?'. Wilde himself liked this wit so much that he used to repeat it on many occasions.

At the end of his lecture tour, Wilde developed a stock response for those who asked how it had gone. 'A great success', he would tell them. 'I had two secretaries. One to answer my letters and the other to send locks of hair to my admirers. I have had to let them both go, poor fellows: 'One is in hospital with writer's cramps, and the other is quite bald'.

During a dinner conversation, Wilde told a host that he'd toiled strenuously that day. "I was working on the proof of one of my poems all the morning and took out a comma," he said.

"And in the afternoon?" she asked.

"In the afternoon," responded Wilde, "-- well, I put it back again."

As this legendary genius rightfully observed, 'Life does not cease to be funny when people die any more than it ceases to be serious when people laugh'. Good conversation is an ephemeral art, and as the autumn breezes

blow brown leaves to eternity, the spring green freshness becomes only a memory. So it is with Oscar Wilde. The wicked wit of Wilde still glows green.

Jimmy says

Some examples:

Good taste is the excuse I've always given for leading such a bad life.

I am always astonishing myself. It is the only thing that makes life worth living.

Life cannot be written. Life can only be lived.

People who count their chickens before they are hatched, act very wisely, because chickens run about so absurdly that it is impossible to count them accurately.

It is absurd to divide people into good or bad. People are either charming or tedious.

I like men who have a future and women who have a past.

To love oneself is the beginning of a lifelong romance.

Being natural is simply a pose, and the most irritating pose I know.

Experience is the name everyone gives to their mistakes.

He hasn't a single redeeming vice.

I can resist everything except temptation.

Starvation, and not sin, is the parent of modern crime.

It is the confession, not the priest that gives us absolution.

Most religious teachers spend their time trying to prove the unproven by the unprovable.

The true artist is a man who believes absolutely in himself, because he is absolutely himself.

To reveal art and conceal the artist is art's aim.

No great artist sees things as they really are. If he did he would cease to be an artist.

The only portraits in which one believes are portraits where there is very little of the sitter and a very great deal of the artist.

Only the great masters of style ever succeed in being obscure.

There is no such thing as a moral or an immoral book. Books are well written or badly written. That is all.

There is only one thing in the world worse than being talked about, and that is not being talked about.

I hate people who talk about themselves, as you do, when one wants to talk about oneself, as I do.

I was working on the proof of one of my poems all the morning, and took out a comma. In the afternoon I put it back again.

Jennifer says

i may not always agree with his statements, but i'll be damned if he isn't the wittiest man i've ever read.
