Overall, I was very impressed that this play was directed by a student. Watching the play, I would have thought that a professor directed it. With that said, I thought the acting of each of the characters was amazing. They seemed fully engaged in their character and portrayed it well. Some of the things I noticed were the vocal pauses and use of non-verbal signs. Both of these further helped the actors in forming their character. For example, Lady Bracknell had less time on stage, but when she was on was so powerful and engaging for the audience. She spoke slowly and with tone inflection as to capture the attention of all. Another example was in costume. Cecily wore a white dress and had blonde hair. It portrayed her innocent, pure character well. The play in general seemed to be a parody of life in the sense of love and marriage. It also seemed to be slightly artificial as characters were taking on false identities. The only negative part I found about the play was at times when the actors spoke. Sometimes the actors spoke very fast, and when speaking with an accent, it was hard to understand fully. Most of the actors, however, still portrayed their characters well.

Jack Worthing and Algernon Moncrieff are two of the main characters in the play. Jack was raised after being found in a handbag as an infant. He is a very dependable and responsible person, but the character that shows while being Earnest is the opposite. He pretends to have this brother Earnest, who is really him, so that he could escape reality and
claim a false identity. Because of this, his functional trait is very amiable and uncertain of himself. His likeness traits, which let him appear as being human, are always defining himself in given situations, being a liar, and always acting and smiling nervously. In the beginning of the play, his character seems to develop through what Moncrieff speaking to and about him. An example of how he always relies on others is how he stands upright and moves around a lot, which are external characteristics. Within this are also internal characteristics. While he shows externally he is nervous, you can also tell he is truly nervous on the inside. The audience can relate because being nervous is something common. He moves his hands around a lot and makes sure his appearance is decent. When changing characters from Jack to Earnest, he has to have a completely different mind set to make it believable. When speaking about marriage and asking about the weather, he claims, “I did mean something else.” He later asks, “May I propose to you,” which is not a common question to ask. He needs other characters to bring out who he is. Later his character somewhat changes as Lady Bracknell brings out the anger in him. He speaks more powerfully yet still somewhat uncertain. Until that point, his character is pretty consistent. Later he shows even more power when he finds out he has the power to stop a marriage because of being Cecily’s guardian. His character takes a complete reversal when at the end of the play, he admits to not being who he said he was. His name does, however, turn out to be Earnest.

Algernon Moncrieff is the other main character who has more of a consistent character in the play. He is always very interested in what others are doing or saying and nosy. For example he listens in as Gwendolyn spoke to Worthing about marriage. When they say he can turn around he responds with “Thanks, I’m turned around already.” He is
also a very powerful character who is always smiling and has positive words to give to others. Because of this, his functional trait is that he is charming. Others can not help but find a liking in him because he is so enthusiastic and bountiful. His likeness traits are that he is positive, nosy, and witty. Throughout the play, everything seems to go his way. The audience can tell this by his externals such as his approving facial expressions and head nods. He also says “by being overeducated,” referring to himself, showing that he is very into himself even though he is so charming. Internals could be observed as he listens from a back part of the stage. He is processing in his head what others are saying and thinking ahead to a conclusion. The audience can pick up on this by how attentive he is to others and relating it again to their own life occurrences. The consistency of his character changes somewhat around Cecily. She seems to have power over him even though she is so graceful and dainty. Her power over him exists because of the letters written and her engagement, neither of which were done by his real character. After Algernon finds out others are aware of the false identity, he becomes less in control of the situation. He briefly becomes sad and shows a shocked look on his face. Other external situations are how Algernon and Worthing change places walking a lot. This makes the long conversations more interesting. At the end of the play, Algernon almost loses his superiority and becomes equals with Worthing and the women characters in the play. He admits to the false character, claims Worthing as his brother, and his love for Cecily.

Overall, the play was very well put together. The characters showed their parts clearly for an audience unknown to the play’s story line. Though confusing with different characters in different roles, in the end it all comes together.