

YORK NOTES ON

# THE WAY OF THE WORLD

William Congreve



LONGMAN  
LITERATURE  
GUIDES

# Contents

|  |               |
|--|---------------|
| <b>Part 1: Introduction</b>                    | <i>page</i> 5 |
| The life of William Congreve                   | 5             |
| The comedy of manners                          | 7             |
| A note on the text                             | 9             |
| <b>Part 2: Summaries</b>                       | 10            |
| A general summary                              | 10            |
| Detailed summaries                             | 13            |
| <b>Part 3: Commentary</b>                      | 34            |
| The plot                                       | 34            |
| Construction: the unities                      | 35            |
| Materialism                                    | 36            |
| Realism  | 37            |
| Wit and wisdom                                 | 38            |
| Humour   | 38            |
| Congreve's style                               | 40            |
| The play's conclusion                          | 43            |
| The characters                                 | 43            |
| <b>Part 4: Hints for study</b>                 | 60            |
| Quotations                                     | 61            |
| Answering questions                            | 63            |
| <b>Part 5: Suggestions for further reading</b> | 67            |
| The author of these notes                      | 69            |