

## JANE AUSTEN (1775-1817)



Jane Austen was born on 16 December 1775 (beginning of the American War of Independence) in the rectory of Steventon (Hampshire), where her father was a vicar, a distinguished classical scholar. Jane's mother was a keen gardener, mother of eight children and proud of her aristocratic relations and heritage. Jane was the sixth child, her only sister Cassandra, named after her mother, was two years older than Jane. The second son was fostered out to a family in a neighbouring village because he suffered fits. The boys received a classical education while the girls were schooled in household management. In 1784 both sisters went to Abbey School at Reading for two years. Before the age of sixteen Jane had filled three notebooks with stories, poems and plays. By 1796 she had completed *Sense and Sensibility*, *Pride and Prejudice* and *Northanger Abbey*. In 1801 the family moved to Bath where the sisters were not happy. Jane is said to have fallen in love with a man whose sudden subsequent death dealt her a blow from which she never fully recovered. (Her sister Cassie told her niece Anna whose daughter recollected the story; Speculation has ranged from the suggestion that he was a clergyman, to that he was Captain John Wordsworth, brother of the Lakeland poet, who drowned at sea.) With her father's death in 1805 financial worries became a constant problem. The sisters and their mother moved with their brother Frank to Southampton and later to Chawton where Jane devoted herself to writing. To all outward appearances she seemed no more than just another refined spinster gentlewoman; she dressed in the style of an older woman, generally wearing a cap, symbol of middle-age. She spent her time in the kitchen garden and at her embroidery, a routine only broken by visits from relatives, nieces and nephews, to whom Jane was an amusing, interesting and animated speaker. In 1811 she published her first book *Sense and Sensibility*, followed by *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) and *Mansfield Park* (1814). Her health deteriorated and she began to suffer from fatigue (Addison's Disease). She died in 1817 at 41 years of age.

Jane Austen made her own restricted social world the centre of her writing. Her novels have a unique and subtle charm, with an unprecedented mixture of sharpness, fun, wit and wisdom. Critics have accused Jane Austen of being peculiarly oblivious to the great events occupying the world stage in her lifetime (American War of Independence; Napoleonic Wars, Waterloo 1815...) Jane Austen's view of the world and of human nature was rooted in the 18th century. In Britain the 18th century turned its back on the excesses of the previous century that had led to civil war. Order, and the management of life -both social and individual- according to the dictates of reason rather than emotion was considered necessary to hold in check Man's violent, corrupt and fundamentally volatile nature.

Using the material she had at first hand, Jane Austen fashioned her art. Almost all her action reported in dialogue, that is conversation. When anything dramatic upsets the order and calm lives of her characters, elopements, duels, death, it occurs off-stage, belonging to a realm beyond her experience.

Jane Austen prized accuracy of detail and what she called credibility. Such qualities give her novels great realism, the feeling that you have seen the places she describes and known her characters personally. She depicted the domestic life of the Regency period with photographic realism. She can be considered a modern novelist because she concentrated on human beings and their mutual reactions.

Austen's novels are far from being openly didactic, but they have a moral purpose that cannot be overlooked, even if her subject-matter is in a sense trivial (a young woman's finding a husband). It was from the 18C novelists that Austen derived her conception of the novel. She owed much to Richardson and Fielding; her novels represent a feminisation of Fielding's. She relied more on dialogue and, as with Fielding, the comment is not direct but implicit in the turn of the sentence. Both are examples of the moralist as satirist. She owes much of her elegant prose, simple and witty, occasionally stiff, to Addison and Steele. She has a special gift for dialogue, especially comic dialogue. Her satirical humour is without excesses of rhetoric or verbosity.

Novel writing in Jane Austen's day was considered by some to be trivial and unimportant. Jane was determined that the novel should be taken seriously as other literary forms. "*The novel is a work in which the greatest powers of the mind are displayed... the most thorough knowledge of human nature, the happiest delineation of its varieties, the liveliest effusions of wit and humour are conveyed in the best chosen language*". Austen finally saw her work ("her children", as she called her books) published and achieved recognition. Even the Prince Regent admired her work and kept a set of her books in each of his royal houses.

In addition to her powers of observation, description and characterisation, Jane Austen was a moralist, believing firmly in a moral code by which to judge human conduct. It was a code based on honesty tempered by realism, "right" judgement and "good sense". In each of the novels the heroine only gains her heart's desire after learning -sometimes painfully- self-knowledge. What prevents this knowledge is often delusion -not seeing people as they really are - and the reasons for this are inexperience, inadequate knowledge and superficiality. Only experience and long association will reveal a person's true nature.

The subtlety and intimacy of female relationships is one of the mainsprings of her art. She depicts men solely in relation to women -negotiating the pitfalls of the drawing room rather than the battlefield.

Works: *Sense and Sensibility* (1811), *Pride and Prejudice* (1813), *Mansfield Park* (1814), *Emma* (1816), *Northanger Abbey* (1818), *Persuasion* (1818).

In her first novels, *Sense and Sensibility*, and *Northanger Abbey*, the source of her comedy -the conflict between illusion and reality- is essentially the confusion in an immature mind between literature and life. Thence she proceeds in her later novels to dissection and exposure of the more normal follies and illusions of mankind. *Mansfield*, *Emma* and *Persuasion* were written after an interval of more than ten years and her mind grew graver; it is as if she could find folly, self-deception, irresponsibility, silliness and the individual lack of knowledge of himself or herself, no longer merely funny; they became contemptible, even hateful to her.

## ***Pride and Prejudice***

One of the first novels written in the English language, and one of the wittiest, Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* has delighted readers for nearly two hundred years. First published in 1813, during a time when England still faced the grave threat posed by Napoleonic France, *Pride and Prejudice* offers an intensely personal story in which the drawing rooms of upper-middle class society are the setting for the extended courtship of Elizabeth Bennet and Fitzwilliam Darcy. In a society in which women scramble to find husbands amid the stumbling blocks of financial snobbery and class prejudice, Austen's novel celebrates the ultimate triumph of romantic love over all impediments.

The novel is written in light, airy, sparkling prose, and its pages are filled with quick-witted, immensely entertaining dialogue. Austen herself feared that *Pride and Prejudice*, for all its popular appeal, was "rather too light and bright, and sparkling," to be considered a serious novel. In addition to the delightful dialogue and happy ending, the novel offers an unforgettable portrait of a particular society with all of its charms and blemishes. Darcy and Elizabeth move through a landscape dotted with brilliantly-drawn characters, from Elizabeth's parents—the idiotic, marriage-obsessed Mrs. Bennet and detached, droll Mr. Bennet—to the pretentious and sanctimonious clergyman, Mr. Collins, and the rakish, gold-digging militia officer Wickham. The novel's scenery is limited to well-appointed homes and estates, but its exploration of the human condition is unlimited.

*Pride and Prejudice* is a comedy of manners, comparable to Shakespeare's comedies in the delight it takes in conversation and wordplay. It is also a pitch-perfect piece of social commentary, brilliantly dissecting the foolish, class-based prejudices of its characters, from the too-proud Mr. Darcy (who eventually reforms himself) to the snotty Miss Bingley and the absurdly self-important Lady Catherine de Bourgh. Best of all, it never oversimplifies. Austen's prose expertly skewers the wellborn and the lower classes alike. Even in its most biting moments, the novel never loses its sense of good cheer, and never ceases carrying its readers toward the destination they desire: the final triumph of true love over all obstacles.

## Key Facts

**Type of work** – Novel

**Genre** - Comedy of manners

**Language** - English

**Time and place written** - England, between 1796 and 1813

**Date of first publication** - 1813

**Publisher** - Thomas Egerton of London

**Narrator** - Third-person omniscient

**Climax** - Mr. Darcy's proposal to Elizabeth (Volume III, Chapter XVI)

**Protagonist** - Elizabeth Bennet

**Antagonist** - Snobbish class-consciousness (epitomized by Lady Catherine de Bourgh and Miss Bingley)

**Setting (time)** - Some point during the Napoleonic Wars (1797–1815)

**Setting (place)** - Longbourn, in rural England

**Point of view** - The novel is primarily told from Elizabeth Bennet's point of view

**Falling action** - The two chapters of the novel after Darcy's proposal

**Tense** - Past tense

**Foreshadowing** - The only notable example of foreshadowing occurs when Elizabeth visits Pemberley, Darcy's estate, in Volume III, Chapter 1. Her appreciation of the estate foreshadows her eventual realization of her love for its owner.

**Tone** - Comic—or, in Jane Austen's own words, "light and bright, and sparkling"

**Themes** - Love; Reputation; Class

**Motifs** - Courtship; Journeys

**Symbols** - The novel is light on symbolism, except on the visit to Pemberley, which is described as being "neither formal, nor falsely adorned," and is clearly meant to symbolize the character of Mr. Darcy.

## Plot Overview

The news that a wealthy young gentleman named Charles Bingley has rented the manor of Netherfield Park causes a great stir in the nearby village of Longbourn, especially in the Bennet household. The Bennets have five unmarried daughters—from oldest to youngest, Jane, Elizabeth, Mary, Kitty, and Lydia—and Mrs. Bennet is desperate to see them all married. After Mr. Bennet pays a social visit to Mr. Bingley, the Bennets attend a ball at which Mr. Bingley is present. He is taken with Jane and spends much of the evening dancing with her. His close friend, Mr. Darcy, is less pleased with the evening and haughtily refuses to dance with Elizabeth, which makes everyone view him as arrogant and obnoxious.

At social functions over subsequent weeks, however, Mr. Darcy finds himself increasingly attracted to Elizabeth's charm and intelligence. Jane's friendship with Mr. Bingley also continues to burgeon, and Jane pays a visit to the Bingley mansion. On her journey to the house she is caught in a downpour and catches ill, forcing her to stay at Netherfield for several days. In order to tend to Jane, Elizabeth hikes through muddy fields and arrives with a spattered dress, much to the disdain of the snobbish Miss Bingley, Charles Bingley's sister. Miss Bingley's spite only increases when she notices that Darcy, whom she is pursuing, pays quite a bit of attention to Elizabeth.

When Elizabeth and Jane return home, they find Mr. Collins visiting their household. Mr. Collins is a young clergyman who stands to inherit Mr. Bennet's property, which has been "entailed," meaning that it can only be passed down to male heirs. Mr. Collins is a pompous fool, though he is quite enthralled by the Bennet girls. Shortly after his arrival, he makes a proposal of marriage to Elizabeth. She turns him down, wounding his pride. Meanwhile, the Bennet girls have become friendly with militia officers stationed in a nearby town. Among them is Wickham, a handsome young soldier who is friendly toward Elizabeth and tells her how Darcy cruelly cheated him out of an inheritance.

At the beginning of winter, the Bingleys and Darcy leave Netherfield and return to London, much to Jane's dismay. A further shock arrives with the news that Mr. Collins has become engaged to Charlotte Lucas, Elizabeth's best friend and the poor daughter of a local knight. Charlotte explains to Elizabeth that she is getting older and needs the match for financial reasons. Charlotte and Mr. Collins get married and Elizabeth promises to visit them at their new home. As winter progresses, Jane visits the city to see friends (hoping also that she might see Mr. Bingley). However, Miss Bingley visits her and behaves rudely, while Mr. Bingley fails to visit her at all. The marriage prospects for the Bennet girls appear bleak.

That spring, Elizabeth visits Charlotte, who now lives near the home of Mr. Collins's patron, Lady Catherine de Bourgh, who is also Darcy's aunt. Darcy calls on Lady Catherine and encounters Elizabeth, whose presence leads him to make a number of visits to the Collins's home, where she is staying. One day, he makes a shocking proposal of marriage, which Elizabeth quickly refuses. She tells Darcy that she considers him arrogant and unpleasant, then scolds him for steering Bingley away from Jane and disinheriting Wickham. Darcy leaves her but shortly thereafter delivers a letter to her. In this letter, he admits that he urged Bingley to distance himself from Jane, but claims he did so only because he thought their romance was not serious. As for Wickham, he informs Elizabeth that the young officer is a liar and that the real cause of their disagreement was Wickham's attempt to elope with his young sister, Georgianna Darcy.

This letter causes Elizabeth to reevaluate her feelings about Darcy. She returns home and acts coldly toward Wickham. The militia is leaving town, which makes the younger, rather man-crazy Bennet girls distraught. Lydia manages to obtain permission from her father to spend the

summer with an old colonel in Brighton, where Wickham's regiment will be stationed. With the arrival of June, Elizabeth goes on another journey, this time with the Gardiners, who are relatives of the Bennets. The trip takes her to the North and eventually to the neighborhood of Pemberley, Darcy's estate. She visits Pemberley, after making sure that Darcy is away, and delights in the building and grounds, while hearing from Darcy's servants that he is a wonderful, generous master. Suddenly, Darcy arrives and behaves cordially toward her. Making no mention of his proposal, he entertains the Gardiners and invites Elizabeth to meet his sister.

Shortly thereafter, however, a letter arrives from home, telling Elizabeth that Lydia has eloped with Wickham and that the couple is nowhere to be found, which suggests that they may be living together out of wedlock. Fearful of the disgrace such a situation would bring on her entire family, Elizabeth hastens home. Mr. Gardiner and Mr. Bennet go off to search for Lydia, but Mr. Bennet eventually returns home empty-handed. Just when all hope seems lost, a letter comes from Mr. Gardiner saying that the couple has been found and that Wickham has agreed to marry Lydia in exchange for an annual income. The Bennets are convinced that Mr. Gardiner has paid off Wickham, but Elizabeth learns that the source of the money, and of her family's salvation, was none other than Darcy.

Now married, Wickham and Lydia return to Longbourn briefly, where Mr. Bennet treats them coldly. They then depart for Wickham's new assignment in the North of England. Shortly thereafter, Bingley returns to Netherfield and resumes his courtship of Jane. Darcy goes to stay with him and pays visits to the Bennets but makes no mention of his desire to marry Elizabeth. Bingley, on the other hand, presses his suit and proposes to Jane, to the delight of everyone but Bingley's haughty sister. While the family celebrates, Lady Catherine de Bourgh pays a visit to Longbourn. She corners Elizabeth and says that she has heard that Darcy, her nephew, is planning to marry her. Since she considers a Bennet an unsuitable match for a Darcy, Lady Catherine demands that Elizabeth promise to refuse him. Elizabeth spiritedly refuses, saying that she is not engaged to Darcy, but that she will not promise anything against her own happiness. A little later, Elizabeth and Darcy go out walking together and he tells her that his feelings have not altered since the spring. She tenderly accepts his proposal, and both Jane and Elizabeth are married.

## **Themes, Motifs, and Symbols**

### Themes

Themes are the fundamental and often universal ideas explored in a literary work.

Love - *Pride and Prejudice* contains one of the most cherished love stories in English literature: the courtship between Darcy and Elizabeth. As in any good love story, the lovers must elude and overcome numerous stumbling blocks, beginning with the tensions caused by the lovers' own personal qualities. Elizabeth's pride makes her misjudge Darcy on the basis of a poor first impression, while Darcy's prejudice against Elizabeth's poor social standing blinds him, for a time, to her many virtues. (Of course, one could also say that Elizabeth is guilty of prejudice and Darcy of pride—the title cuts both ways.) Austen, meanwhile, poses countless smaller obstacles to the realization of the love between Elizabeth and Darcy, including Lady Catherine's attempt to control her nephew, Miss Bingley's snobbery, Mrs. Bennet's idiocy, and Wickham's deceit. In each case, anxieties about social connections, or the desire for better social connections, interfere with the workings of love. Darcy and Elizabeth's realization of a mutual and tender love seems to imply that Austen views love as something independent of these social forces, as something that can

be captured if only an individual is able to escape the warping effects of hierarchical society. Austen does sound some more realist (or, one could say, cynical) notes about love, using the character of Charlotte Lucas, who marries the buffoon Mr. Collins for his money, to demonstrate that the heart does not always dictate marriage. Yet with her central characters, Austen suggests that true love is a force separate from society and one that can conquer even the most difficult of circumstances. (see the following pages for an extended discussion of love and marriage)

Reputation - *Pride and Prejudice* depicts a society in which a woman's reputation is of the utmost importance. A woman is expected to behave in certain ways. Stepping outside the social norms makes her vulnerable to ostracism. This theme appears in the novel, when Elizabeth walks to Netherfield and arrives with muddy skirts, to the shock of the reputation-conscious Miss Bingley and her friends. At other points, the ill-mannered, ridiculous behavior of Mrs. Bennet gives her a bad reputation with the more refined (and snobbish) Darcys and Bingleys. Austen pokes gentle fun at the snobs in these examples, but later in the novel, when Lydia elopes with Wickham and lives with him out of wedlock, the author treats reputation as a very serious matter. By becoming Wickham's lover without benefit of marriage, Lydia clearly places herself outside the social pale, and her disgrace threatens the entire Bennet family. The fact that Lydia's judgment, however terrible, would likely have condemned the other Bennet sisters to marriageless lives seems grossly unfair. Why should Elizabeth's reputation suffer along with Lydia's? Darcy's intervention on the Bennet's behalf thus becomes all the more generous, but some readers might resent that such an intervention was necessary at all. If Darcy's money had failed to convince Wickham to marry Lydia, would Darcy have still married Elizabeth? Does his transcendence of prejudice extend that far? The happy ending of *Pride and Prejudice* is certainly emotionally satisfying, but in many ways it leaves the theme of reputation, and the importance placed on reputation, unexplored. One can ask of *Pride and Prejudice*, to what extent does it critique social structures, and to what extent does it simply accept their inevitability?

Class - The theme of class is related to reputation, in that both reflect the strictly regimented nature of life for the middle and upper classes in Regency England. The lines of class are strictly drawn. While the Bennets, who are middle class, may socialize with the upper class Bingleys and Darcys, they are clearly their social inferiors and are treated as such. Austen satirizes this kind of class-consciousness, particularly in the character of Mr. Collins, who spends most of his time toadying to his upper class patron, Lady Catherine de Bourgh. Though Mr. Collins offers an extreme example, he is not the only one to hold such views. His conception of the importance of class is shared, among others, by Mr. Darcy, who believes in the dignity of his lineage; Miss Bingley, who dislikes anyone not as socially accepted as she is; and Wickham, who will do anything he can to get enough money to raise himself into a higher station. Mr. Collins's views are merely the most extreme and obvious. The satire directed at Mr. Collins is therefore also more subtly directed at the entire social hierarchy and the conception of all those within it at its correctness, in complete disregard of other, more worthy virtues. Through the Darcy-Elizabeth and Bingley-Jane marriages, Austen shows the power of love and happiness to overcome class boundaries and prejudices, thereby implying that such prejudices are hollow, unfeeling, and unproductive. Of course, this whole discussion of class must be made with the understanding that Austen herself is often criticized as being a classist: she doesn't really represent anyone from the lower classes; those servants she does portray are generally happy with their lot. Austen does criticize class structure but only a limited slice of that structure.

Motifs

Motifs are recurring structures, contrasts, or literary devices that can help to develop and inform the text's major themes.

**Courtship** - In a sense, *Pride and Prejudice* is the story of two courtships—those between Darcy and Elizabeth and between Bingley and Jane. Within this broad structure appear other, smaller courtships: Mr. Collins's aborted wooing of Elizabeth, followed by his successful wooing of Charlotte Lucas; Miss Bingley's unsuccessful attempt to attract Darcy; Wickham's pursuit first of Elizabeth, then of the never-seen Miss King, and finally of Lydia. Courtship therefore takes on a profound, if often unspoken, importance in the novel. Marriage is the ultimate goal, courtship constitutes the real working-out of love. Courtship becomes a sort of forge of a person's personality, and each courtship becomes a microcosm for different sorts of love (or different ways to abuse love as a means to social advancement).

**Journeys** - Nearly every scene in *Pride and Prejudice* takes place indoors, and the action centers around the Bennet home in the small village of Longbourn. Nevertheless, journeys—even short ones—function repeatedly as catalysts for change in the novel. Elizabeth's first journey, by which she intends simply to visit Charlotte and Mr. Collins, brings her into contact with Mr. Darcy, and leads to his first proposal. Her second journey takes her to Derby and Pemberley, where she fans the growing flame of her affection for Darcy. The third journey, meanwhile, sends various people in pursuit of Wickham and Lydia, and the journey ends with Darcy tracking them down and saving the Bennet family honor, in the process demonstrating his continued devotion to Elizabeth.

## Symbols

Symbols are objects, characters, figures, or colors used to represent abstract ideas or concepts.

**Pemberley** - *Pride and Prejudice* is remarkably free of explicit symbolism, which perhaps has something to do with the novel's reliance on dialogue over description. Nevertheless, Pemberley, Darcy's estate, sits at the center of the novel, literally and figuratively, as a geographic symbol of the man who owns it. Elizabeth visits it at a time when her feelings toward Darcy are beginning to warm; she is enchanted by its beauty and charm, and by the picturesque countryside, just as she will be charmed, increasingly, by the gifts of its owner. Austen makes the connection explicit when she describes the stream that flows beside the mansion. "In front," she writes, "a stream of some natural importance was swelled into greater, but without any artificial appearance." Darcy possesses a "natural importance" that is "swelled" by his arrogance, but which coexists with a genuine honesty and lack of "artificial appearance." Like the stream, he is neither "formal, nor falsely adorned." Pemberley even offers a symbol-within-a-symbol for their budding romance: when Elizabeth encounters Darcy on the estate, she is crossing a small bridge, suggesting the broad gulf of misunderstanding and class prejudice that lies between them—and the bridge that their love will build across it.

## Marriage and Love

The novels' major theme is love and marriage. Yet, they are not romantic stories. Passions are controlled.

Sex is defined as explicit, exhaustive detail about what people do and feel in bed. As far as Jane Austen is concerned, her understanding of sexuality is much less narrow.

There is little examination of the feelings and responses sexual attraction can bring. To Jane Austen sexuality was far vital to relationships than its counterpart, affection. Once respect, regard and love were established and validated by marriage, then sexuality was acceptable and taken for granted. Outside marriage, sexuality was merely self-indulgent, and therefore a threat to society.

Her main interest is to dramatise sex in everyday social life -in the drawing room rather than in the bedroom. The courtship plots she creates allow her to explore the relations between sex and moral judgement, sex and friendship, sex and knowledge.

The very publicity of sex in Austen's novels is what makes her examination of it in social life so extensive and powerful. We have to consider different points related with the treatment of sex in social life by Austen.

A general view of society in the towns may have been sophisticated and attractive to the wealthy, but the aristocracy and the gentry derived their social position from the land they owned. The abundance of massive houses in the English and Scottish countryside is a testimony to the wealth of the men who built them and to their desire to make their mark in their country. (We can see how the Bingley family in Meryton). The desire to maintain a country house or seat) has been prevalent throughout English history. A sure sign of upward social mobility was the purchase of a stately property in the countryside.

Acceptance by the English upper classes has not, on the whole, been difficult. The standard joke is that it takes three generations to make a gentleman. These complexities of rural society (that is, the society of the rich) are treated in Jane Austen novel and beautifully described.

Shrewd and ironic, she never questioned the foundations on which her society was based. Her works, by virtue of the skill and insight, mark a turning point in the history of the English novel.

The literary and social conventions governing sexuality during the time Austen composed her novels, there were established very elaborate codes of behaviour for relations between the sexes.

The relations that the literary and social conventions have to one another and to documented sexual attitudes or sexual behaviour during this period, human behaviour is frequently at odds with the codes or conventions that are supposed to govern it. Private sexual behaviour and attitudes are notoriously likely to diverge from publicly proclaimed norms and are, for this reason, rarely documented and very hard to establish. The best sources are private journals and letters, but even these are unsatisfactory: they are scarce and unrepresentative, for usually only those of aristocratic, political or literary figures survive; and these journals are often censored.

Courtship is the one publicly approved form of sexuality, so is fully documented by both public and private sources during this period. It is also the focus of didactic novelists and of Austen herself.

All available eighteenth-century records -journals, letters, conduct books, essays and novels- insist that every possible stage of courtship must be reached in full view of the public eye. These stages -initial attraction, flirtation, infatuation and love- develop within a social world. Moreover, the public eye is readily



offended by any deviation from the various courtship conventions which operate, to some extent, both in life and in literature.

By contrast with their frequently absurd attitudes toward attraction, flirtation, infatuation and love can the freedom, wit and good sense of Austen's treatment be fully appreciated.

Initial attraction between the sexes is a subject of many warnings. Love at first sight is particularly reprobated. The likely consequence: a marriage based on "mere personal liking, without the requisite foundation of esteem, without the sanction of parental approbation", can produce only "Misery and Shame"

Although the conduct books only rarely warn young women against the seducing effects of good looks in men, such works continually put them on their guard against the seducing effect of their own charms on themselves, that is, against the consciousness of being distinguished by personal attractions.

This consciousness makes women particularly susceptible to the elaborate compliments of flirtation, known also as gallantry, coquetry and polite raillery. Although women are adjured in the strongest terms not to coquet, much more frequent are exhortations to close their ears to compliments.

A woman's love, according to the conduct books and many novels, is founded on gratitude and esteem and does not vary; a man's love is acknowledged to be more capricious, but esteem should be its foundation also.

Austen subjects all the conventions of courtship to the scrutiny of irony and commonsense as part of her attempt to dramatise the relations between character and sexuality within everyday social life. In the novels there is a favourite perception: that good looks and charm inevitably create favourable responses and biased judgement. Such bias is at work when Elizabeth Bennet honours Wickham for his sentiments toward the Darcy's father and thinks him "Handsome than ever" as he utters them, or when she reflects that Wickham's "very countenance may vouch for his being amiable". This simplest and most instinctive sexual response is always taken for granted in Austen's novels, not criticised or investigated. Bingley is immediately attracted to Jane Bennet "The most beautiful creature I ever beheld" as Jane to Bingley, although her account is rather less candid:

"He is just what a young man ought to be", said she, "sensible, good humoured, lively; and I never saw such happy manners so much ease, with such perfect good breeding;"

"He is also handsome", replied Elizabeth, "Which a young man ought likewise to be, if he possibly can. His character is thereby complete".

The more complicated forms of sexuality in Austen's novels, flirtation, infatuation and the mentor relation, all of which may precede but need not necessarily lead to courtship. Of these, flirtation is by far the most complex. As Austen treats it, flirtation is often indistinguishable for courtship. In the beginning, the same behaviour -attention, admiration, teasing, flattery, even professions of devotion- may be appropriate to both. But the two cannot be confused in the end, for both courtship "means" something -marriage- and flirtation nothing.

Though few of Austen's major characters pursue flirtation all the novels dramatise the loose, free floating sexual energies that lead like Kitty and Lydia Bennet to attach themselves to one available. Unlike her contemporaries, Austen is capable of a number of attitudes toward flirtation.

Flirtation is dangerous: one character, who is no fool, is deliberately fooling another. In such cases Austen's moral judgement is adverse; but as a rule she delights in flirtation as a form of sexuality, for example when she describes Elizabeth Bennet dressing for a ball "with more than usual care preparing in

the highest spirits for the conquest of all that remained unsubdued of (Wickham's) heart trusting that it was not more than might be won in the course of the evening.

Flirtation shades easily into infatuation, and distinctions can be difficult: is Elizabeth flirting with Wickham or infatuated? Although she is deceived in him, Elizabeth's interest in Wickham is never strong enough to be labelled infatuation. Moreover, for Austen infatuation often involves attraction to a consciously predetermined ideal.

The attraction of opposing personalities usually takes a far stronger and more complex form. This form of attraction -sexual antagonism- is most clearly dramatised in *Pride and Prejudice*. Undercurrents of sexual attraction and challenge accompany the antagonism expressed in the early exchanges between Darcy and Elizabeth, an antagonism based on differences in manner and style. Just as flirtation tries to make sex a game, antagonism makes it a combat, a contest, a power play.

Although Austen does not endorse the drive for conquest that is at work in this form of sexuality, neither does she dismiss sexual antagonism as a means of making characters known to one another. Darcy and Elizabeth come to know each other despite (and partly because of) early misjudgement and conflict. One reason Darcy is attracted to Elizabeth is that she is always teasing or challenging him, not flattering him like Miss Bingley. Darcy and Elizabeth's conflicts are resolved because both can move from misjudgement, testing and conflicts of will to those fundamental likenesses in principle and perception that so often give rise, paradoxically enough, to antagonism.

## MARRIAGE

In Jane Austen world, both financially and socially, marriage was a woman's chief aim. Financially, because of women's dependent position, marriage was the honourable provision, infinitely preferable to the dependency of spinsterhood or the near slave-labour of being a governess. Socially, it marked maturity. When a woman married and started a family, a woman took her place in society. So marriage is obviously the focus of interest in Jane Austen's world.

A model of marriage in Jane Austen's time was that of a business contract, joining and strengthening families' wealth and status, linking estates, providing heir, giving women financial security. Partners were chosen for what might now seem unemotional reasons: fortune and connections similar to, but preferably better than, one's own.

At first Jane Austen seems to disapprove strongly of such arrangement. The opening sentence of the book, she mocks the link between marriage and money made by Mrs Bennet when talking about Bingley.

Elizabeth judgement about it, marriage, is choosing a husband for love, rather than money, despising those who wed to be "well-married". But when she marries Darcy and moves to the comfort and elegance of Pemberley, she has also achieved an adult view of marriage as a practical and necessary financial contract.

In her novels sex is one of the way men and women come to know each other, and sexual attraction consummated by sexual union in marriage is the highest form of intimacy that the characters achieve. The novel moves quickly from frustration and misjudgement to satisfaction in every sense. Every page of Austen's novels is charged with emotional, moral and social as well as sexual conflicts, and all are resolved in the end. What distinguished Austen's treatment of sex in social life distinguished all her concerns equally: she gives us resolutions in which sexuality is as tested and satisfied as is morality or any other aspect of character.

Between major characters, then mentor relation, sexual antagonism, flirtation and infatuation give way to or even lead to full knowledge and intimacy between equals. Though separate sexual roles are certainly

adopted by Austen's married couples, her conclusions tend to disregard (without denying) the social conventions that make wives submissive to husband.

The social roles and activities Austen explores are the modes of sexuality in daily life, and they pervade the emotional, moral and intellectual lives of Austen's characters perhaps even more than they do our own; in this sense, her novels may have been too much sex rather than too little. Austen's rendering of everyday sexuality takes for granted in ways unthinkable to her contemporaries and often ignored by moderns that every relationship can carry a sexual charge. Sexual response and excitement are, in Austen's novels, so much a part of ordinary social life that in significant ways social intercourse is sexual intercourse. By dramatising the interplay of character and sex in ordinary life, then, Austen gives us the unavoidable and complicated sex of our social lives, seen with a persuasiveness and with that ought not to surprise us, if we do know her.

Examining each character's view of love, marriage and their conduct towards them we can see that Elizabeth, really appalled as the rest, seeing the elopement as shameful, anti-social and irresponsible. She also has the strength of character to question whether such a marriage is right.

Jane Austen uses standard romantic terms to describe Elizabeth's preparation for the Netherfield ball to conquer "all that remained unsubdued of his heart".

Finally Elizabeth's relationship with Darcy is such as a good communication, giving each other mutual support and affection and generally complement each other. It seems in the end that she's found her true partner, he controlled her spirit by his rationality, and she gave him a less severe, more emotional view of the world.

At the end she has not only changed herself through her love for Darcy, but has changed Darcy through his love for her.

As far as Darcy's concerned, that is the first time he has been truly in love, and that, because she is the right woman for him. Elizabeth is able to affect him deeply -that we can call "real love"- coming from the heart and not from the mind. We can consider it the one true union in the book.

About Lydia, first of all consider that in Jane Austen's day a girl was unmarriageable if she had eloped, and, once her parents were dead, was possibly without means of support. She is simply a naïve child, falling for Wickham without considering this, let alone the family disgrace. But when she returned, she has all that her mother has brought her up to want: a handsome husband, a wedding ring and a married status. Later we can see her marriage characterized by a lack of money which reflects their growing lack of affection.

Her husband Wickham is the kind of man who treats women in the standard romantic way, making them feel wanted, respected, admired (Only he does Elizabeth have the classic romantic symptoms; only for him does she dress up, prepared for the conquest, noticing later that he is a chauvinist).

Wickham's marriage is vital to the plot, not only because it brings Elizabeth and Darcy together, but because it also represents what is in the end the wrong sort of marriage. For him, more than for Lydia, it is a sexually based relationship. He takes her to London for companionship, with no intention of carrying her. This is the truly anti-social act -placing sex before affection, knowing it may destroy the other person.

Wickham ultimately submits to marriage because he is paid, the relationship has to fail for it is based, like Wickham's own character, on wrong.

Jane represents romantic love, which is seen in the novel as unrealistic and suspect. It's Jane's sweet nature, hiding her vulnerability, which leads to her being misunderstood and losing Bingley for a while.

Bingley shows us the negative side of romantic love. Though Elizabeth defends Bingley, Mrs Gardiner's criticisms are true, and show us that real love is stable, developing and realistic.

Charlotte makes the relationship work, at the same time retaining her emotional independence, she married Collins just because she wanted to find someone to support her. And also we can see that his reasons for marrying are selfish. Both reasons for marrying are equally practical, and a good relationship results.

Mrs Bennet's role as a matchmaking mother is achieved finally.

### ***Concerning Human Understanding.***

**Pride and Prejudice** is the drama of pre-judging and re-judging, of recognition. A very important part of the book touches on some aspects of the whole problem of knowledge.

Eighteenth-century philosophers had, of course, addressed themselves to what Locke called "the discerning faculties of a man"(Essay Concerning Human Understanding). "our business is not to know all things, but those which concern our conduct"... " because of settled habit we take for the perception of our sensation that which is an idea formed by our judgement".

The first title that Austen chose for *Pride and Prejudice*, *First Impressions*, provides an important clue to a central concern of the final version.

*Impressions* is also a key word in David Hume's philosophy, to which he gives pre-eminence as the source for knowledge.

All the perceptions of the human mind resolve themselves into two distinct kinds, which I shall call IMPRESSIONS and IDEAS. The difference betwixt these consists in the degrees of force and liveliness, with which they strike upon the mind, and make their way into our thought or consciousness. Those perceptions, which enter with most force and violence, we may name impressions; and under this name I comprehend all our sensations, passions and emotions, as they make their first appearance in the soul. By ideas I mean the faint image of these in thinking and reasoning...

(Treatise on Human Nature)

The constant need to be alert to the difference between appearance and reality is made clear from the start. The ability of language to make black appear white and vice versa was a crucial truth of which Austen was particularly aware. In a society which relied so much on conversation it is a constant danger. The question of how language is used is also studied in the book. Some people employ it unreflectively as an almost automatic extension of their behaviour, unable to think outside their particular social situation (Mrs. Bennet's repetitions; Lady Catherine's commands). Others are capable of using language reflectively, thinking outside their particular social context.

In this society linguistic experience is stressed almost to the exclusion of bodily experience (see conversations between Elizabeth and Darcy). Austen minimises the bodily dimension.

Another concern of the book is what constitutes a person's "real character". The word "picture" appears frequently in the novel. "Picture" is a mental image derived from impressions or imagination. The neo-classical approach tended to minimise the individuating qualities of a person or thing in favour of more generic attributes, or in deference to classical models, but for Austen it was precisely the individuating qualities which held most interest. Her characters are not types.

The novel, conceived first as epistolary is a combination of both, as a metaphor of man, performing/dramatic self and reflective/epistolary self. It is in social performance that Elizabeth reveals all her vitality, vivacity and wit; it is in private reflection ("reflection must be reserved for solitary hours) that she matures in judgement and reconsiders first impressions.

Austen seems also quite interested in the effects on a family of ineffectual, absent, or ailing fathers, which indicates a dangerous lapse of central authority. Mrs Bennet, incapable of reflection, loses herself in performance. Mr. Bennet takes refuge in his library.

## INDIVIDUAL/SOCIAL

Austen is fundamentally loyal to the respect for limits and clear rationality of the 18C. However, she is writing at a time when a major shift of sensibility is taking place and major social changes are imminent. Among writers who published work the same year as *Pride and Prejudice* were Byron, Coleridge, Sir Walter Scott and Shelley.

## Important Quotations Explained

1. It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife.

### Explanation for Quotation 1

This is the first sentence of *Pride and Prejudice* and stands as one of the most famous first lines in literature. Even as it briskly introduces the arrival of Mr. Bingley at Netherfield, the event that sets the novel in motion, this sentence also offers a miniature sketch of the entire plot, which concerns itself with the pursuit of "single men in possession of a good fortune" by various female characters. The preoccupation with socially advantageous marriage in nineteenth-century English society manifests itself here, for in claiming that a single man "must be in want of a wife," the narrator reveals that the reverse is also true: a single woman, whose socially prescribed options are quite limited, is in (perhaps desperate) want of a husband.

2. "Which do you mean?" and turning round, he looked for a moment at Elizabeth, till catching her eye, he withdrew his own and coldly said, "She is tolerable; but not handsome enough to tempt me; and I am in no humour at present to give consequence to young ladies who are slighted by other men. You had better return to your partner and enjoy her smiles, for you are wasting your time with me".

### Explanation for Quotation 2

These words describe Darcy's reaction at the Meryton ball in Chapter 3 to Bingley's suggestion that he dance with Elizabeth. Darcy, who sees the people of Meryton as his social inferiors, haughtily refuses to condescend to dancing with someone "not handsome enough" for him. Moreover, he does so within Elizabeth's hearing, thereby establishing a reputation among the entire community for pride and bad manners. His sense of social superiority, artfully exposed in this passing comment, later proves his chief difficulty in admitting his love for Elizabeth. The rudeness with which Darcy treats Elizabeth creates a negative impression of him in her mind, one that will linger for nearly half of the novel, until the underlying nobility of his character is gradually revealed to her.

3. "In vain have I struggled. It will not do. My feelings will not be repressed. You must allow me to tell you how ardently I admire and love you." Elizabeth's astonishment was beyond expression. She stared, coloured, doubted, and was silent. This he considered sufficient encouragement, and the avowal of all that he felt and had long felt for her, immediately followed. He spoke well, but there were feelings besides those of the heart to be detailed, and he was not more eloquent on the subject of tenderness than of pride. His sense of her inferiority—of its being a degradation—of the family obstacles which judgment had always opposed to inclination, were dwelt on with a warmth which seemed due to the consequence he was wounding, but was very unlikely to recommend his suit.

### **Explanation for Quotation 3**

Darcy's proposal of marriage to Elizabeth in Chapter 34, demonstrates how his feelings toward her transformed since his earlier dismissal of her as "not handsome enough." While Elizabeth rejects his proposal, this event marks the turning point in the novel. Before Darcy asks Elizabeth to marry him, she feels only contempt for him; afterward, she begins to see him in a new light, as certain incidents help illustrate the essential goodness of his character. At this moment, however, Elizabeth's eventual change of heart remains unforeseen—all she thinks of is Darcy's arrogance, his attempts to interfere in Bingley's courtship of Jane and his alleged mistreatment of Wickham. Her judgment of Darcy stems from her initial prejudice against his snobbishness, just as his pride about his high social status hampers his attempt to express his affection. As the above quote makes clear, he spends more time emphasizing her lower rank and unsuitability for marriage to him than he does complimenting her or pledging his love. "He was not more eloquent on the subject of tenderness than of pride," the narrator states; Darcy must prioritize love over his sense of superiority before he is worthy of Elizabeth's hand.

4. They gradually ascended for half a mile, and then found themselves at the top of a considerable eminence, where the wood ceased, and the eye was instantly caught by Pemberley House, situated on the opposite side of a valley, into which the road with some abruptness wound. It was a large, handsome, stone building, standing well on rising ground, and backed by a ridge of high woody hills;—and in front, a stream of some natural importance was swelled into greater, but without any artificial appearance. Its banks were neither formal, nor falsely adorned. Elizabeth was delighted. She had never seen a place where nature had done more, or where natural beauty had been so little counteracted by an awkward taste. They were all of them warm in her admiration; and at that moment she felt that to be mistress of Pemberley might be something.

### **Explanation for Quotation 4**

These lines open Chapter 43 and provide Elizabeth's introduction to Darcy's grand estate at Pemberley. Her visit to Darcy's home, which occupies a central place in the narrative, operates as a catalyst for her growing attraction toward its owner. In her conversations with the housekeeper, Mrs. Reynolds, Elizabeth hears testimonials of Darcy's wonderful generosity and his kindness as a master; when she encounters Darcy himself, while walking through Pemberley's grounds, he seems altogether changed and his previous arrogance has diminished remarkably. This initial description of the building and grounds at Pemberley serves as a symbol of Darcy's character. The "stream of some natural importance ... swelled into greater" reminds the reader of his pride, but the fact that it lacks "any artificial appearance" indicates his basic honesty, as does the fact that the stream is neither "formal, nor falsely adorned." Elizabeth's delight, and her sudden epiphany about the pleasure that being mistress of Pemberley must hold, prefigure her later joy in Darcy's continued devotion.

5. Elizabeth was much too embarrassed to say a word. After a short pause, her companion added, "You are too generous to trifle with me. If your feelings are still what they were last April, tell me so at once. My affections and wishes are unchanged, but one word from you will silence me on this subject forever." Elizabeth feeling all the more than common awkwardness and anxiety of his situation, now forced herself to speak; and immediately, though not very fluently, gave him to understand, that her sentiments had undergone so material a change, since the period to which he alluded, as to make her receive with gratitude and pleasure, his present assurances.

### **Explanation for Quotation 5**

This proposal and Elizabeth's acceptance mark the climax of the novel, occurring in Chapter 58. Austen famously prefers not to stage successful proposals in full, and the reader may be disappointed in the anticlimactic manner in which the narrator relates Elizabeth's acceptance. It is important to remember, however, that the proposal and acceptance are almost a foregone conclusion by this point. Darcy's intervention on behalf of Lydia makes obvious his continuing devotion to Elizabeth, and the shocking appearance of Lady Catherine de Bourgh in the previous chapter, with her haughty attempts to forestall the engagement, serves to suggest strongly that a second proposal from Darcy is imminent. The clunky language with which the narrator summarizes Elizabeth's acceptance serves a specific purpose, as it captures the one moment of joyful incoherence for this supremely well-spoken character. She accepts Darcy's proposal "immediately," the narrator relates, but "not very fluently." As Elizabeth allows herself to admit that her love has supplanted her long-standing prejudice, her control of language breaks down. The reader is left to imagine, with some delight, the ever-clever Elizabeth.

### **Study Questions**

1. Jane Austen's original title for the novel was *First Impressions*. What role do first impressions play in *Pride and Prejudice*?

### **Answer for Question 1**

*Pride and Prejudice* is, first and foremost, a novel about surmounting obstacles and achieving romantic happiness. For Elizabeth, the heroine, and Darcy, her eventual husband, the chief obstacle resides in the book's original title: *First Impressions*. Darcy, the proud, prickly noblewoman's nephew, must break free from his original dismissal of Elizabeth as "not handsome enough to tempt me," and from his class-based prejudice against her lack of wealth and family connections. Elizabeth's first impressions, meanwhile, catalogue Darcy as arrogant and self-satisfied; as a result, she later accepts slanderous accusations against him as true. Both Elizabeth and Darcy are forced to come to grips with their own initial mistakes. Structurally, the first half of the novel traces Darcy's progression to the point at which he is able to admit his love in spite of his prejudice. In the second half, Elizabeth's mistaken impressions are supplanted by informed realizations about Darcy's true character. Darcy's two proposals to Elizabeth chart the mature development of their relationship. He delivers the first at the mid-point of the novel, when he has realized his love for Elizabeth but has not yet escaped his prejudices against her family, and when she is still in the grip of her first, negative impression of him. The second proposal—in which Darcy humbly restates his love for her and Elizabeth, now with full knowledge of Mr. Darcy's good character, happily accepts—marks the arrival of the two characters, each finally achieving the ability to view the other through unprejudiced eyes.

2. Analyze how Austen depicts Mr. Bennet. Is he a positive or negative figure?

## Answer for Question 2

Mr. Bennet's chief characteristics are an ironic detachment and a sharp, cutting wit. The distance that he creates between himself and the absurdity around him often endears him to the reader and parallels the amused detachment with which Austen treats ridiculous characters such as Mr. Collins and Lady Catherine. To associate the author's point of view with that of Mr. Bennet, however, is to ignore his ultimate failure as a father and husband. He is endlessly witty, but his distance from the events around him makes him an ineffective parent. Detached humor may prove useful for handling the Mr. Collinses of the world, but it is helpless against the depredations of the villainous (but likeable) Wickham. When the crisis of Lydia's elopement strikes, Mr. Bennet proves unable to handle the situation. Darcy, decent and energetic, and the Gardiners, whose intelligence, perceptiveness, and resourcefulness make them the strongest adult force in the novel, must step in. He is a likable, entertaining character, but he never manages to earn the respect of the reader.

3. Discuss the importance of dialogue to character development in the novel.

## Answer for Question 3

All of Austen's many characters come alive through dialogue, as the narrative voice in Austen's work is secondary to the voices of the characters. Long, unwieldy speeches are rare, as are detailed physical descriptions. In their place, the reader hears the crackle of quick, witty conversation. True nature reveals itself in the way the characters speak: Mr. Bennet's emotional detachment comes across in his dry wit, while Mrs. Bennet's hysterical excess drips from every sentence she utters. Austen's dialogue often serves to reveal the worst aspects of her characters—Miss Bingley's spiteful, snobbish attitudes are readily apparent in her words, and Mr. Collins's long-winded speeches (and occasional letters, which are a kind of secondary dialogue) carry with them a tone-deaf pomposity that defines his character perfectly. Dialogue can also conceal bad character traits: Wickham, for instance, hides his rogue's heart beneath the patter of pleasant, witty banter, and he manages to take Elizabeth in with his smooth tongue (although his good looks help as well). Ultimately, though, good conversational ability and general goodness of personality seem to go hand in hand. It is no accident that Darcy and Elizabeth are the best conversationalists in the book: *Pride and Prejudice* is the story of their love, and for the reader, that love unfolds through the words they share.

## Suggested Essay Topics

4. Discuss the importance of social class in the novel, especially as it impacts the relationship between Elizabeth and Darcy.
5. Though Jane Austen satirizes snobs in her novels, some critics have accused her of being a snob herself. Giving special consideration to Mrs. Bennet and Mr. Collins, argue and defend one side of this issue. Discuss Austen's irony in its exposure of foolishness and hypocrisy. Comment on the several types of irony found in the novel. Who are the comic characters of the novel?
6. *Pride and Prejudice* is a novel about women who feel they have to marry to be happy. Taking Charlotte Lucas as an example, do you think the author is making a social criticism of her era's view of marriage?



7. Giving special attention to Wickham, Charlotte Lucas, and Elizabeth, compare and contrast male and female attitudes toward marriage in the novel. Portraits of women. Elisabeth/Charlotte (Ch.22)
8. Discuss the relationship between Mrs. Bennet and her children, especially Elizabeth and Lydia.
9. Compare and contrast the Bingley-Darcy relationship with the Jane-Elizabeth relationship.
10. Compare and contrast the roles of Lady Catherine de Bourgh and Mrs. Bennet.
11. Comment on the title: to what extent are the adjectives "proud" and "prejudiced" applicable to the two main characters? Are they applicable to both, or one to each of them?
12. Discuss the role of dialogues in the novel.
13. Why does Pride & Prejudice have such moving force for many readers?

**If you have decided to read the complete novel you may be able to answer the following quiz. Congratulations!**

1. Complete the quote: "it is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a \_\_\_\_"

- (A) house
- (B) title
- (C) wife
- (D) dog

2. The Bennet family lives in the village called

- (A) Pemberley
- (B) Longbourn
- (C) Rosings
- (D) Londonberry

3. Mr. Bingley, when he attends the ball in Meryton, seems to be quite taken with

- (A) Elizabeth
- (B) Jane
- (C) Lydia

(D) Charlotte Lucas

4. How does Mr. Darcy offend Elizabeth at the first ball?

- (A) He insults her father
- (B) He dances with Jane too often
- (C) He slaps her
- (D) He refuses to dance with her

5. Elizabeth's best friend is named

- (A) Mrs. Phillips
- (B) Charlotte Lucas
- (C) Miss Bingley
- (D) Mrs. Gardiner

6. Why does Jane's visit to the Bingleys end up lasting for days?

- (A) She gets soaked in a rainstorm and becomes ill
- (B) Mr. Bingley proposes to her
- (C) Mrs. Bennet forgets to send a carriage to bring her home
- (D) Jane is hoping to make Mr. Darcy fall in love with her

Bennet's property is "entailed"?

- (A) Lady Catherine de Bourgh gave it to him
- (B) It can only be inherited by a male
- (C) It comes from his wife's family
- (D) He rents from Sir William Lucas

8. What reason does Wickham give Elizabeth for his dislike of Darcy?

- (A) Darcy killed his cousin in a duel
- (B) Darcy wouldn't let Wickham marry his sister
- (C) Darcy betrayed his country
- (D) Darcy cheated him out of an inheritance

9. To which Bennet daughter does Mr. Collins propose marriage?

- (A) Elizabeth
- (B) Jane
- (C) Mary
- (D) Lydia

10. Whom does Mr. Collins marry?

- (A) Jane
- (B) Lydia
- (C) Miss Bingley
- (D) Charlotte Lucas

11. Why does Miss Bingley dislike Elizabeth?

- (A) She is jealous of Darcy's growing attraction to Elizabeth
- (B) Elizabeth insulted Miss Bingley at the ball
- (C) Wickham has told Miss Bingley lies about Elizabeth's character
- (D) Darcy is constantly speaking ill of Elizabeth

12. Where do the Bingleys and Darcy go for the winter?

- (A) Pemberley
- (B) London
- (C) They remain at Netherfield
- (D) France

13. In March, Elizabeth goes to visit

- (A) Miss Darcy
- (B) Charlotte Lucas
- (C) Wickham and Lydia
- (D) Miss Bingley

14. Lady Catherine de Bourgh is Darcy's

- (A) Aunt
- (B) Sister
- (C) Mother
- (D) First wife

15. When Darcy first proposes to Elizabeth, he spends most of the proposal dwelling on

- (A) Her beauty
- (B) How socially unsuitable a match she is for him
- (C) How much he adores her family
- (D) How much money he will lavish on her

16. When Darcy proposes for the first time, Elizabeth

- (A) Tells him that she is engaged to Wickham
- (B) Asks him for more time
- (C) Turns him down
- (D) Faints

17. Elizabeth's feelings toward Darcy begin to change when he

- (A) Sends her a letter explaining his actions
- (B) Fights a duel with Wickham
- (C) Sends money to Jane
- (D) Marries Miss Bingley

18. Darcy's estate is called

- (A) Rosings
- (B) London
- (C) Pemberley
- (D) Brighton

19. Where does Lydia spend the summer, and why?

- (A) Netherfield, to be near Darcy
- (B) London, because she enjoys the opera
- (C) Brighton, to be near the militia regiment
- (D) Barbados, for her health

20. What socially disastrous romantic decision does Lydia make?

- (A) She elopes with Wickham
- (B) She marries Bingley
- (C) She rejects Mr. Collins's proposal
- (D) She runs away to France with a lover

21. Who spearheads the search for Lydia after Mr. Bennet returns home in defeat?

- (A) Mr. Gardiner
- (B) Sir William Lucas
- (C) Charlotte Lucas
- (D) Mrs. Phillips

22. Who pays off Wickham, convincing him to marry Lydia?

- (A) Bingley
- (B) Darcy
- (C) Mr. Gardiner
- (D) Mr. Collins

23. When he returns to Netherfield, Mr. Bingley

- (A) Has just married Miss Darcy
- (B) Pursues the priesthood
- (C) Begins courting Elizabeth
- (D) Resumes courting Jane

24. What does Lady Catherine forbid Elizabeth to do?

- (A) Marry Bingley
- (B) Visit Rosings
- (C) Marry Darcy
- (D) See Wickham

25. The novel ends with

- (A) Darcy marrying Elizabeth, and Bingley marrying Miss Darcy
- (B) Darcy marrying Elizabeth, and Wickham marrying Jane
- (C) Bingley marrying Jane, and Elizabeth marrying Wickham
- (D) Bingley marrying Jane, and Darcy marrying Elizabeth

### **Suggestions for Further Reading**

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### **Jane Austen Links**



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*Sense and Sensibility* ( 1811 ).

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### Works On Line

[Complete on-line works. \(with commentary\)](#) (HTML at Texas)

[Lady Susan](#) (HTML at Texas)

[Love and Friendship](#) (HTML at Texas)

[The Plan of a Novel According to Hints from Various Quarters](#) (HTML at Texas)

[The Watsons](#) (HTML at Texas)

[Brabourne, Edward, ed.: Letters of Jane Austen](#) (HTML at Texas)

[Jane Austen](#) Huge HTML file of Austen texts.

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[JA Information Page](#). Don't miss this one.

[Austen.com](#) Numerous links.  
[Jane Austen Criticism](#) from Internet Public Library.

## Other Pages

Jane Austen en Bath: <http://www.janeausten.co.uk/>  
Sobre Jane Austen: <http://www.goucher.edu/library/jausten/jane.htm>  
Pemberley: <http://www.pemberley.com>  
Críticas sobre la obra de J. Austen: <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/oracle/2138>  
Sobre la Regencia: <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Acropolis/7517/>  
Obras y versiones cinematográficas de Jane Austen: <http://www.alwaysausten/tripod.com>  
Búsqueda en las obras de Jane: <http://www.concordance.com/austen.htm>  
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Hantsfordshire: <http://www.hants.gov.uk/austen>  
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E-books:  
Bibliomanía: <http://www.bibliomania.com>  
University of Pennsylvania: <http://www.onlinebooks.library.upenn.edu/> (tienen también las memorias de Jane Austen escritas por su sobrino)  
Elecbook (formato pdf): <http://www.elebook.com/> y <http://www.elf.chaoscafe.com/>  
Librodot (en castellano) <http://www.librodot.com>  
[Pride and Prejudice](#) Zip

Guía Penguin:  
[http://www.penguinclassics.com/UK/resources/readers\\_guides/r\\_austen\\_pride.html](http://www.penguinclassics.com/UK/resources/readers_guides/r_austen_pride.html)

Base de datos: <http://www.kirijasto.sci.fi/>

Revista literaria de Oxford Classics: <http://www.oup.com/>

Jane Austen Society: <http://www.janeaustensociety.org.uk/>

La mayor base de datos de películas de la red **IMDB**: <http://www.imdb.com/>

Sobre aspectos culturales de la Regencia (moda, etc.):  
<http://www.austentation.tripod.com/>  
<http://www.lauryllane.com/regalia/home.html> (también puedes hacer compras)  
<http://www.sensibility>  
<http://www.costumes.org>  
<http://www.songsmyth.com/costumerscompanion.html>  
<http://www.erasofelegance.com/>

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