

CHALKIE



PRIDE AND PREJUDICE

Navigating Class, Love, and Reputation in
Regency England

THE AUTHOR AND CONTEXT

Jane Austen (1775–1817)

Austen wrote during the **Regency era**, a time defined by strict social codes and rigid class structures.

The Social Landscape

- **Marriage:** Often seen as a financial transaction rather than a romantic union.
- **Inheritance:** Wealth and land were usually passed down to male heirs, leaving women vulnerable.
- **Class:** Status determined whom one could marry and how one was treated.



KEY VOCABULARY



Prejudice

Prejudice: forming a judgment without knowing the facts.



Pride

Pride: deep pleasure from achievements/qualities; in novels, often an inflated sense of status.



Gentleman

Wealthy, educated, land-owning nobleman.



Entail

Legal restriction limiting property inheritance to specific heirs, preventing sale or division.

THE BENNETT FAMILY DILEMMA

The Situation

The Bennett estate is **entailed** to Mr. Collins, a distant cousin. This means:

- Mr. Bennett cannot leave his home to his wife or daughters.
- Upon his death, the women will lose their home and income.
- They must marry well to ensure financial security.

The Mother's Goal

Mrs. Bennett's primary mission is to find wealthy husbands for her five daughters (Jane, Elizabeth, Mary, Kitty, and Lydia). Her anxiety drives much of the plot's humor and conflict, highlighting the economic stakes of marriage for women in this era.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS



The Meryton Ball: Where Darcy's pride wounds Elizabeth's vanity.

THE EVOLUTION OF DARCY AND ELIZABETH

1

The Insult

Darcy refuses to dance with Elizabeth, calling her 'tolerable.' Elizabeth resolves to hate him for his arrogance.



2

The Proposal

Darcy proposes badly, emphasizing her lower status. Elizabeth rejects him, citing his role in separating Jane and Bingley.



3

The Letter

Darcy explains his actions; Elizabeth realizes her prejudice clouded her judgment.



THEMES: REPUTATION VS. INTEGRITY



The Scandal

Lydia's elopement with Wickham threatens the family's social standing. In Regency society, a woman's 'ruin' destroyed her sisters' prospects.

Darcy's Intervention

Darcy secretly saves the family's reputation by paying Wickham's debts and securing a position for him.

The Contrast

- **Wickham:** Charming but deceitful; lacks integrity.
- **Darcy:** Appeared proud but acted with genuine honor and generosity.

TRUE OR FALSE AND WHY?

Elizabeth initially rejects Mr. Darcy because she does not find him physically attractive.



TRUE



FALSE

Now it's time to explain why...

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TRUE OR FALSE AND WHY?

Elizabeth initially rejects Mr. Darcy because she does not find him physically attractive.



Why is that?

- a) Incorrect: She rejects him because of his arrogance and his alleged mistreatment of Mr. Wickham and Jane.
- b) Correct: Elizabeth is driven solely by appearances and status.

Answers on the next slide...

TRUE OR FALSE AND WHY?



Elizabeth initially rejects Mr. Darcy because she does not find him physically attractive.



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DISCUSS!



Class Discussion

How do the characters of Mr. Collins and Lady Catherine de Bourgh represent the negative aspects of class hierarchy? Is Austen criticizing all social structures or just the abuse of them?

DISCUSS!



You might have said...

Mr. Collins is obsequious to those above him and arrogant to those below him, showing how class can warp personality. Lady Catherine uses her rank to bully others. Austen criticizes the rigidity and lack of merit in the system, not the idea of social order itself.

SUMMARY

Key Takeaways

- **Personal Growth:** Both protagonists must overcome their own flaws (Pride and Prejudice) to find happiness.
- **Social Critique:** Austen highlights the economic pressure on women while satirizing the rigid class system.
- **True Love:** The novel argues that marriage should be based on mutual respect, understanding, and compatibility, not just wealth or status.

