

Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen

Discussion Questions

1. "It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife." In addition to setting the narrative in motion, how does this line alert us to the tone of the novel and our role as readers? What does the line imply about women?
2. Elizabeth is upset to learn that Charlotte has accepted Mr. Collins's proposal. Should Charlotte have married Mr. Collins? Did she choose him or did he choose her? What influenced her decision? Is Charlotte a romantic? Is Elizabeth?
3. How does Pemberley shape Elizabeth's change of heart? Does she fall in love with Darcy after seeing his estate? Trace the development of both their feelings.
4. What might have happened if Elizabeth had accepted Darcy's first proposal? Did he expect her to accept? How does that proposal change their opinions of each other?
5. Several letters are reproduced in full. What is the effect of reading a letter versus third-person narration? Why might Austen rely on letters so often?
6. How does the title *Pride and Prejudice* relate to the original title *First Impressions*? Which title fits better and why? How does it relate to Elizabeth and Darcy and to other characters?
7. Mr. and Mrs. Bennet rarely agree, especially about their daughters' futures. Who is the better parent and why? What role does family play in the novel?
8. Darcy says Wickham tried to elope with Georgiana for revenge. Does revenge play a part in his elopement with Lydia?
9. Lady Catherine's visit to Elizabeth to prevent a marriage has the opposite effect and propels the ending. Why is this dramatic irony satisfying? What other examples of irony appear?
10. Imagine the Facebook pages of each Bennet sister. Who would be most active? How would their posts differ? Would any opt out?
11. Why is this novel so popular? Why do readers keep returning even after they know the ending?

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