

Before Reading

TALKING ABOUT THE COVER

- Can you tell from these two faces which character will be proud, and which will be prejudiced?
- In your opinion, which of the two characteristics – pride or prejudice – would be more damaging to a relationship?
- Which of these two characters do you expect to feel more sympathy for in the story?

BEFORE READING ACTIVITIES (PAGE 108)

ACTIVITY 1 BEFORE READING

Encourage discussion about types of pride and prejudice, and speculation about the kind of story students are expecting to read. Do not tell students if their guesses are right. They will find out as they read that the best answers are 1b, 2a, 3a, 3b, 3c, 3e and 3g.

ACTIVITY 2 BEFORE READING

This activity is designed to introduce students to Jane Austen's irony, as a preparation for their reading of the book. As irony is 'the humorous or mildly sarcastic use of words to imply the opposite of what they normally mean', it can cause problems for foreign readers, who may take in only the surface meaning of the words, and miss the underlying humour. While it looks as if 1a and 2b are correct, in fact 1b and 2a give the true, ironical meanings.

While Reading

CHAPTERS 1 TO 4 WHILE READING

- 1 Mrs Bennet to Mr Bennet, about Mr Bingley's arrival at Netherfield Park.
- 2 Jane to Elizabeth, about being asked to dance twice by Bingley.
- 3 Mr Darcy to Caroline Bingley. When he commented on Elizabeth's fine eyes, Miss Bingley immediately assumed he might propose to Elizabeth, so Darcy is criticizing the way women's minds work.
- 4 Mr Bennet to Kitty and Lydia, saying they are two of the silliest girls in the country.
- 5 Mrs Bennet to Jane, urging her to ride to the Bingleys so that if it rained, she would have to stay the night and so would see Mr Bingley the next day.
- 6 Caroline Bingley to her sister Mrs Hurst, about Elizabeth.
- 7 Mr Bingley to his sisters, about Elizabeth's five-mile

walk across the muddy fields to visit Jane's sick-bed at Netherfield Park.

- 8 Mr Collins to Mrs Bennet, referring to the fact that he might propose to one of her daughters, to make amends for inheriting their house when Mr Bennet dies.
- 9 Elizabeth to Mr Wickham, about Mr Darcy.
- 10 Mr Wickham to Elizabeth, about the post of rector of Pemberley which Mr Darcy had failed to give him.
- 11 Elizabeth to Mr Darcy, mocking him for his lack of conversation, by suggesting to him the kind of boring comment that he should be making.
- 12 Mr Darcy to Elizabeth, about Wickham and whether he was able to keep the friends that he found easy to make.

BEFORE READING CHAPTER 5

Encourage speculation and discussion, but do not confirm or deny students' guesses at this stage. The answers are: Mr Collins proposes to Elizabeth Bennet and Charlotte Lucas, and the latter accepts him.

CHAPTERS 5 TO 7 WHILE READING

- 1 T
- 2 F Mr and Mrs Bennet *did not agree* in their opinion of Mr Collins.
- 3 F Caroline Bingley hoped her brother would marry *Georgiana Darcy*.
- 4 T
- 5 F Jane was *deeply upset* at Mr Bingley's failure to return to Netherfield.
- 6 T
- 7 F Charlotte spent as *little* time as possible with her new husband.
- 8 F Lady Catherine was a *rude, proud* woman, and *insensitive* to other people's feelings.
- 9 T
- 10 F Darcy *admitted* doing his best to separate Bingley and Jane.
- 11 F If Darcy had made his proposal to Elizabeth more flattering, she would *still have refused* him.

BEFORE READING CHAPTER 8

Encourage students to speculate and to make guesses, but do not tell them the answers. They will find out as they read that the 'yes' answers are numbers 1 and 2.

CHAPTERS 8 TO 11 WHILE READING

- 1 *What . . . ?* He felt Jane's family was socially inferior to Bingley's, and he did not believe that Jane had any strong feeling for Bingley.
- 2 *Why . . . ?* Darcy paid him this sum instead of giving him the post of rector, for which Wickham was not suitable.

- 3 *Why . . . ?* Because she had a fortune of thirty thousand pounds, and perhaps also because he wanted to revenge himself on Darcy.
- 4 *Why . . . ?* Because she felt she had been prejudiced, and had badly misjudged both Darcy and Wickham.
- 5 *Who . . . ?* Lydia Bennet.
- 6 *Who . . . ?* Elizabeth, with her uncle and aunt, Mr and Mrs Gardiner.
- 7 *Why . . . ?* It was so favourable, and painted quite a different picture from the Darcy Elizabeth felt she knew.
- 8 *Who . . . ?* His sister, Georgiana Darcy.
- 9 *What . . . ?* That Wickham and Lydia might not be married, but merely living together.
- 10 *Why . . . ?* Because she had not told her family when she had discovered about Wickham's immoral character from Darcy.
- 11 *Who . . . ?* Mr Darcy.
- 12 *What . . . ?* His love for Elizabeth.
- 13 *Who . . . ?* Only Mr and Mrs Gardiner, and Elizabeth.
- 14 *What . . . ?* The news of Jane Bennet's engagement to Mr Bingley.

BEFORE READING CHAPTER 12

Encourage speculation and discussion, but do not tell students the answers. They will find out if their guesses were right when they have read the chapter.

- 1 Yes, and yes.
- 2 Lady Catherine de Bourgh.
- 3 Elizabeth's family is at first astonished, and then very pleased. Darcy's aunt, Lady Catherine, is angry and rude; Darcy's sister, Georgiana, and Mr Bingley are delighted; Caroline Bingley is deeply offended but does not show it.

After Reading

ACTIVITY 1 AFTER READING

1 *Charlotte Lucas*

She is pessimistic about a woman's chances of happiness in marriage, although she wants to get married, because she thinks it is the only way a woman with little fortune can provide a home for herself. She takes a realistic approach to finding a husband, and decides that Mr Collins will do as well as anyone, particularly as his will probably be the only proposal she will receive.

2 *Mr Bennet*

He has realized what a mistake it had been to marry his wife, a foolish woman who thinks only about clothes and matchmaking. He is rather bitter about this, and he often makes sarcastic comments to his wife, like this one, which she completely fails to understand.

3 *Mr Darcy*

He is not a sociable man, and never likes meeting new people. He also dislikes any sort of public performance. His intense pride in his birth and his family name makes him disdain the small-town and country people at the ball.

4 *Mr Collins*

Here he is showing extreme servility, in his praise for his patron, Lady Catherine. At other times he shows unnecessary pride in his position and his achievements. His language is always flowery, flattering and formal.

5 *Caroline Bingley*

Her main characteristic is hypocrisy and her main activity is constant scheming. In this remark she is being extremely complimentary towards Darcy's sister, not because she really admires her, but because she wants to give Jane (the recipient of this letter) the impression that Bingley is as good as engaged to Georgiana. She also hopes that if Bingley does get engaged to Georgiana, it would make it easier for her, Caroline, to entice Darcy into an engagement.

6 *Jane Bennet*

This remark proves what a very sweet, modest nature Jane has. She is always reluctant to think ill of anyone, and prefers to blame herself when things go wrong.

7 *Mrs Bennet*

Here she reveals her materialistic attitude to finding husbands for her daughters. Despite her previous dislike for Darcy, she is prepared to find him charming and attractive, now that he has proposed to Elizabeth. The size of a man's fortune is the only thing that seems important to her.

8 *Lady Catherine de Bourgh*

Here she shows her pride and arrogance. She is a fearful social snob, and is outraged at the thought that Elizabeth, whom she considers her social inferior, might marry her nephew. Her own behaviour is not at all ladylike; she tries to get her own way by threats, and is often unnecessarily rude and insulting.

9 *Elizabeth Bennet*

She is the most sensible character in the book, and always tries to act correctly and wisely. If she makes a mistake, she is happy to confess it. On the whole her advice to others is valuable, although they do not always take it. In this case, she takes her aunt's advice, which shows her common sense.

10 *Mr George Wickham*

His chief characteristic is his ability to deceive people. He has an easy charm, is a fluent liar, and is completely selfish and insincere. Here he is giving Elizabeth a completely false version of events concerning himself and Darcy.

ACTIVITY 2 AFTER READING**Suggested answers:**

WICKHAM: So, Darcy, you've discovered our hiding-place! And what are you going to do about it?

DARCY: *I'm going to insist that you marry Lydia Bennet.*

WICKHAM: Marry her? Why should I? No, we've had some fun together, but I need to find a woman of fortune to marry.

DARCY: *What will happen to Lydia then?*

WICKHAM: Oh, I imagine she'll go back to her silly mother. I can't worry about that – I've got my debts to take care of.

DARCY: *How much do your debts add up to?*

WICKHAM: Well, at least four thousand pounds. But why do you ask?

DARCY: *If I pay you four thousand, will you promise to marry Lydia?*

WICKHAM: I'm afraid it's not tempting enough, Darcy. That would only pay my debts, and I'd need much more than that. Marriage is an expensive business, you know.

DARCY: *Well, if I pay you double that, what do you say?*

WICKHAM: For that amount of money, yes, I'll marry her! She'll be delighted! But Darcy, tell me, what's your reason for doing this?

DARCY: *That is none of your business, Wickham.*

WICKHAM: Well, it is my business in a way. Because why are you paying me a large sum of money to marry a girl who has no connection with you? Ah, perhaps you have an interest in—

DARCY: *I warn you, Wickham, do not dare to mention that lady's name!*

WICKHAM: All right, all right, I won't name her. But I think I've discovered your secret, Darcy. I congratulate you on your choice. A charming woman, and with your wealth, you don't need to worry about her lack of fortune!

ACTIVITY 3 AFTER READING

Any answer may be acceptable, provided it follows the same style as the beginning. Possible answer:

Dear Mr Darcy,

I am writing in response to your letter, the contents of which, I must confess, I found extremely disturbing. Before I received your letter, I was certain I knew the circumstances surrounding Mr Bingley's separation from Jane, and I was also sure I had judged Mr Wickham's character correctly. Now I must admit I was wrong, and I am deeply ashamed that I have been so prejudiced, and misjudged you so badly. I have always prided myself on my ability to judge people, but that pride has led me into making some very stupid mistakes. You are quite right in saying that Jane showed little outward feeling for Bingley. How were you to know that she loved him with all her heart?

And it is with great embarrassment that I read your words about my family's behaviour; I cannot deny that they are all, except for Jane, occasionally lacking in social correctness. Where Mr Wickham is concerned, you have convinced me that you and your family have suffered greatly from his greed and immorality, and I can only apologize for scolding you so severely on his behalf.

Final sentences: students can choose which ending they like, as long as they give suitable reasons for the choice. Encourage students to think not only about Elizabeth's personality, but also the social conventions of the time. Some ideas are given below.

- 1 This is the most reserved and formal ending, giving no clues at all as to Elizabeth's feelings about Darcy. It would probably be the most 'correct' for the times, as it was thought quite improper for young ladies even to correspond with young men that they were not related to, or engaged to.
- 2 This shows some warmth of feeling, with a hint that a future friendship would not be unacceptable. A strong and confident personality like Elizabeth's might well take such a social risk in trying to repair the damage done by their quarrel.
- 3 This is the warmest ending, with a strong hint that if Darcy proposed again, Elizabeth might accept him. It is probably the most unlikely ending, as it could look as though Elizabeth was almost proposing to Darcy, which would have been shockingly unladylike for the times. Also, Elizabeth's attitude to Darcy as a possible husband did not really change until after she had met him at Pemberley and been so impressed by the change in his behaviour.

ACTIVITY 4 AFTER READING

Acceptable answers to these cloze passages are any words that have an appropriate meaning and fit the grammar of the sentence. Students might like to check each other's work and discuss alternative answers.

Some alternatives are given below.

1 *Caroline Bingley to Louisa Hurst*

This news, my dear *sister (Louisa)*, has made me very *bitter (unhappy, angry, etc.)*. I was so sure *Darcy (he)* intended to propose to *me!* I would be the *mistress* of Pemberley now, if *he (Darcy)* had never met that *hateful (horrible, awful, etc.)* girl. I really *dislike (hate, loathe, etc.)* her! And such a *vulgar (inferior, coarse, etc.)* family!

2 *Mrs Bennet to Lydia*

My dear, it's such *wonderful (exciting, etc.)* news, don't you think? *She (Lizzy)* will have the most *elegant (beautiful, etc.)* dresses and jewels! I *never* thought little Lizzy would *marry (catch)* Mr Darcy, who is *wealthier (richer)* than Mr Bingley! If *Wickham* cannot pay all his *debts*, I'm sure you can *ask* your sister for some *money (help)*.

3 *Mr Bennet to Mr Collins*

Dear Sir, I must *ask* (*trouble*) you more for *congratulations*. Elizabeth will very soon *be* (*become*) the wife of Mr *Darcy*. Comfort Lady Catherine as *well* as you can. But *if* I were you, I *would* take the nephew's side. *He* has more to give.

4 *Jane to Mrs Gardiner*

There is nothing that *could* add more to my *joy* (*happiness*) than this news! She's *deeply* (*truly, etc.*) in love with him. *Although* he isn't like my *dear* (*darling*) Bingley (no man could *be!*), I know she'll be *happy* with him. You have *met* him already, haven't you?

ACTIVITY 5 AFTER READING

Open answers. If appropriate to the class, encourage discussion of past and present attitudes to marriage and romantic expectations in the students' own and other cultures.