

Questions for Essay and Discussion

1. How and why does the character of Mr. Darcy develop over the course of the novel?
2. What different attitudes toward "female accomplishment" does the novel present? To what extent do these different attitudes function as a critical commentary on female education and gender relations?
3. To what extent are Elizabeth Bennet and Mr. Darcy characters who transgress boundaries? To what extent are Mr. Wickham, Lydia, Mrs. Bennet, and Mr. Collins characters who transgress boundaries?
4. What effect do instances of irony and sarcasm have on the reader? How does Austen's narrative style help reinforce her critical perspective on social class and gender relations in Regency England?
5. Which characters can be considered dynamic characters? Which characters do not change over the course of the novel and why?
6. How do first impressions influence plot development in the novel?
7. To what extent are pride and prejudice characteristics that shape the attitudes of different characters, such as Mr. Darcy, Elizabeth, Mrs. Bennet, Charlotte Lucas, Lady Catherine de Bourgh, etc.? Does the novel present different notions of pride?
8. What lessons are Elizabeth Bennet and Mr. Darcy able to learn from one another?
9. What are the different perspectives on marriage portrayed by Austen?
10. To what extent do the characters of Mr. Bingley and Mr. Darcy represent the opposition between romantic passion and idealism versus rational thought and skepticism?
11. How does the novel present community life in Meryton?
12. How does the novel present attitudes of jealousy, envy, and greed, particularly with regard to the relationship between the Lucas family and the Bennets, Miss Bingley and Elizabeth, Mr. Darcy and Mr. Wickham?
13. Can Elizabeth Bennet be considered a progressive, even rebellious female character who goes against social expectations set upon women?