Novel Series

Pride and Prejudice

teacher resource

TheCenterforLearning

Pride and Prejudice

Jane Austen

Second Edition

Curriculum Unit
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Introduction

One wonders how a book that was rejected the first time it was sent to a publisher and not accepted until seventeen years later with the author simply noted as "Author of *Sense and Sensibility*" could become a worldwide sensation. Surely, no other novel has generated so many adaptations (including zombies), spin-offs, films, blogs, and fans. Millions of readers each year fall in love with Mr. Darcy or Elizabeth Bennet, who even the author felt was "as delightful a creature as ever appeared in print." Millions reread *Pride and Prejudice* finding something new each time. With 2013 came this literary phenomenon's two hundredth birthday, and it is as popular as ever.

Jane Austen's "own darling Child" did not have an auspicious beginning. When her father sent it to the most famous publisher in London in 1797, it was returned unopened, stamped "declined by Return of Post." Finally printed by Thomas Egerton in 1813, *Pride and Prejudice* was Austen's second novel to be published, even though the author had been writing since she was twelve. Still, as she told her sister Cassandra in a letter of February 4, a week after its publication, she was "well satisfied enough" with her efforts. She only wrote for four more years, and her brief life ended in 1817.

What could be regarded as the ultimate romance novel has endured for more reasons than the proud and prejudiced couple who turn from loathing to love. Austen wrote for a thinking, literate audience. Best suited for advanced juniors and seniors in high school honors and Advanced Placement classes, *Pride and Prejudice* has great appeal because of its enduring relevancy. It is pertinent because of the "truth[s] universally acknowledged" about family dynamics and sibling rivalry. It is significant in its portrayal of "first impressions" (the original name of the novel) which are wildly mistaken. The quest for self-knowledge and the desire for security are relevant issues for today's readers, as are the issues of proper protocol and appropriate behavior. While the mannerisms, the modes of transportation, the evening's entertainment, and the penchant for letter writing may seem archaic, the search for self is timeless.

Teacher Notes

In high schools, the primary audience for reading *Pride and Prejudice* is typically college-bound juniors and seniors. The story line is not difficult, but a certain amount of intellectual maturity is necessary for full appreciation of themes that transcend time and place and for recognition of Jane Austen's delicious irony. Efforts to know oneself and to form deep relationships are as important today as they were two centuries ago.

The book was originally published in three volumes, a practice which some editions continue to use, while others number the chapters sequentially from beginning to end. It is not difficult to convert the numbers, but this unit frequently lists both options. For example, chapter 32 corresponds to volume 2, chapter 9.

The lessons have been developed so that the inquiry is divided into three main parts which correlate with the three volumes. It can work equally well to have students read the entire novel before beginning discussion in the classroom. While procedures certainly include treatments of the story line, emphasis is placed on more universal concerns such as family life, courtship, women's roles, the class system, travel, social conventions, irony, and satire. Reading assignments use the following schedule:

Chapters 1–11 for Lesson 2

Chapters 12–19 for Lesson 3

Chapters 20–23 for Lesson 4

Chapters 24–31 for Lesson 5
(corresponding to volume 2, chapters 1–8)

Chapters 32–38 for Lesson 6

Chapters 39–42 for Lesson 7

Chapters 43–48 for Lesson 8
(corresponding to volume 3, chapters 1–6)

Chapters 49–55 for Lesson 9

The rest of the novel for Lesson 10

Lesson 10 concludes with directions for an essay that can be used for summative evaluation. In addition, the supplementary materials include three quizzes corresponding to the three volumes; these can serve as reading checks.

The lessons place a strong emphasis on textual support and incorporate multiple writing assignments. Students examine the book's structural elements, Austen's style, complex characterization, multiple themes, and

ironies. You may want to enhance the study of the novel by having students view clips from or all of one of the movie adaptations. In addition, many Internet sites provide information about both the author and the book.

Answers to handouts will vary unless otherwise indicated. Students may need additional paper to complete some handouts.

Lesson 1

Regency England: Prereading Activities

Objectives

- To define the time period of *Pride and Prejudice*
- To develop inquiry into background components through a WebQuest

Notes to the Teacher

In this beginning lesson, students examine a variety of topics to establish context and to build anticipation for reading *Pride and Prejudice*, a novel that is still relevant today even though published two centuries ago. Students conduct a WebQuest to understand the place, time, and social mores of the Georgian and Regency Eras when the book was written and later published. Note that the era most evident in the novel is that of the Regency Age. Assist students in answering the questions about the time period and the author so that they are able to envision such background details as transportation, dress, manners, class rank, and entertainment. The guiding questions for the WebQuest also lead to the themes explored in this unit: family dynamics and sibling rivalries; discovery of the truth about one's faults; and the quest for security in life and in relationships. These themes are emphasized throughout this unit since they are the most relevant to students today.

Another important strategy to immerse students in this book is the significant saying activity on the famous first sentence of the novel, which concludes this lesson. This type of analysis promotes interaction between students and the text, allowing for text-to-self connections. Examining this single sentence leads to later analysis of Jane Austen's uses of irony, humor, and satire.

Procedure

1. Distribute **Handout 1**. This activity works best when books are first given to students, before any reading assignments have been made. Discuss first impressions about the title, author, genre, and format of the novel.

Suggested Responses

- *Title*—The title, *Pride and Prejudice*, suggests that the book centers on human attitudes and values. Are pride and prejudice necessarily negative attributes? Most covers of the book seem sentimental or romantic.
- *Author*—Jane Austen lived from December 16, 1775, to July 18, 1817, which means she died at age forty-one. This was during the Georgian and Regency Eras. She lived in the countryside, for the most part near London, and she also spent time in Bath. She was the seventh of eight children born to a country vicar and his wife. She received little schooling, but she was raised in a household that treasured books. She wrote six complete novels and read many of her works out loud to her family, who served as her main critics.
- *Genre/Format*—Depending on the edition being used, the novel may be divided into three volumes.

2. Distribute **Handout 2**. Give students time to fill in all four boxes completely. Direct students to use the Internet (and perhaps some print sources) to complete the sections.

Suggested Responses

- *Description*—A complete description of the Regency Era should include the following points: In England, this time period includes the French Revolution and Napoleonic Wars. It was a time period of elegance and achievement in art and architecture. The aristocracy during this time were given to excess, as seen in the construction of the Brighton Pavilion ordered by the Prince Regent. Social rank was very rigid. This era preceded and led into the Victorian Age.
- *Reason for the Title*—The Regency Era officially began in 1811 when the Prince Regent (later George IV) took the power of the throne from his father, King George III, because the older king was declared mentally unfit to serve. (This is King George of the American Revolution.) The era ended in 1820 when the Prince Regent became George IV upon the death of his father. The dates of the Regency Era are often extended to include the time between 1795 and 1837, thus encompassing both the writing and the later publication of Pride and Prejudice. The Prince Regent was an avid reader of Austen's works.
- *Notable People*—Notable people in this era include Napoleon I, the British romantic poets, and Sir Walter Scott.
- *Illustration, Symbol, Logo*—Illustrations should include the dress of the era, which for women was influenced by the

recent excavations of Pompeii. This was called the neoclassical era in fashion. Other images could include soldiers in familiar red coats and the ornate architecture represented by the Brighton Pavilion.

3. Distribute **Handout 3**, and divide students into teams to complete the WebQuest on the handout.

Suggested Responses

1. Austen was the seventh child of eight. She had six brothers and one older sister. She was born in the county of Hampshire in England, a farming community where her father, the Reverend George Austen, was the vicar of the Steventon rectory. When Reverend Austen retired in 1800, his daughters and his wife, Cassandra, went with him to Bath, England, where they lived until after his death in 1805. In 1809, after years of poverty and disruption for the women in the family, Mrs. Austen, Jane, and Cassandra moved into Chawton Cottage, Hampshire, on the estate of the brother Edward Austen-Knight, who had been adopted by wealthy distant relatives. Jane Austen lived in the Chawton Cottage until her final illness in 1817. She died in nearby Winchester, where she had been moved for medical reasons.
2. Young men in the time period were expected to take up their prescribed positions in society: the firstborn son inherited the land. Younger brothers could choose careers in the military, in law, or in the church, but being a tradesman was looked down upon. Their pursuits were those of noblemen: hunting, shooting, fishing, keeping horses and dogs for hunting, carriage driving, membership in exclusive clubs in London, dancing, card games like whist, and visiting friends for long periods of time.
3. Austen's brothers followed their allotted places in society: the oldest, James, went to Oxford University and later became a clergyman, taking the Steventon parish after his father's retirement. Little is said about George, who may have been mentally handicapped and was sent off to live with distant relatives. Edward, the third son, was adopted at the age of twelve by a rich, childless couple distantly related to the Austens. This was not an uncommon practice for a younger son. Edward led a life of privilege and inherited his adoptive parents' land and property in Hampshire and Kent. The next son, Henry, was probably Jane's favorite brother. He also was the least consistent in his careers: he studied at Oxford University, joined the army, tried his hand unsuccessfully in business, and eventually became a church minister. The

younger two brothers—Francis and Charles—both entered the Royal Naval Academy, fought in the British Navy during the Napoleonic Wars, and became admirals. The many clergymen and soldiers in Jane Austen's works are based on the real-life careers of her brothers.

4. Jane Austen and her sister went briefly to live in Oxford and then Southampton to be taught by a relative, Mrs. Cawley, but both girls became very ill. They went to the Abbey boarding school in Reading, England, between 1785 and 1787. Most of Jane Austen's education came from her father's library. The Austen family members were serious readers, and young Jane undoubtedly read the novels of Henry Fielding and Samuel Richardson. The girls also received education from their father and older brothers. Since the Austen family always struggled with money, they took in boarders, sons of noble families who were sent to be educated by the Reverend George Austen. Jane undoubtedly learned alongside them.
5. Unlike the freedom of young men, young women had to pursue pastimes that prepared them for marriage. At all costs, they had to retain an untarnished reputation. Young women learned to dance elegantly, sew, draw, paint, sing, and play either the harp or the piano. They went for walks or carriage rides, visited friends and acquaintances, and were never unsupervised in the company of unrelated young gentlemen. They read novels and other literature and learned the art of conversation.
6. Cassandra and Jane were very close. Cassandra had been engaged to Thomas Fowle, but he died in 1797, when Cassandra was twenty-four. She chose to be considered a widow for the rest of her life. She was a talented artist and drew the only authentic likeness of her sister. Both sisters were devoted aunts to the children of their brothers. Cassandra outlived her younger sister by many years. During Jane's long illness, Cassandra provided care for her, and she deeply mourned Jane's death.
7. Jane Austen wrote about the position of society with which she had the most personal experience, the gentry, which in modern terms would be the middle and upper-middle classes. While the majority of the population of England were poor, the lower classes are rarely seen in Austen's works. The upper classes make many appearances. The nobility—such as dukes, earls, and barons—were addressed as Lord and Lady. Knights did not receive their titles through family lines. Landed gentry were people who owned land, and they were the foundation of society. This group includes the Bennet family.

8. Marriage was the only form of security for young women. Because of the circumstances of Jane Austen's family, she had no hope of a dowry. In her time, if a girl hoped to find a well-born young man as a husband, she was expected to bring a generous dowry to the relationship. Since young women of the gentry had virtually no opportunity for careers, if they did not marry, they remained dependent upon their relations. The only alternative was a life of servitude as a lady's companion or a governess, or worse, life in the poorhouse.
9. While Jane Austen never married, she did receive at least one marriage proposal. Before that, though, when she was twenty, she had a mutual flirtation with young Tom Lefroy, an Irishman. It is generally believed that he was sent back home quickly because this would not have been considered a suitable marriage. Five years later, she accepted the proposal from Harris Bigg-Wither, but the next morning she broke it off.
10. Austen completed the writing of *First Impressions* in 1797. Her father sent a letter to a London bookseller, asking if he had interest in seeing the manuscript, but the offer was immediately declined. Later, when she was living in Chawton, Jane Austen began revising it under the new title of *Pride and Prejudice*. Austen sold the copyright to Thomas Egerton of Whitehall Publishers for £110. Her novel was published in three volumes in 1813, attributed to "The Author of *Sense and Sensibility*," which had been published in 1811.

4. Read aloud the first sentence of the novel. Inform students that while the wording of the first sentence is not unique to Jane Austen, the implied irony is. In fact, the phrase, "It is a truth acknowledged" is a phrase beloved by eighteenth-century philosophers such as Adam Smith and thinkers such as Dr. Samuel Johnson. The use of the word *truth* is significant because it is a loaded term: truth according to whom? This sweeping statement leads to the further development of irony. Ask students to write about the meaning of the opening sentence, including ways it might connect with our lives today. (Clearly, this is going to be about the pursuit of marriage. The statement suggests that marriage might be based on monetary pursuits. The tone is coy and even humorous. It will not take long for readers to see that the reverse is true—that single women are the ones who desire to find men with money. Many people today are still obsessed with finding secure and meaningful relationships.)
5. Assign students to read the first eleven chapters of *Pride and Prejudice*.

Guidelines for Reading Literature

Directions: Using the text *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen and notes from the introductory presentation (with additional online research as needed), respond to the following prompts.

1. Before Reading
   - Title
     Speculate on the meaning of the title. Consider the graphics on the cover for information about the contents and meaning of the book. What tone is suggested by the title and cover art?
   - Author
     Knowing about authors can help us understand their work. Record details about Jane Austen which you think will help you understand her work.
   - Genre/Format
     Identifying the structure of the work can help you understand what to expect while reading it. After browsing through the book, record the most important details about the novel's format.

2. While Reading

   As you read this book, make it active reading by doing the following: annotate by using sticky notes to identify key passages; record questions as they occur; consider the basic elements of narration such as plot, character, setting, theme, and point of view.

3. For Review

   To prepare for class discussions, do the following after each reading assignment: free-write on ideas and images; respond by using statements (immediate reactions) or questions; and compose dense questions on the five basic elements of narration.

 Name:

WebQuest—The Regency Era

Directions: Use the Internet to complete the four-square form with information about the Regency period in English history. Use colored pencils or markers to draw a symbol or logo.

Description	Reason for the Title
Notable People	**Illustration, Symbol, Logo**

Jane Austen: A WebQuest

Directions: Use the Internet to find the following information.

1. Describe Jane Austen's family and where she lived during the forty-one years of her life.

2. What were the typical pastimes of young gentlemen during Austen's era?

3. How did Austen's brothers conform to society's expectations?

4. Describe Austen's education. Did she go to school? Who taught her?

5. How did young women pass their time during the Georgian and Regency Eras?

6. Describe the relationship between Austen and her sister.

7. Describe the social class that Austen wrote about the most comprehensively.

8. Why were courtship and marriage so important to women in this era?

9. Describe Austen's romantic relationships. Did she ever marry?

10. Describe the writing and publication of *Pride and Prejudice*.

Lesson 2

First Impressions

Objectives

- To explore the first impression of key characters conveyed through direct and indirect characterization
- To contrast characters and their motivations
- To analyze text for tone and meaning

Notes to the Teacher

The original title of *Pride and Prejudice* was *First Impressions,* which Jane Austen wrote between October 1796 and August 1797. She revised it in 1811–12, telling her sister Cassandra in an 1813 letter that she had "lop't and crop't" the original manuscript so that it would be shorter than *Sense and Sensibility*, which she had published with success in 1811. She had to change the title because another novel called *First Impressions* was published in 1800. Austen used the phrase "pride and prejudice" because it made an impression on her when reading *Cecilia*, a popular contemporary novel by Fanny Burney, one of Austen's favorite authors. In Burney's work, the phrase is hard to ignore because it is all in capital letters.

Clearly, the use of "pride and prejudice" is ironic. Few of the first impressions that proud Mr. Darcy makes on other characters (and on the reader) are valid when his complex character is fully revealed. Likewise, the first impressions of Elizabeth Bennet are misleading, particularly when she examines her prejudices honestly near the end of the novel. Austen presents her characters through direct and indirect characterization. So that the reader is not misled by first impressions, it is important to determine whether comments about a character are accurate or biased.

In this lesson, students discuss first impressions of several main characters and how the reader arrives at those impressions. Students then contrast key characters and their motivations to further determine characterization. This lesson concludes with a focus on a section of the text representing Mr. Collins and Austen's society's views of condescension. After completing these activities, the students have a firm foundation for their study of the novel.

Procedure

1. Distribute **Handout 4**. Describe the difference between direct and indirect characterization, and emphasize that indirect characterization leads readers to make inferences.

Suggested Responses

1. Information about Mr. Bennet has been supplied as an example on the handout.
2. The reader's first impression of Mrs. Bennet is that she is anxious to see her daughters married; she is whiny and self-absorbed, complaining constantly. Through indirect description of dialogue with Mr. Bennet, we learn that she is nervous; through direct description in chapter 1, we learn that she has little understanding of life and is temperamental. In chapter 9, Elizabeth is clearly embarrassed by her mother's poor manners. Mrs. Bennet is prejudiced in favor of Lydia; Mr. Bennet is prejudiced in favor of Elizabeth.
3. Fitzwilliam Darcy seems to be very proud. He is twenty-eight years old and has already inherited a great estate and fortune. In chapter 3 through direct description, the reader learns that Mr. Darcy is handsome and rich. Through indirect description, Darcy seems rude and snobbish, because at the assembly or dance in Meryton (chapter 3), he is overheard to say that Elizabeth is not good-looking enough to tempt him to dance. In chapter 5 when the Lucas women are gossiping about the ball with the Bennet sisters, they comment that Mr. Darcy is "ate up with pride." At the dance at Lucas Lodge, when Mr. Darcy says that "every savage can dance" (chapter 6), the reader has an additional impression of his arrogance. In chapter 9, he shows prejudice against the people of the countryside.
4. Through direct description, the reader learns that Charles Bingley, the owner of Netherfield Park in Hertfordshire, is "lively, unreserved," talkative, and amiable (chapter 3). In chapter 4, Jane Bennet describes him as "sensible, good-humoured, lively . . . with . . . good breeding." Later, in direct characterization, the reader learns that Bingley is open and easy in temperament. When Jane becomes ill in chapter 8, Bingley is attentive and anxious. He seems to be a most likable young man.
5. The oldest of the five sisters, Jane Bennet is described as beautiful and even tempered; Mrs. Bennet is proud of Jane's good looks, which she fancies are like her own. At the Meryton Assembly (dance), Darcy tells Bingley that he is dancing "with the only handsome girl in the room." In chapter 4 when Elizabeth tells her sister that she is "too apt . . . to like people in general," readers can deduce that Jane may be too agreeable. Darcy claims that Jane "smiled too much." Jane seems naïve about the arrogance of the Bingley

sisters. In direct description in chapter 6, the reader learns that Jane does not show her feelings, which Charlotte Lucas notes could be a disadvantage to a woman. Jane's disposition is calm and composed.

6. Elizabeth Bennet is lively and witty. Darcy almost grudgingly admits her attractiveness lies in her "pair of fine eyes." She is twenty years old and the second oldest of the five sisters. Her figure is "light and pleasing." She loves to walk energetically, and the Bingley sisters are outraged when she appears at Netherfield with a mud-stained petticoat. At the Lucas Lodge dance, she daringly engages in conversation with Mr. Darcy. Through her actions at this assembly, the reader learns that Elizabeth performs adequately at the pianoforte and sings in a pleasing manner. She tends to be outspoken and to make snap judgments. Elizabeth is clearly prejudiced against Darcy from the beginning and seems proud of her prejudices.

2. Distribute **Handout 5**. Contrast is an important feature in this novel. The reader is continuously forced to contrast Darcy with his friend Bingley and each Bennet sister with her siblings. While Jane Bennet is recuperating from a bad cold at Netherfield Park, the reader also contrasts Elizabeth Bennet with the supercilious Caroline Bingley.

Suggested Responses

1. Bingley's fortune is from trade; he has inherited an income between £4,000 and £5,000 a year. By contrast, Darcy is quite wealthy and has the ancestral estate of Pemberley. Darcy is much more reserved and seemingly arrogant. Despite their friendship, their dispositions are opposite. Bingley relies on Darcy's judgment, and Darcy is the more intelligent of the two. Bingley's manners are easygoing, while Darcy is haughty and reserved. Bingley is liked wherever he goes; Darcy gives offence. Elizabeth notes that Mr. Darcy has a great deal of influence over his friend Bingley. Darcy exposes Bingley's false modesty and a conduct "dependent on chance."

2. Lydia feels she should have all the privileges of her older sisters. Jane is reserved, while Lydia is flighty and flirtatious. Lydia is saucy and proclaims in chapter 2 that while she is the youngest, she's the tallest and therefore should have more attention. Jane is so reserved that she seldom shows her feelings. In contrast, Lydia has high spirits and can be quite rude and insensitive. Lydia is her mother's favorite daughter, and Mrs. Bennet indulges her, allowing her to socialize with the militia at a very young age. Lydia calls attention to herself, while Jane shows much more decorum.

3. Caroline Bingley is proud of her money and status and is prejudiced against those in trade or lower in status than she, which is ironic since her father's trade was the source of the wealth. Miss Bingley mocks Elizabeth's uncles, who are in trade, and she is clearly prejudiced against Elizabeth because she sees that Darcy is becoming interested in the Bennet girl. Caroline wants Darcy for herself and seeks to gain his notice by promenading around the room, reading over his shoulder, and commenting on the letters he is writing (chapters 10 and 11). In contrast, Elizabeth prefers to read quietly. Elizabeth is clearly the better conversationalist and the less arrogant of the two.

3. Distribute **Handout 6**, and have small groups complete the exercise.

Suggested Responses

1. It seems that Mr. Collins wishes to marry Elizabeth (although at first he had fixed his sights on Jane) because he wants to please his patron, Lady Catherine de Bourgh. He is mainly concerned that Elizabeth's temperament is acceptable to his patron. He believes a clergyman in his position should marry as an example to his flock.
2. The tone of this passage is stuffy, pompous, and offensive. Mr. Collins is condescending in the worst possible way.
3. Every word that Mr. Collins speaks reveals him to be a fool. His is a ridiculous pride because it is based on Lady Catherine's "condescension." He is too stupid to realize how he is being patronized.
4. Lady Catherine de Bourgh is meddling and opinionated. She has no business telling her resident clergyman the type of woman he must find so that the grand lady of the manor can approve of her. She interferes in his life and patronizes him as an inferior.

4. Assign students to read chapters 12–19.

First Impressions

Directions: Using the first eleven chapters of *Pride and Prejudice*, record the first impression the reader has for each of the following characters. Record textual references where those impressions are formed, from whose bias the impressions are formed, and if the impressions are gained through direct or indirect characterization.

Character	First Impression	Textual Evidence
1. Mr. Bennet	sarcastic and teasing	In chapter 1, in direct characterization, the reader learns that he is an "odd . . . mixture of . . . sarcastic humour . . . and caprice." In chapter 2, in indirect characterization through dialogue, Mr. Bennet delays telling his daughters and wife that he has already called on Mr. Bingley until they are all astonished at his pronouncement.
2. Mrs. Bennet		
3. Fitzwilliam Darcy		

 Name:

Character	First Impression	Textual Evidence
4. Charles Bingley		
5. Jane Bennet		
6. Elizabeth Bennet		

A Study in Contrasts

Directions: Jane Austen used contrasts between characters as an important tool in *Pride and Prejudice*. Note factors that bring the following pairs of characters together, and answer the questions regarding ways they differ.

1. Charles Bingley and Fitzwilliam Darcy are both successful young men with a "very steady" friendship, although Darcy is at least five years older. How do the two differ in background, temperament, personality, and attitudes they evoke from other people?

2. Jane Bennet at age twenty-two is the oldest of the five sisters; Lydia is the youngest at fifteen. They grew up in the same home with the same parents. In what ways are they different?

3. Jane spends four days at Netherfield Park recuperating from a bad cold; Elizabeth comes to help, bringing her into close proximity with Caroline Bingley. How do these two young women contrast?

Condescending Classes

Directions: During Jane Austen's time, an upper-class person who treated a social inferior well was admired and considered courteous. This concept was known as condescension, treating lower-class people with courtesy. In chapter 19, Mr. Collins offers a marriage proposal to Elizabeth Bennet. Read the following excerpt, and answer the questions.

> "My reasons for marrying are, first, that I think it a right thing for every clergyman in easy circumstances (like myself) to set the example of matrimony in his parish; secondly, that I am convinced it will add very greatly to my happiness; and thirdly—which perhaps I ought to have mentioned earlier, that it is the particular advice and recommendation of the very noble lady whom I have the honour of calling patroness. Twice has she condescended to give me her opinion (unasked too!) on this subject; and it was but the very Saturday night before I left Hunsford—between our pools at quadrille, while Mrs. Jenkinson was arranging Miss de Bourgh's footstool—that she said, 'Mr. Collins, you must marry. A clergyman like you must marry.—Chuse properly, chuse a gentlewoman for *my* sake; and for your *own*, let her be an active, useful sort of person, not brought up high, but able to make a small income go a good way. This is my advice. Find such a woman as soon as you can, bring her to Hunsford, and I will visit her.' Allow me, by the way, to observe, my fair cousin, that I do not reckon the notice and kindness of Lady Catherine de Bourgh as among the least of the advantages in my power to offer. You will find her manners beyond anything I can describe; and your wit and vivacity, I think, must be acceptable to her, especially when tempered with the silence and respect which her rank will inevitably excite. . . ."

1. What seem to be Mr. Collins's real reasons for wanting to marry Elizabeth?

2. What is the tone of the passage?

3. What does the reader learn about Mr. Collins?

4. What does the reader learn about Lady Catherine de Bourgh?

Lesson 3

Family Life and Sibling Rivalries

Objectives

- To determine the effects of birth order among siblings in the Bennet family
- To examine life in a typical middle-class family in Regency England
- To define *entailment* and its implications in the novel

Notes to the Teacher

Jane Austen wrote about what she knew best: family life for the middle-class landed gentry in the rural counties of Hertfordshire, Hampshire, and Kent. Members of the landed gentry ranged from the lesser aristocracy to the Bennets at the lower end. As evident in the characters of Austen's novels, the landed gentry regularly associated with the lower titled classes of the aristocracy. The gentry, the middle class, was the foundation of society, and the author paid them due respect.

Another aspect of life in the countryside, which Austen knew well, was the society of one's own family. Since her sister Cassandra was her dearest friend, Jane Austen, the seventh child out of eight, knew the importance yet frustrations of siblings and the necessity of a dowry. The five Bennet sisters reflect characteristics often seen in oldest, youngest, and middle children. Like Jane, oldest children tend to be reliable, conscientious, and cautious. Lydia reflects traits typical of some youngest children; she is self-centered, outgoing, and manipulative. Middle children, caught between the two extremes, must fight for attention.

Life for a middle-class rural family living in Hertfordshire was generally tranquil and seemingly uneventful by today's standards. The fictional market town of Meryton, one mile north of the village of Longbourn, was within a few miles of the Great North Road, which ran from London to Scotland. This wooded and attractive area thrived on an agricultural economy that produced grain, cattle, and sheep. The small country towns of Austen's time provided all one needed in life: assembly balls, a library, an apothecary, food shops, a milliner, and inns. Longbourn House itself was set on some acreage and, even though Mr. Bennet's means were modest, would have housed several servants and staff. Indoor servants would have included a housekeeper, a butler, and scullery maids. The groundsmen would have included a coachman and grooms, as Mr. Bennet kept a carriage and horses. This was the coach Mrs. Bennet did not want Jane to

use so that Jane had to go on horseback to visit at Netherfield Park. Many students find it difficult to conceive of middle-class families maintaining horses and servants, but this status was not unusual in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Students often note that the gentry do not seem to work. They live off the money earned by their inherited land. Darcy, for example, lives off the annual income of £10,000, while Mr. Bennet's smaller estate earns a much lower annual income of £2,000. That is why the entailment is such a terrible prospect for the Bennets. The *entail* was a legal arrangement that ensured property would be handed down to a male heir with the intent of keeping the family estate intact. When entailed on male heirs, the property would go to the nearest eligible male in the family if the primary tenant's family had no male heirs. Entails were a customary way of life in rural England of the early nineteenth century, and even though the surname of the property would change when the Collinses inherited the land upon Mr. Bennet's death, at least it stayed in the family, albeit through a distant cousin. Mr. Bennet inherited Longbourn through an entail, and while it was his property for his lifetime, he could not change it so that his wife and five daughters could remain at their family home after his death unless Mr. Collins somehow cooperated in their predicament. No wonder Mrs. Bennet was willing to force Elizabeth into marrying the empty-headed, loathsome Mr. Collins.

In this lesson, students complete a chart pertaining to birth order and personality traits in the Bennet family. Students then discuss entailment as practiced in the novel.

Procedure

1. Ask students to discuss characteristics of children based on their positions as oldest, youngest, or in the middle. Are the first children in families usually the most responsible? Are youngest children often spoiled?

2. Distribute **Handout 7**, and ask students to complete the chart.

Suggested Responses

1. As the oldest girl, Jane is referred to as "Miss Bennet" by society. She is modest and exhibits decorum. Elizabeth says that compliments take Jane by surprise and that she is too apt to "like people in general" (chapter 4). Typical of the firstborn, she is cautious about showing her true feelings, as is evident in chapter 6, when Charlotte Lucas says that a woman had better show "*more* affection than she feels" if she is to get married. Even though the Bingley sisters treat Jane and Elizabeth poorly, Jane refuses to think ill of them.
2. Elizabeth, at twenty, is referred to as "Miss Elizabeth Bennet" or familiarly as "Lizzy" or "Eliza." She is vivacious and at ease in society, teasing Darcy openly at the dance at Lucas Lodge

in chapter 5. While Jane is recuperating at Netherfield Park, Elizabeth holds her own with the Bingley sisters and is not intimidated by Darcy. She enjoys herself in society as at the various dances and at her Aunt Phillips's card party (chapter 16). She draws the attention of Mr. Wickham and converses easily with him.

3. Mary, whose age is not precisely determined, although she is younger than Elizabeth and older than Catherine, is the plainest and perhaps most pathetic of the sisters. She desires attention, but through working "hard for knowledge and accomplishments" (chapter 6). She seeks approval by parroting "threadbare morality" (chapter 12). At the Netherfield ball, she eagerly seeks attention by singing and performing in a manner that embarrasses Elizabeth (chapter 18).
4. Catherine ("Kitty") is the least developed of the sisters. She is frail in health and has a persistent cough. She is truly the forgotten child, and while she enjoys walking to Meryton to shop and ogle the militia, she does so at her younger sister's initiative.
5. Lydia at fifteen is too young to be out in society. Her head is easily turned by soldiers flirting with her. She has "high animal spirits" and is very outgoing. As her mother's favorite, Lydia does not seem to understand boundaries or correct manners. She addresses Mr. Bingley directly, begging for a dance at Netherfield (chapter 9); she brags about playing cards and winning lottery tickets (chapter 16); she interrupts Mr. Collins while he is reading James Fordyce's *Sermons* to them (chapter 14).

3. At this point of students' reading of *Pride and Prejudice*, they have a keen sense of the differences between life today and life in Austen's time. Ask students to brainstorm a list of activities the Bennet family and their friends seem to enjoy. Then ask students to write about the extent to which people today have the same interests. Follow with discussion. (In the novel, there are dances, visits, card playing, and reading. Today, instead of writing long letters, people often spend time writing e-mails or texting to keep in touch. Dances are still popular but are very different in nature from the assemblies held at homes in Hertfordshire. For some people today, walking is not as popular as working out at the gym.)
4. Distribute **Handout 8**, and conduct a discussion based on the questions.

Suggested Responses

1. Because only males can inherit, the five Bennet daughters can expect to find themselves destitute unless they are married.

While their father's estate is meager compared to Darcy's, the girls can inherit none of it.

2. Mrs. Bennet says, "How anyone could have the conscience to entail away an estate from one's own daughter I cannot understand."
3. We see the same pattern in the Darcy and Bingley families, but they did have sons who could inherit property, so the daughters experience some protection.
4. The purpose was to prevent property from being split up into ever smaller units, to maintain estates intact.
5. The rather odious Mr. Collins will inherit Longbourn.
6. Mr. Collins intends to marry one of the Bennet sisters. He first pays attention to Jane, but Mrs. Bennet exclaims that Jane is all but engaged. He turns his attention to Elizabeth, who will not have him; he initially believes that her refusal is not genuine, that she is just being coy.

5. Assign students to read chapters 20–23, thus completing the first volume.

 Name:

Birth Order and Personality in the Bennet Family

Directions: Using as much as you have read of *Pride and Prejudice*, fill in the columns with information about the Bennet sisters.

Birth Order and Age	Term of Address and General Characteristics	Specific Behaviors
1. Jane (22)		
2. Elizabeth (20)		

 Name:

Birth Order and Age	Term of Address and General Characteristics	Specific Behaviors
3. Mary (18 or 19?)		
4. Catherine (17)		
5. Lydia (15)		

What Does Inheritance Entail?

Directions: In wills and legacies, an entailment involves restrictions on inheritance. In Jane Austen's England, property was passed on to male heirs, most often to eldest sons. This practice is evident throughout *Pride and Prejudice*. Answer the following questions.

1. Why is entailment of property a particular concern for the Bennet family?

2. In chapter 23, what does Mrs. Bennet have to say about this entailment?

3. How is entailment evident among other families in the novel?

4. What was the purpose behind laws involving entailment of a family's property?

5. Who is slated to inherit Longbourn? How does this idea affect the reader?

6. Is there any attempt to compensate for the entail?

Lesson 4

Entertainment in Jane Austen's Time

Objectives

- To identify types of games and card playing in Jane Austen's time
- To recognize the significance of characters' card games
- To analyze the etiquette and importance of dancing in Austen's time

Notes to the Teacher

There were two prevalent social diversions in Jane Austen's time: card playing and dancing. These two pastimes shared in common an opportunity for the opposite sexes to converse free from the confines of a chaperone, while still exhibiting the etiquette of social gatherings. Card playing was an acceptable pastime among men of both the nobility and the gentry. A young lady could also play cards and parlor games, including light gambling. In fact, in chapter 16, Lydia "talked incessantly of lottery tickets, of the fish she had lost and the fish she had won," after Aunt Phillips's supper party in Meryton. Lottery tickets was a simple, almost brainless, card game—a type of round game with flexibility in the number of players. The round is over when the winner produces a certain card—the "lottery ticket." "Fish" are a type of marker or gaming token, often made of mother of pearl and shaped like fish. Later in chapter 29 (or chapter 6 of volume 2) at Lady Catherine de Bourgh's evening party, card games are also played, and fish are won. Since lottery fish are on display in Jane Austen's House Museum at Chawton, clearly she knew well the card games described in *Pride and Prejudice*. Loo, mentioned in chapter 10, was another round game.

Much more complicated was the game of whist, a precursor to bridge. At the Meryton card party and supper in chapter 16, Mr. Collins is eager to play whist, even though he is probably an impediment, for he knows little of the game. Mr. Wickham does not play whist, which gives him an opportunity to converse with Elizabeth about Darcy. Whist involves four players in two partnerships. The object is to be the first team to win ten points from taking tricks, and the game involves strategy. Another game of strategy mentioned in *Pride and Prejudice* is backgammon, one of the oldest board games for two players; pieces are moved according to the roll of dice.

Dancing has even greater thematic significance in *Pride and Prejudice*. Since young people in Austen's time did not date as we know it today, a dance was an occasion at which young men and women of the gentry or nobility could meet, get to know each other socially, and even make physical contact by holding hands—gloved, of course. Many of Jane Austen's letters to Cassandra include news of dances she attended. It is interesting to note that all of the dances in *Pride and Prejudice* take place in volume 1, when the characters are getting to know each other. Thus, dances are a primary method of developing characterization and conflict.

Strict etiquette governed private balls such as those held in *Pride and Prejudice*. The evening began at eight, with mingling and dancing to a small ensemble of mostly string players. Dancers requested partners and filled in their dance cards. One could only dance two times with a single partner. At midnight, supper was served. The ball or dance ended somewhere between three and four in the morning. At public balls, a dancing master or master of ceremonies oversaw the protocol. A single dance set could last up to thirty minutes, ample time for a conversation. At some points in the dances, the choreography required couples to stand and wait their turn to rejoin the set. This was valuable time to flirt and converse openly with a partner without a chaperone hovering nearby. Dances were also a rigorous form of exercise; part of a lady's costume was a fan used to cool off as much as for flirtation.

In this lesson, students focus first on card games and then on dancing in *Pride and Prejudice*.

Procedure

1. Point out that *Pride and Prejudice* describes games popular in Jane Austen's time. Ask students to identify card games that are popular today (poker, bridge, cribbage, pinochle, hearts, crazy eights). Distribute **Handout 9**, and ask students to complete the exercise.

Suggested Responses

1. a. It seems ironic that Mr. Collins would turn to a difficult game when he lacks good sense. Additionally, turning from Fordyce's *Sermons,* which are somber moral passages intended to edify young women, to a game seems to indicate his shallow nature. Probably he is not well suited to be a clergyman.

   b. Backgammon is a game that involves only two players. Thus, by offering to be Mr. Bennet's antagonist, which in an ironic sense Mr. Collins certainly is, he excludes all of the women in the room.

2. a. Mr. Collins believes he is the equal to everybody he meets, no matter their status or intelligence. He is not at all intimidated by the prospect of playing a game of strategy, yet he is simple-minded and pretentious. He believes his

rank comes from his patroness, which is highly ironic, since that places him as an inferior in so many ways.

b. The connotation of Mrs. Phillips's reaction is that she cuts off Mr. Collins before he can go into another long-winded, boring compliment or explanation. Mr. Collins is so empty-headed and pompous that he is oblivious to others' reactions to him.

3. a. Lydia typically shows her "high animal spirits" by her playing of lottery tickets. As a "determined talker," she is suited to a game that involves only chance and no thinking. She seeks attention by winning.

b. Just as Lydia stays true to form, Mr. Collins, when he protests that he does not mind his losses, is also true to his contrary nature. He talks as incessantly as Lydia and lets it be known that losing some money at whist is not a problem because of his position under the patronage of Lady Catherine de Bourgh. Every comment he makes illustrates his silly, pompous, crass nature.

2. If possible, show a movie clip of *Pride and Prejudice* with a dance scene. The 1995 BBC series is an exceptionally good source to capture the etiquette, intricacy, and significance of dancing in the world of the novel.

3. Give information on rules and etiquette at dances:
   - Gentlemen were expected to ask young ladies who were seated without partners to dance.
   - One was expected to be attentive to his or her partner by conversing while dancing.
   - When a gentleman requested a dance with a young lady (most likely by filling in her dance card), he was expected to present himself promptly.
   - A young lady could only decline an invitation to dance if she were too tired or indisposed. Declining an invitation meant that a young lady could not dance later in the evening. (This occurs when Elizabeth declines a dance with Mr. Darcy at Lucas Lodge.)
   - A couple was expected not to dance with each other more than twice. Doing so was viewed as one step before matrimony.

4. Distribute **Handout 10**, and ask students to complete the exercise. Then discuss the impressions of the characters and the etiquette involved.

Suggested Responses

1. Darcy's arrogance is evident at the Meryton Assembly. He behaves badly when he deliberately insults Elizabeth, who is

within earshot of his comments. He also sees a young lady sitting out for two dances because of a lack of partner but does not ask her to dance. Whether she is attractive or not does not matter; according to etiquette, he should have come to her rescue. In truth, there is a scarcity of partners for young ladies at the Meryton Assembly, and Darcy's moving about the room merely advertises that he is available but chooses not to dance. This does not endear him to the people of Meryton.

2. Elizabeth displays her prejudice against Darcy in this passage; yet, ironically, he is behaving well at the Netherfield Assembly. He asks her to dance, which shocks her into submission, and then returns promptly to "claim her hand." Here, Darcy shows very good manners while Elizabeth displays both pride and prejudice. She also shows her prejudice for Wickham, and it is ironic that the inexperienced Charlotte Lucas warns her friend that Darcy is ten times the man that Wickham seems to be.
3. This is the scene when Darcy and Elizabeth dance together for the first time at the Netherfield Assembly. They converse at some length only because Elizabeth draws him out by archly reminding him of the etiquette of conversation. She wittily states that they are similar in mind, being of an "unsocial, taciturn disposition, unwilling to speak." Of course, she is ironically saying this about Darcy, and, rather than being offended, he is amused by her good humor. She tells him as they dance that she is merely trying to sketch his character. When they part, Darcy feels "a tolerable powerful feeling" that is a precursor to the love he will feel later.

5. Assign students to read chapters 24–31 (the first eight chapters of volume 2).

Playing Games in *Pride and Prejudice*

Directions: Read the three passages, and answer the questions about characterization.

1. "Then turning to Mr. Bennet, [Mr. Collins] offered himself as his antagonist at backgammon. Mr. Bennet accepted the challenge, observing that he acted very wisely in leaving the girls to their own trifling amusements. Mrs. Bennet and her daughters apologised most civilly for Lydia's interruption, and promised that it should not occur again, if he would resume his book; but Mr. Collins, after assuring them that he bore his young cousin no ill-will, and should never resent her behaviour as any affront, seated himself at another table with Mr. Bennet, and prepared for backgammon" (chapter 14).

   a. What is the irony that Mr. Collins challenges Mr. Bennet to a game of backgammon after Lydia's rude interruption of the sermon?

   b. How is the backgammon game a type of affront to the rest of the family?

2. "When the card-tables were placed, [Mr. Collins] had an opportunity of obliging her in turn, by sitting down to whist.

   'I know little of the game at present,' said he, 'but I shall be glad to improve myself, for in my situation of life—' Mrs. Phillips was very glad for his compliance, but could not wait for his reason" (chapter 16).

   a. Why does Mr. Collins believe he can learn the complicated game of whist quickly?

b. What elements of Mr. Collins's personality does this passage reveal?

3. "Lydia talked incessantly of lottery tickets, of the fish she had lost and the fish she had won; Mr. Collins, in describing the civility of Mr. and Mrs. Phillips, protesting that he did not in the least regard his losses at whist, enumerating all the dishes at supper, and repeatedly fearing that he crowded his cousins, had more to say than he could well manage before the carriage stopped at Longbourn House" (chapter 16).

   a. Why is Lydia better suited to the playing of lottery tickets than whist?

   b. How are Mr. Collins's reactions to his losses at whist typical of his personality?

Dance Etiquette in *Pride and Prejudice*

Directions: On a separate piece of paper, record what the reader learns about the character(s) and etiquette involved in each of the following passages.

1. "'*You* are dancing with the only handsome girl in the room,' said Mr. Darcy, looking at the eldest Miss Bennet.

   'Oh! she is the most beautiful creature I ever beheld! But there is one of her sisters sitting down just behind you, who is very pretty, and I dare say very agreeable. Do let me ask my partner to introduce you.'

   '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'" (chapter 3).

2. "[Elizabeth] danced next with an officer, and had the refreshment of talking of Wickham, and of hearing that he was universally liked. When those dances were over she returned to Charlotte Lucas, and was in conversation with her, when she found herself suddenly addressed by Mr. Darcy, who took her so much by surprise in his application for her hand, that, without knowing what she did, she accepted him. He walked away again immediately, and she was left to fret over her own want of presence of mind; Charlotte tried to console her.

   'I dare say you will find him very agreeable.'

   'Heaven forbid! *That* would be the greatest misfortune of all!—To find a man agreeable whom one is determined to hate—Do not wish me such an evil.'

   When the dancing recommenced, however, and Darcy approached to claim her hand, Charlotte could not help cautioning her in a whisper not to be a simpleton, and allow her fancy for Wickham to make her appear unpleasant in the eyes of a man of ten times his consequence" (chapter 18).

3. "'It is particularly incumbent on those who never change their opinion, to be secure of judging properly at first.'

   'May I ask to what these questions tend?'

   'Merely to the illustration of *your* character,' said [Elizabeth], endeavouring to shake off her gravity. 'I am trying to make it out.'

   'And what is your success?'

   She shook her head. 'I do not get on at all. I hear such different accounts of you as puzzle me exceedingly.'

   'I can readily believe,' answered [Darcy] gravely, 'that report may vary greatly with respect to me; and I could wish, Miss Bennet, that you were not to sketch my character at the present moment, as there is reason to fear that the performance would reflect no credit on either.'

   'But if I do not take your likeness now, I may never have another opportunity'" (chapter 18).

Lesson 5

A Woman's Education

Objectives

- To explore the educational opportunities available to women in the Regency Era
- To analyze connected nonfiction readings regarding women and education
- To recognize irony in Jane Austen's work

Notes to the Teacher

Despite attending boarding school only briefly, Jane Austen was extremely well educated for the era. To supplement his meager income as a country pastor, the Reverend Mr. Austen boarded four or five young boys from wealthy or titled families. These students benefitted from the reverend's excellent education as well as his large library. His daughters benefitted as well. The curriculum for his students and his sons included Latin, Greek, and works of philosophy—appropriate preparation for Eton and other schools. Jane Austen undoubtedly sat in on many of the lessons, and she had access to the books in her father's library.

Jane Austen's formal education was in two stages: at the ages of seven and nine respectively, she and Cassandra attended a boarding school in Oxford, but the school was poorly run. When the two girls became ill with typhus, they returned home. Two years later, the sisters went to the Abbey School to board. While the education was meager, the atmosphere was much more conducive to the development of a budding writer. Back at home at Steventon, Jane read books ranging from Shakespeare to modern publications and novels such as *Cecilia* by Fanny Burney (one of Austen's favorites) from her father's library and conversed with her better-educated older brothers.

A typical education for women of the gentry at the time included dancing, music, and French. Jane Austen learned dancing, probably from a dancing master brought to her village. She was accomplished on the pianoforte and practiced early every morning, but she condemned the shallow education described in chapter 8 when Bingley mentions young ladies' accomplishments such as painting tables, needle pointing fire screens, and netting purses. Both Elizabeth and Darcy are skeptical that this indeed is a suitable education, which is a clue of their suitability for one another, particularly when Darcy endorses reading.

At Rosings Park, Lady Catherine de Bourgh further illustrates the limitations of women's education when she is appalled to learn that the Bennet sisters never had a governess. Mrs. Bennet illustrates the worst aspects of an ignorant woman who manages a house well but does not enjoy reading or learning. So like her mother in many ways, Lydia demonstrates what happens when women are not educated suitably. Thoughtless, wild, and vulgar, she stands in contrast to Elizabeth's innate intelligence.

A final contrast regarding the education of women and a source of satire for Jane Austen is between the chauvinist pieties of the Reverend Fordyce and the feminist writings of Mary Wollstonecraft. Dr. James Fordyce (1720–1796) was a Scottish Presbyterian minister whose great work was a two-volume text, *Sermons to Young Women*, published in 1766 with the chief purpose to instruct young girls in the finer points of appropriate behavior. His extremely popular work was a staple among clergy and laity alike. Elizabeth is close to the sentiments of Mary Wollstonecraft (1759–1797), who was an advocate of women's rights. Austen was undoubtedly familiar with Wollstonecraft's works, as she was sixteen when Wollstonecraft's revolutionary work *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792) was published. One can argue that Austen's writing shows Wollstonecraft's influence. Of particular interest for this lesson is Wollstonecraft's earlier work, *Thoughts on the Education of Daughters* (1787).

Wollstonecraft complained that women were no more than property to men. While Fordyce encouraged young women to be docile and passive, Wollstonecraft argued that women should be educated to use their minds from infancy. A further irony is that despite her charms, Jane Bennet is closest to Fordyce's feminine ideal, while Elizabeth in contrast has many of the so-called masculine qualities Fordyce abhorred in women.

In this lesson, students discuss the education of women in the context of *Pride and Prejudice*. Then students examine quotations from both Fordyce and Wollstonecraft and apply the quotations to the novel. Lastly, students write in-class essays that draw upon Wollstonecraft's views and Austen's story.

Procedure

1. Explain the limited educational opportunities for young women in the time of Jane Austen. (See Notes to the Teacher.)

2. Distribute **Handout 11**. After students have answered the questions by using their texts, discuss the type of education women received in the Regency Era**.**

Suggested Responses

1. Mary is pompous and overly concerned with formal rules and details. As the plain one in the family, she tries too hard to compensate by cleverness. She displays knowledge, but her comments are often meaningless. Her accomplishments, such as her performance on the pianoforte, are perhaps technically

better than Elizabeth's, but the older sister has a far more pleasing air.

2. The two older Bennet sisters seem fairly well educated despite their father's neglect and their mother's silliness. Unlike Austen, none of the Bennet sisters went to boarding school, nor did they have a governess. They did not have painting lessons or lectures on deportment, as evident in the outlandish behavior of Catherine and Lydia. Mr. Bennet usually retreats to the confines of his library where the rest of the family is not permitted. He is irresponsible as a husband and father and comes close to mocking his wife and children.
3. Caroline Bingley is a snob and a fake. She ridicules Elizabeth's relatives for being in trade, yet that is how Charles Bingley's father made money. She desperately wants to marry Darcy, and she counts herself among accomplished women. Neither Miss Bingley nor Mrs. Hurst considers Elizabeth accomplished, partly because they feel her playing at the pianoforte is inferior and the appalling lack of breeding involved in walking to Netherfield Park in the mud and rain. They do not regard her enjoyment of reading as a virtue. Elizabeth rightly proclaims that no woman could possibly meet all of the criteria that Caroline Bingley describes.
4. Lady Catherine de Bourgh is shocked that all of the Bennet sisters are out in society at once, even though the oldest is not yet married. She is appalled that they never had a governess and believes that they must be neglected and poorly educated.
5. Mrs. Jenkinson is little more than a slave to Anne de Bourgh, who, at twenty-eight, is too old for a governess, yet Mrs. Jenkinson is her constant companion. Mrs. Jenkinson has a small pianoforte in her room which Lady Catherine de Bourgh offers to Elizabeth to practice. Clearly, Mrs. Jenkinson is not considered "somebody," and Lady Catherine does not respect either the governess's privacy or property.
6. In chapter 31, Lady Catherine proclaims to the assembled group, "I often tell young ladies that no excellence in music is to be acquired without constant practise. I have told Miss Bennet [Elizabeth] several times that she will never play really well, unless she practises more." Later, when Elizabeth is playing the pianoforte, she tells Darcy, "My fingers . . . do not move over this instrument in the masterly manner which I see so many women's do. . . . But then I have always supposed it to be my own fault—because I would not take the trouble of practicing." Ironically, she is using the same advice

that Lady Catherine gave her, but to illustrate how both she and Darcy lack accomplishment.

3. Explain who Dr. James Fordyce was, and point out that it is his sermon that Mr. Collins is reading out loud in chapter 14 until Lydia rudely interrupts him with gossip from Meryton. Then, distribute **Handout 12**, and use it for discussion.

Suggested Responses

1. Elizabeth, with her vigor and energy, could be considered masculine in the sense Fordyce suggests. She delights in long walks, reading, and witty conversation. She is not at all passive and will stand her ground when confronted with illogic. She begs Collins to consider her "as a rational creature speaking the truth from her heart" when he accuses her of being coy in rejecting his first proposal. Even though Mr. Darcy accuses her of a lack of civility, Elizabeth vigorously explains the rejected marriage proposal. Ironically, the meek, sweet Jane fulfills the definition of a desirable woman, even though it is that very meekness which causes Darcy to persuade Bingley that Jane does not really love him.
2. Mary is a perfect illustration of how a little learning can be a dangerous thing. Rather than being delightful, she is repugnant in her scholarly airs. Elizabeth, on the other hand, while not the great beauty that Jane is, attracts several men in the course of the novel with her wit and intellect.
3. Elizabeth does not hide her learning but reads with pleasure at Netherfield Park to the amazement of the Bingley sisters and Mr. Hurst. In fact, ironically, Elizabeth prides herself on her good sense.

4. Using Notes to the Teacher, explain the role of Mary Wollstonecraft in the advancement of women. After distributing **Handout 13**, allow students to use their materials, notes, and the text to construct brief, in-class essays comparing Wollstonecraft's views to situations and characters in the novel.

Suggested Responses

A complete analysis should include the following points, though not necessarily in this order:

1. Mr. and Mrs. Bennet's marriage is certainly in a state of discord. While Mr. Bennet is comedic, neither parent is truly rational.
2. Mr. Darcy accuses Elizabeth of being uncivil in her rejection of his marriage proposal, yet she is expressing exactly what she feels. In contrast, Caroline Bingley only feigns civility in her relationship with Jane. The letter Jane receives from

Caroline Bingley is cruel yet civil. There are many examples of artificial manners including those demonstrated by Mrs. Hurst and Lady Catherine de Bourgh.

3. Elizabeth does not act a part; she prides herself on her ability to discern truth, but her prejudices get in her way. While she is not a great beauty like Jane, Elizabeth is attractive, witty, and intelligent.
4. Elizabeth's playing pleases the assembly at Netherfield Park as well as the group at Rosings. She plays with expression, revealing her depth of character, unlike Mary, whose performance is technically better but not as pleasing.
5. Elizabeth explains to Lady Catherine de Bourgh that her own education did not suffer, for she was "encouraged to read, and had all the masters that were necessary." There are many examples of how Elizabeth's mind is always employed; unlike the shallow Lydia, Elizabeth is not dependent on her senses or emotions for entertainment.
6. Mrs. Jenkinson as the example of a humble companion is pathetic. Lady Catherine de Bourgh is tyrannical.
7. Lydia's shallow flirtations and eventual affair with Wickham are not supported by a rational mind or true esteem. Even earlier, readers must cringe at her obsession with the men in the militia. Also, readers are beginning to perceive that Elizabeth is truly worthy of Darcy, and both will improve under the effect of their mutual esteem. The effect of Darcy's letter after his marriage proposal to Elizabeth initiates her growing respect for him and her own developing self-knowledge.

5. Explain that essays should include precise thesis statements and textual support from both Wollstonecraft and Austen.
6. Assign students to read chapters 32–38 (volume 2, chapters 9–15).

Accomplished Women

Directions: Answer the following questions regarding education and the women in *Pride and Prejudice*.

1. "Mary had heard herself mentioned to Miss Bingley as the most accomplished girl in the neighborhood." This statement occurs in chapter 3. How can the reader tell that Mary's education is not endorsed by Jane Austen and that the above quotation is meant to be ironic?

2. Contrast Austen's own education to that of the Bennet sisters. What is the role of a father in his daughter's education, and how does Mr. Bennet portray a negative example?

3. Review the comments on an accomplished woman in chapter 8 when Elizabeth converses with Charles Bingley, Caroline Bingley, and Darcy. Why does Caroline Bingley consider herself accomplished? Why don't Miss Bingley and Mrs. Hurst consider Elizabeth accomplished? Why does Elizabeth claim no woman can exist who is truly accomplished?

4. In chapter 29 (chapter 6 of volume 2), how does Lady Catherine de Bourgh contrast an accomplished woman's education with that of the Bennet sisters? What shocks her about their education and social status?

5. What is the role of Mrs. Jenkinson in the education and care of Anne de Bourgh? How can the reader tell that the life of a governess is sheer drudgery?

6. What advice does Lady Catherine de Bourgh give to Elizabeth about her performance on the pianoforte? How does Elizabeth ironically use this advice with Darcy in chapter 31 when she suggests that if he would practice at conversing, he could master it and be more accomplished himself?

Quotations from Fordyce's *Sermons to Young Women*

Directions: Read the following quotations from Dr. James Fordyce, and answer the questions. Pay particular attention to how the quotations are used ironically by Jane Austen.

1. On Masculinity in Women

> Nature appears to have formed the [mental] faculties of your sex, for the most part, with less vigor than those of ours, observing the same distinction here as in the more delicate frame of your bodies. . . . But you yourselves, I think, will allow that war, commerce, politics, exercises of strength and dexterity, abstract philosophy, and all the abstruser sciences, are most properly the province of men. I am sure those masculine women, that would plead for your sharing any part of this province equally with us, do not understand your true interests. There is an influence, there is an empire which belongs to you, and which I wish you ever to possess: I mean that which has the heart for its object and is secured by meekness and modesty, by soft attraction and virtuous love.

Describe how Elizabeth seems to fulfill Fordyce's description of a masculine woman. Which character ironically seems to match the woman he described?

2. On Education

> As a small amount of knowledge entertains a woman, so from a woman a small expression of kindness delights, particularly if she has beauty.

Which women in the novel ironically portray the danger of a "small amount of knowledge"? Which woman seems the kindest and most beautiful?

3. On Being Ignorant

> Be ever cautious in displaying your good sense. It will be thought you assume superiority over the rest of the company. But if you have any learning, keep it a profound secret especially from the men, who generally look with a jealous and malignant eye on a woman of great parts and a cultivated understanding.

Does Elizabeth follow Fordyce's advice? How does her good sense, which she does not keep secret, actually serve as an attraction?

Mary Wollstonecraft on Education and Women

Directions: Read the following passages taken from Mary Wollstonecraft's *Thoughts on the Education of Daughters* (1787). After considering the significance of these quotations, write a brief essay in which you compare Wollstonecraft's beliefs to situations and characters in *Pride and Prejudice*. Be sure to quote directly from the novel and from the following excerpts.

1. "The marriage state is too often a state of discord; it does not always happen that both parents are rational, and the weakest have it in their power to do most mischief."

2. "Civility is due to all, but regard or admiration should never be expressed when it is not felt."

3. "She who suffers herself to be seen as she really is, can never be thought affected. She is not solicitous to act a part; her endeavour is not to hide; but correct her failings, and her face has of course that beauty which an attention to the mind only gives."

4. "In music I prefer expression to execution. . . . A [woman] must have sense, taste, and sensibility, to render their music interesting."

5. "It is an old, but a very true observation, that the human mind must ever be employed. A relish for reading, or any of the fine arts, should be cultivated very early in life; and those who reflect can tell of what importance it is for the mind to have some resource in itself, and not to be entirely dependent on the senses for employment and amusement."

6. "Few are the modes of earning a subsistence, and those very humiliating. Perhaps to be a humble companion to some rich old cousin, or what is still worse, to live with strangers who are so intolerably tyrannical, that none of their own relations can bear to live with them, though they should even expect a fortune in reversion."

7. "Love, unsupported by esteem, must soon expire, or lead to depravity; as, on the contrary, when a worthy person is the object, it is the greatest incentive to improvement, and has the best effect on the manners and temper."

Lesson 6

Travel and Transportation

Objectives

- To distinguish the residences of fictional characters in the actual counties of England
- To relate various vehicles with the status of the owners

Notes to the Teacher

The first volume of *Pride and Prejudice* is dominated with assemblies and balls; the second volume involves traveling. Jane travels from Hertfordshire to London and stays with her aunt and uncle, the Gardiners, for nearly two months in Gracechurch Street, which is in an unfashionable, commercial part of town called Cheapside. It is interesting to note the origin of the name Cheapside, which does not connote poverty: *cheap* was the word for "market" in Middle English, thus confirming that the Gardiners were in trade. Elizabeth travels further, four hours from London by coach to Hunsford in Kent to visit the Collinses. She is gone six weeks. Darcy and Colonel Fitzwilliam visit their aunt, Lady Catherine de Bourgh, at Rosings Park for nearly three weeks. At the end of volume 2, Lydia travels with her friends, Colonel and Harriet Forster along with the relocated regiment, to Brighton, a seaside resort. The militia being moved by the War Office is the only mention of the Napoleonic Wars; for political reasons, Jane Austen could not give an exact name of the militia. Finally, Elizabeth learns that her travels with the Gardiners will not take her all the way to the Lake District, which is in northwest England. They only have time (again a matter of several weeks) to travel to Derbyshire, which coincidentally includes the estate of Fitzwilliam Darcy, Pemberley.

Clearly, time is an important consideration regarding traveling. A fifty-mile trip would be a full day of travel by coach, as horse-drawn carriages, the prevalent method of travel, could only achieve about seven miles an hour. Only the wealthy owned their own carriages solely for the use of family transport, and the nobility's vehicles proudly displayed coats of arms. Roads were improving in Jane Austen's time, but since maintenance was the responsibility of the parishes through which roads passed or financed by turnpike tolls, conditions were uneven. Mail coaches could travel more quickly because horses were changed at two-hour intervals, and many letters would arrive at their destination the day after they were posted. Because of the slow pace of carriages and the risks of travel, the duration of visits was very different from today.

Another important consideration regarding travel and transportation is the idea that the type of carriage one drove clearly identified his or her place in society. *Carriage* is a generic term because there were many specific types of vehicles, such as coaches, chaises, and gigs. Sporty two-wheeled vehicles such as phaetons were also popular. While the gentry, like the Bennets, had coaches and coachmen for family travel, their horses were also needed for farm work. Those higher up in society might own a luxury carriage such as a barouche, which Lady Catherine de Bourgh grudgingly offers to Elizabeth to entice her to stay longer. Ladies would drive gigs or phaetons. Sporty rich gentlemen like Darcy would drive curricles.

In this lesson, students consider locations and distances from one English county to another. In addition, they consider the various modes of transportation available during the novel's time setting.

Procedure

1. Provide information about traveling in Jane Austen's time. (See Notes to the Teacher.) Then distribute **Handout 14**, and have small groups complete the exercise.

   #### Suggested Responses

   1. Most of the novel takes place in the southeast corner of England, not far from London.
   2. Lydia travels to the south coast of Sussex, where the resort town of Brighton is located. Today it is a short trip; in the early eighteenth century, it was much longer.
   3. Hertfordshire, north of London, is the location of Longbourn (the Bennet home), Meryton (the location of the Phillips family and the militia), Lucas Lodge, and Netherfield Park (the Bingley home).
   4. Lady Catherine de Bourgh and Mr. Collins live in Kent.
   5. Elizabeth travels south to London to visit her aunt and uncle, the Gardiners, who live on Gracechurch Street in Cheapside. Bingley's married sister also lives in London.
   6. The trip to Derbyshire is much more extensive, bringing Elizabeth and her companions northwest. This is the location of Pemberley, Fitzwilliam Darcy's estate.
   7. To get to the Lake District, Elizabeth would have had to continue in a northwest direction.

2. Distribute **Handout 15**, and have students work in groups to complete it.

   #### Suggested Responses

   1. Lady Catherine de Bourgh owns a barouche, which she offers rather condescendingly to convey Elizabeth to London. Pictures show a long, elegant carriage with the driver sitting

high up front. Luxury cars like BMWs could be equivalent. Of course, a chauffeur would drive these for the wealthy.

2. The chaise was an expensive gentleman's carriage, usually with just one seat. Bingley appears in one at the beginning of the novel. A modern-day equivalent could be a Rolls-Royce.
3. The coach was the family car of the time, and the Bennets own one, which Jane wants to use to go to Netherfield Park. The appearance is familiar from films showing stagecoaches in the past. Today the Bennets could afford to own a mid-range automobile.
4. The curricle was the snazzy sports car of the time. Mr. Darcy appears in one with his sister in Lambton. Today Mr. Darcy would no doubt drive a car like a Jaguar.
5. The gig was a poor man's curricle. Mr. Collins delighted in driving his modest gig all over the area of Rosings Park, showing Sir William Lucas the sights. Today Mr. Collins would drive a moderately priced sports car.
6. Maria Lucas is all agog because the phaeton bearing Anne de Bourgh and Mrs. Jenkinson pulls up in front of Hunsford. Phaetons are elegant, with open sides. These wealthy individuals would now drive expensive cars.

3. Assign students to read chapters 39–43 (volume 2, chapters 16–19).

The Geography of *Pride and Prejudice*

Directions: Use the following questions to identify places in the novel.

1. Use the Internet to find a map of England's counties. In what part of the country do most of the events in *Pride and Prejudice* occur?

2. Lydia goes to Brighton. Where is it? Does she travel very far?

3. Which characters live in Hertfordshire?

4. Which residences are in Kent?

5. Elizabeth Bennet travels to London. Why? Is that a long journey from her home?

6. Whose residence is in Derbyshire? Where is it?

7. Time does not allow Elizabeth to get as far as the famous Lake District. Where is it?

"You Are What You Drive"

Directions: For the types of carriages, name the owners and/or drivers, and identify their status. Use the Internet to locate pictures. Then imagine the equivalent type of vehicle in today's world.

Vehicle	Notes
1. Barouche A barouche was the most expensive and showy of carriages. Unlike practical carriages, barouches had no storage space; wealthy owners had goods delivered. Barouches were driven by four horses and could carry four passengers. A barouche-landau had an adjustable roof.	
2. Chaise This vehicle was very popular for travel. It could hold up to four passengers. The closed carriage had room for packages, and trunks could be fastened on the back. A "chaise-and-four" was drawn by four horses and could move much faster than one drawn by only two. The wealthy could also afford postilions (liveried servants who rode the lead horses).	
3. Coach Large vehicles that could hold six or more passengers, coaches usually had two rows of seats facing each other. Four horses pulled the closed vehicles.	

 Name:

Vehicle	Notes
4. Curricle A curricle was a light, small, two-wheeled carriage with a convertible top, drawn by two horses and driven by its owner. It required very good driving skills because it could tip over easily. This was a fashionable gentleman's vehicle.	
5. Gig A gig—another small, two-wheeled carriage with a convertible top—was drawn by only one horse. Like the curricle, it was driven by its owner. Since it could travel very fast for the time and was very light, it could easily tip. This smaller version was also more affordable.	
6. Phaeton This light carriage was pulled by one or two horses and used for pleasure driving. It had a convertible top and held two comfortably. Often a phaeton driven by women would be pulled by ponies.	

Lesson 7

The Genteel Gentry

Objectives

- To define the abstract noun *gentility*
- To identify the rank and status of characters in *Pride and Prejudice*
- To analyze the ironic displays of social rank in the novel

Notes to the Teacher

Pride and Prejudice has been classified as a comedy or a satire of manners focused on the hypocrisy of the class system. Understanding the connotation of the abstract noun *gentility* is crucial to understanding the purpose and themes of this novel. Jane Austen's age was an era of abstract nouns (think of the titles of half of her novels), as well as an epoch that valued civility; modern readers can easily miss the nuances of words. Indeed, Austen could be considered a didactic writer, one who certainly entertains with a timeless story, but one who is also dependent on the ideals inherited from the Enlightenment. What saves her novels from being too moralistic are her sparkling dialogues, her keen eye for detail, and the charm of her main characters. This lesson centers on one key abstract noun but also considers the hierarchy of social classes.

Handout 16 uses the inscription on Austen's tomb in Winchester Cathedral to illustrate abstract nouns that her era revered. This activity also reveals how abstractions become concrete in the novel. The next handout focuses on one abstract noun at the heart of this lesson—gentility. A four-square vocabulary activity will help students realize the importance of the gentry, the class with which Austen primarily concerns herself. This word also connects to the idea of being a gentleman or gentlewoman. The word has the same origin as "genus" or "generation." "Gentle birth" had the connotation of "born well." The term *gentility* came to be associated with courtesy, noble conduct, and graciousness.

One point of satire in *Pride and Prejudice* is the changing hierarchy of the class system. **Handout 18** explores rank and status and how Austen uses the concept of being "to the manor born" ironically. To Austen, being a gentleman meant much more than inheriting money and land. She considered those in trade as an upwardly mobile group. Mr. Gardiner, perhaps the paradigm of a gentleman, is intelligent, practical, polite, and generous (honorable qualities of a genteel man), even though he is a tradesman living in Cheapside. On the other hand, George Wickham, who appears to

be a charming gentleman, is in fact corrupt. He was given a gentleman's education through the kindness of the elder Mr. Darcy, and he has the manners of a gentleman, but he lacks courage and honesty. The contrast between these two suggests that the class system was changing.

In this lesson, students ponder Austen's tomb inscription, define *gentility*, and rank characters according to both social status and gentility.

Procedure

1. Explain that Jane Austen died at forty-one after a long illness. The exact cause of her death is somewhat of a mystery. For generations, Addison's disease was suspected, but more recently, forensic scientists have posed that her death could have been from such causes as tuberculosis from unpasteurized milk, Hodgkin's disease (cancer), or even arsenic poisoning. A strand of her hair in the Jane Austen House Museum was recently DNA tested and revealed inordinately high concentrations of arsenic. She died on July 17, 1817, and was buried in a simple service in Winchester Cathedral. Her inscription does not acknowledge her writing, nor is it clear who wrote the message on her tomb, although it is believed that her brother Henry composed it. The inscription does serve as a model of the use of abstract nouns in the early nineteenth century. It is interesting to note that it was not until 1870 that a second memorial was erected to her memory, installed near her grave in the north aisle of the cathedral. This brief memorial, in glistening brass, makes a small mention of her writings. Distribute **Handout 16**, and have students complete the exercise. (Significant abstract nouns include the following: *patience, hope, benevolence, sweetness, temper, endowments, mind, love, grief, affection, loss, affliction, charity, devotion, faith,* and *purity*. In no way does this somber message convey the spirit, wit, or genius of Jane Austen. The tone of the tombstone is grave, pious, and sentimental. After reading two volumes of *Pride and Prejudice*, students should perceive that the persona of the author was much more lively, witty, charming, and spirited.)

2. Tell students that one abstract concept used often in the novel is *gentility*. The word is important because Austen attached great value to good manners and honorable behavior, particularly when displayed toward those in need. Distribute **Handout 17**, and have students use resources such as dictionaries and thesauruses to explore all aspects of this key abstract noun.

   #### Suggested Responses

   - *Definition*—Gentility always involves good manners, refinement, and virtuous behavior.
   - *Etymology, History, and Synonyms*—The etymology is from Middle English meaning "gentle birth," Old French *gentilite*, and Latin *gentilitas*, signifying a relationship of those belonging to

the same tribe or family. Synonyms include *refinement, culture, courtesy, breeding, elegance, politeness, decorum,* and *civility*.

- *Words from the Same Root*—Related words include gentleman, gentry, genus, generation, gentle, genteel, and gentrification.
- *Illustration, Symbol, Logo*—Illustrations will vary, but if students are using images from *Pride and Prejudice*, they might include Lady Catherine. Students will learn, though, that she is an ironic example.

3. Explain the class system that Austen satirized. The social pyramid began with the royal family at the tip, followed by the nobility or aristocracy. Dukes, marquises, earls, viscounts, and barons had hereditary titles. The man was addressed as "lord," which meant that he was a peer or son of a peer. Peers served in the House of Lords. A peer's daughter would be addressed as "lady." Below the nobility were knights, who, like Sir William Lucas, were commoners, not of noble birth. His wife would be referred to as Lady Lucas, without the first name being noted, thus distinguishing her from Lady Catherine de Bourgh. Below knights were the gentry, the foundation of society, and a wide class ranked by wealth. Members of the gentry owned at least three hundred acres of property and were a long-established and highly respected class. Gentlemen lived off the money earned by their land: Darcy ranked higher than Mr. Bennet because of his income. Younger sons of the gentry needed respectable careers but did not own land because of a system known as primogeniture; firstborn sons inherited the estates. The military was considered a suitable profession for a gentleman. On the same level as the military were the Anglican clergy, who were considered gentlemen even if they had no property.

4. Distribute **Handout 18** for students to complete.

Suggested Responses

1. Lady Catherine de Bourgh, the daughter of an earl, is of the nobility.
2. Sir William Lucas was knighted as an honor because of a speech.
3. Highest of the gentry class is Mr. Darcy because of his income of £10,000 a year, a veritable fortune. Next in fortune is Mr. Bingley. As a female, Caroline Bingley would be slightly below rank of her brother. Mr. Bennet is next in the gentry, because of his annual income. Mr. Hurst would be considered a gentleman, but while he is very wealthy, he does not own land.

4. Mr. Gardiner represents the rising middle class as a successful tradesman. Mr. Phillips is a lawyer, but he is considered of the business class. He would rank below Mr. Gardiner because his profession did not yield as much respect, ironically.
5. Colonel Fitzwilliam is an officer in the military and the younger son of a gentleman. George Wickham ranks below Colonel Fitzwilliam, because he is the son of a steward on Darcy's estate and has not made a name for himself in the military.
6. Mr. Collins, representing the clergy, is well educated, although his behavior does not seem intellectual. When he inherits Longbourn because of the entail, he will rise to the class of the landed gentry.

5. Point out that Austen ultimately examines the concept of gentlemanliness. She questions if being a gentleman is truly due to money and land or if it is dependent on behavior and character. Distribute **Handout 19**, and encourage students to work in small groups to reach consensus on the ranking of characters according to their moral behaviors. Many of the ranks are somewhat arbitrary, but in the explanation, students should justify their ideas with textual evidence. In discussion, include the following points:

   - The most genteel character is ironically one who is relatively low in class status. Mr. Gardiner, Mrs. Bennet's younger brother, is kind, generous, and considerate.
   - Most likely, Mr. Darcy should be ranked next, for he rises in status after he explains himself in the letter to Elizabeth. He seems so very uncivil in the terrible marriage proposal of chapter 34, and Elizabeth says she might have felt concern in refusing him if he had "behaved in a more gentleman-like manner." Still, when Elizabeth contemplates the letter, she comes to a higher opinion.
   - Charles Bingley should be ranked below Darcy because, while he is kind, he is too easily led. A gentleman should know his own mind.
   - Below Bingley would be Colonel Fitzwilliam. He is the younger son of a lord and is amiable, courteous, and attentive.
   - Next would be Mr. Bennet. While he is humorous and attentive to Elizabeth, he is too self-absorbed to be truly a gentleman of character. In the very first chapter, we see him as "so odd a mixture of quick parts, sarcastic humour, reserve, and caprice."
   - Sir William Lucas would be lower than Mr. Bennet even though he has a title. His is an odd sort of pride, as he is obsessed with

his knighthood and his experience at the court of St. James. He is neither elegant nor well mannered.

- Caroline Bingley would be even lower in rank because of her hypocrisy and snobbishness.
- Mr. Phillips, the Bennet girls' uncle, a minor character, illustrates a lack of status. His manners are not cultivated.
- Lady Catherine de Bourgh is much lower in status of moral behavior than her title would claim. She demonstrates pride in the worst way and is a busybody. In Lady Catherine, Austen shows that pride, where there is no real superiority of mind, is a serious fault.
- Mr. Collins, with his foolishness and false humility, must be ranked low. He is incapable of original thought, and he lacks sense. He is emotionally shallow, as his attentions sway from Jane to Elizabeth to Charlotte in rapid succession. He welcomes his visitors "with ostentatious formality to his humble abode."
- Mr. Hurst is minor as a character and is ranked very low because of his indolence, drinking, gluttony, and false pride. He "merely looked the gentleman."
- George Wickham is the least noble character, as Elizabeth finally finds out through Mr. Darcy's explanation in the letter. Wickham seems to have good manners, but he lacks honesty, integrity, and decorum. "He had then no reserves, no scruples in sinking Mr. Darcy's character, though he had assured her that respect for the father would always prevent his exposing the son."

6. Assign students to read chapters 43–48 (volume 3, chapters 1–6).

Last Words

Directions: Circle the abstract nouns in this inscription from Jane Austen's tomb in Winchester Cathedral, England. Then answer the questions. Note that this is a replication of the exact spacing, wording, and grammar on the tomb.

In Memory of
JANE AUSTEN
youngest daughter of the late
Revd GEORGE AUSTEN,
formerly Rector of Steventon in this County
she departed this Life on the 18th of July 1817,
aged 41, after a long illness supported with
the patience and the hopes of a Christian.

The benevolence of her heart,
the sweetness of her temper, and
the extraordinary endowments of her mind
obtained the regard of all who knew her, and
the warmest love of her intimate connections.

Their grief is in proportion to their affection
they know their loss to be irreparable,
but in their deepest affliction they are consoled
by a firm though humble hope that her charity,
devotion, faith and purity have rendered
her soul acceptable in the sight of her
REDEEMER.

Does this seem to capture the essence of the author you have researched and read? Contrast the tone of the inscription with the tone of *Pride and Prejudice*. Does Austen, the author of the novel, seem very different from the person described in the dedication on the tomb?

 Name:

Four-Square Vocabulary—Gentility

Directions: Use dictionaries and online vocabulary tools to fill in the four-square form, which defines and describes *gentility*. Use colored pencils or markers to draw a symbol or logo.

Definition	Etymology, History, and Synonyms
Words from the Same Root	**Illustration, Symbol, Logo**

 Name:

Class Rank

Directions: Rank the following characters in *Pride and Prejudice* according to their social status. Give reasons to support your ideas.

Mr. Bennet	Mr. Collins	Mr. Hurst
Miss Bingley	Mr. Darcy	Sir William Lucas
Mr. Bingley	Colonel Fitzwilliam	Mr. Phillips
Lady Catherine de Bourgh	Mr. Gardiner	George Wickham

Rank	Character(s)	Explanation
1. Nobility		
2. Knights		
3. Gentry		
4. Businessmen		
5. Military		
6. Clergy		

 Name:

True Nobility of Character

Directions: Take the same characters from **Handout 18**, consider their qualities and actions, and rank them from the most genteel and gentlemanlike to the least. Explain your reasoning with textual references to volumes 1 and 2 of *Pride and Prejudice*.

Character	Explanation

Lesson 8

The Epistolary Mode

Objectives

- To identify key plot developments through letters
- To contrast the tones and styles of two letters
- To analyze the text of a letter for its significance
- To create a letter in the style and voice of a character

Notes to the Teacher

Early novels were often epistolary in mode; the narration progressed through a series of documents—mostly letters, but also diaries, newspaper clippings, bills of sale, etc. The genre of the epistolary novel was made popular in the eighteenth century by authors like Samuel Richardson, whose *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded* (1740) was instrumental in the development of the novel form. Jane Austen's early attempts at writing were in the epistolary style; letters could convey the thoughts and feelings of her heroines in the absence of a third-person omniscient narrator. It is thought that *First Impressions,* which was redrafted to become *Pride and Prejudice,* may have been epistolary. Forty-four letters are referred to in *Pride and Prejudice*, many of which are quoted in part or in full. The letters are integral to crucial developments in the plot. While balls and social gatherings dominate volume 1, and travels are prevalent in volume 2, volume 3, which contains over a dozen different letters, is definitely epistolary.

There was as much protocol involved in writing letters as in social gatherings. An inflexible law of decorum forbade correspondence between marriageable persons not yet engaged to be married. That is why Jane Bennet cannot write to Bingley herself to let him know that she is in London. Instead, she must correspond with his sisters. Elizabeth does not even contemplate responding to Darcy's letter.

Letters were a vital part of Austen's life, as she conducted a vast correspondence. Unfortunately, Cassandra destroyed many of her sister's letters, but the few remaining reveal her character, her wit, and her dedication to writing. Letter writing consumed much time, for it was done laboriously with paper, a quill pen, and ink—all costly. Another factor that controlled letter writing was that the recipient of the letter paid the postage, and the longer the letter, the more money owed. No wonder Mr. Bennet did not eagerly anticipate the long, effusive letters from Mr. Collins.

In *Pride and Prejudice*, letters direct the plot and convey important information. **Handout 20** connects key letters to important plot events. Letters also reveal the truth about characters: Mr. Gardiner's careful, thoughtful letters show his keen sense of responsibility and integrity; on the other hand, Mr. Bennet's letters reveal his sarcasm and lack of propriety in letter writing—it took him a fortnight to reply to Mr. Collins's letter and a full month to tell his family about Collins' visit. The tone of Lydia's letters reveals her lack of shame and propriety; she refers to her impending marriage as a joke. The next handout contrasts the tone and style of Lydia's letter to Harriet Foster with Mr. Collins's officious letter in chapter 48. Jane Bennet writes sweet, thoughtful letters and never condemns anyone, even when she has cause. The most important letter in the novel is Mr. Darcy's, which he hand-delivers to Elizabeth after his proposal at Hunsford. This letter is rational, informative, formal yet personal, and closes with his innate sense of fairness. Students complete a text rendering or close analysis and personal response to Darcy's letter. Finally, students have an opportunity to try their hands at correspondence in the style of Austen by creating the text of Caroline Bingley's letter to Jane Bennet alluded to at the beginning of volume 2.

Procedure

1. Explain the history of the epistolary novel and the prevalence of letter writing in Austen's age. Distribute **Handout 20** for individual completion. During the discussion, stress the manner in which each letter develops characterization.

Suggested Responses

1. Jane's letter to her sister is brief because she is ill but typically is sweet and uncomplaining. This illness requires her to stay at Netherfield Park until she is well. Her devoted sister rushes to her side for the four days of recuperation at Bingley's house, thus giving Darcy and Elizabeth an opportunity to know each other better. The letter shows Jane's composure and control of her emotions, her sweetness, and her genuine goodness.
2. Mr. Collins's letter announces that he wishes to make amends with the Bennet family. It tells of his patron, Lady Catherine de Bourgh, and of his duties as a clergyman. It also states that he will visit shortly. This letter makes clear the dilemma that the entail has placed on the Bennets. The tone of the letter is stuffy and pompous. Elizabeth notes his extraordinary deference for Lady Catherine and states that he must be an oddity. She and her father conclude that Collins cannot be sensible.
3. Jane's letter to her beloved sister reveals, in Jane's usual sweet manner, that Caroline Bingley has deceived her. Jane now

realizes that Charles Bingley will not return to Netherfield Park, that Caroline will not visit her again, and that their friendship has come to an end. Still, Jane states that she pities Caroline and credits her, wrongly, with acting only out of regard for her brother. Jane also believes, incorrectly as the reader learns later, that Charles knows she is in London and chooses not to come and visit. The tone is sad but not desperate. Even in this confessional letter, Jane cannot be cruel or harsh.

4. Darcy's long letter reveals his true character. He does not feel it is necessary to apologize for his role in separating Bingley and Jane, which he still feels is justifiable. He does acknowledge that he must have been mistaken. Darcy says it pains him to tell Elizabeth that her family does act in ways that are improper. He tells Elizabeth the truth about Wickham, the terms of Mr. Darcy Sr.'s will, and Wickham's life of idleness and waste. The reader sees a new side of Darcy. He does not try to convince Elizabeth to marry him, but he does admit that he was not very gentlemanlike. He has learned a lesson. The tone is not at all angry but conciliatory. The letter shows how similar Elizabeth and Darcy are: They are both proud and prejudiced. They both believe that they know how to act properly, and yet they form incorrect opinions based on prejudice.
5. Lydia's letter to her friend Harriet announces her elopement with Wickham and their going to Gretna Green, Scotland. Lydia also asks Harriet to apologize to Pratt because Lydia will not be able to dance with him that night. She asks for her clothes to be sent to her. The tone is flippant. Lydia obviously does not regard marriage as serious; she says it is "a good joke." She doesn't want her parents to know until she can write them herself, signing her name as Lydia Wickham. She obviously has little regard for their feelings.

2. Distribute **Handout 21**, and have students use it for style analysis.

Suggested Responses

1. Lydia's word choices are simple and familiar. Most of the words are monosyllabic, and there is a preponderance of the use of I. Lydia uses colloquial words such as *joke* and *simpleton*. Mr. Collins, on the other hand, uses words that are abstract and polysyllabic. Collins's words are formal in level but empty in real meaning.
2. Lydia's sentences are simple in construction, and there is an exclamation. Conversely, Collins's sentences are very long and complex. They are two or three times the length of Lydia's sentences.

3. Lydia's letter is flippant, light, immature, and discourteous. The tone in Collins's appalling letter is insulting, moralistic, hypocritical, and condescending. He actually states that Lydia would be better off dead than disgraced. He blames the parents for Lydia's behavior. He is self-satisfied that he did not marry into "such a family" and ends by advising Mr. Bennet to banish Lydia forever.
4. The purpose of Lydia's letter is to joke with her friend about the serious subject of marriage. She does not appear to be deeply in love with Wickham, for she says she can think of "no harm to be off" with him. There is no real passion in the letter, just self-indulgence. The letter is straightforward and not at all ironic. The purpose of Collins's letter is to congratulate himself, seemingly, on not being part of the Bennet family. Collins also moralistically chastises Mr. Bennet. Even though it appears that the letter is meant to sympathize with Mr. Bennet in his present distress, Collins only makes matters worse by suggesting that time will not heal this disgrace. This letter displays satire at is best, because readers must look between the lines to perceive Austen's intent.

3. To focus even more closely on style and purpose, distribute **Handout 22**. Explain that text rendering is the action of taking a word, phrase, sentence, or passage from a text for the purpose of deep analysis. This activity helps students make sense of dense prose and also aids them in reading purposefully. Text rendering helps students gain ownership and insight into difficult reading. Follow with open-ended discussion.

4. Emphasize that this letter serves to bring the two main characters to a point of realization about themselves. While Elizabeth has prided herself on her insight and clarity of mind, she comes to realize that she has "courted prepossession and ignorance, and [has] driven reason away. . . . Till this moment, I never knew myself." She recognizes now that she has unjustly condemned Mr. Darcy for being proud and that her own family is "ignorant, idle, and vain." She vows to become a more thoughtful and responsible person. Likewise, writing this incredibly long letter allows Darcy an opportunity for some soul-searching. Darcy, too, has learned a lesson.

5. Have students reread the description of the letter from Caroline Bingley to Jane Bennet at the beginning of chapter 24. Point out that this is one of the few letters for which none of the actual text is given. Ask students to reread Caroline's letter in chapter 7, as well as conversations in chapters 8–11, to get a sense of her voice. Then ask students to try to create the actual text of the letter itself. Point out that the letter should begin with the convention of a formal

salutation, that it would maintain at least a veneer of politeness, and that it would end with an acknowledgement of relationship, as well as the letter writer's full name.

6. Assign students to read chapters 49–55 (volume 3, chapters 7–13).

Pivotal Letters

Directions: Reread the following letters. Summarize the content, and explain what important plot elements are revealed. Finally, describe the tone of each letter, and explain what it reveals about the writer.

1. Jane Bennet, from Netherfield Park, to Elizabeth Bennet (chapter 7)

2. Mr. Collins to Mr. Bennet (chapter 13)

3. Jane Bennet, in London, to Elizabeth Bennet (chapter 26)

4. Mr. Darcy to Elizabeth Bennet (chapter 35)

5. Lydia Bennet to Harriet Forster (chapter 47)

Style and Substance in Two Letters

Directions: Contrast the various elements of style in the two letters. Comment on the following:

1. Word choices, including number of syllables in the words
2. Length of sentences, complexity of sentences, and distance from the reader
3. The tones, including three adjectives that express the attitudes of the writers
4. The real purpose of each letter

Letter A

From Lydia Bennet to Harriet Forster (Chapter 47)

MY DEAR HARRIET,
You will laugh when you know where I am gone, and I cannot help laughing myself at your surprise to-morrow morning, as soon as I am missed. I am going to Gretna Green, and if you cannot guess with who, I shall think you a simpleton, for there is but one man in the world I love, and he is an angel. I should never be happy without him, so think it no harm to be off. You need not send them word at Longbourn of my going, if you do not like it, for it will make the surprise the greater when I write to them and sign my name Lydia Wickham. What a good joke it will be! I can hardly write for laughing. Pray make my excuses to Pratt for not keeping my engagement and dancing with him to-night. Tell him I hope he will excuse me when he knows all, and tell him I will dance with him at the next ball we meet, with great pleasure. I shall send for my clothes when I get to Longbourn; but I wish you would tell Sally to mend a great slit in my worked muslin gown before they are packed up. Good-bye. Give my love to Colonel Forster. I hope you will drink to our good journey.

Your affectionate friend,
LYDIA BENNET.

Letter B

From Mr. Collins to Mr. Bennet (Chapter 48)

My dear Sir,
I feel myself called upon by our relationship, and my situation in life, to condole with you on the grievous affliction you are now suffering under, of which we were yesterday informed by a letter from Hertfordshire. Be assured, my dear Sir, that Mrs. Collins and myself sincerely sympathise with you and all your respectable family, in your present distress, which must be of the bitterest kind, because proceeding from a cause which no time can remove. No arguments shall be wanting on my part that can alleviate so severe a misfortune; or that may comfort you, under a circumstance that must be of all others most afflicting to a parent's mind. The death of your daughter would have been a blessing in comparison of this. And it is the more to be lamented, because there is reason to suppose, as my dear Charlotte informs me, that this licentiousness of behaviour in your daughter has proceeded from a faulty degree of indulgence, though, at the same time, for the consolation of yourself and Mrs. Bennet, I am inclined to think that her own disposition must be naturally bad, or she could not be guilty of such an enormity at so early an age. Howsoever that may be, you are grievously to be pitied, in which opinion I am not only joined by Mrs. Collins, but

likewise by Lady Catherine and her daughter, to whom I have related the affair. They agree with me in apprehending that this false step in one daughter will be injurious to the fortunes of all the others; for who, as Lady Catherine herself condescendingly says, will connect themselves with such a family. And this consideration leads me moreover to reflect with augmented satisfaction on a certain event of last November, for had it been otherwise, I must have been involved in all your sorrow and disgrace. Let me advise you then, my dear Sir, to console yourself as much as possible, to throw off your unworthy child from your affection for ever, and leave her to reap the fruits of her own heinous offence.

I am, dear Sir, etc., etc.

Mr. Darcy's Letter: A Text Rendering

Directions: Reread Darcy's long but important letter in chapter 35. Then respond to the following prompts.

1. Choose one word that you find interesting from Mr. Darcy's letter. Record that word in the space below.

2. Next, select a phrase (two or more words but not a complete sentence) from the text which appeals to you. Write that phrase below.

3. Finally, choose one sentence from the letter which is particularly well written and which you think carries the meaning of the entire letter. Write that sentence below.

4. Take only one of the three text renderings above, and reflect in writing for a few minutes why you like that text and how it connects to you. Be prepared to share your reflections.

5. Next, write one question about what you are still wondering after rereading this letter. What would you like to ask Mr. Darcy?

6. Finally, evaluate how the letter connects to the theme of the quest for self-knowledge that you have seen developing in *Pride and Prejudice*. Why is this letter so significant?

Lesson 9

Manners Matter

Objectives

- To define *propriety*
- To identify correct manners and protocol in the time of Jane Austen
- To analyze the use of satire in *Pride and Prejudice*

Notes to the Teacher

Propriety in behavior to Jane Austen was a means to social harmony and happiness. The general concept of propriety suggests appropriate moral behaviors. Austen typically displays the concept of propriety through irony. Propriety meant a woman could not let a man know she was attracted to him, but Jane Bennet's composure hides her true feelings so much that Darcy feels a need to steer his love-stricken friend Bingley away. Fortunately, Bingley reenters her life. At this point, her composure is part of her charm. On the other hand, Lydia and Mrs. Bennet illustrate the opposite extreme. Certainly, the highly structured class system in Austen's time meant knowing one's proper place in society. People had to know when to bow or curtsy, when to introduce themselves, and when to enter a room. The formalities of etiquette were so ingrained that Austen did not need to define them. She consistently examined them with irony. Married people referred to each other formally as "Mr." and "Mrs." Friends addressed each other by their last names. Shaking hands was a rarity; bowing and curtsying were the proper ways to react when formally introduced.

Austen's most notable stylistic device is her skillful use of irony, the primary tool of satire. The disconnect between what appears to be and what actually is true allows the reader to reevaluate a character or situation beyond first impressions. Even the title can be considered ironic. Examining *Pride and Prejudice* as satire gives additional pleasure to the reading experience. Satire, which aims to entertain and to correct, often uses a persona or "mask" in place of the author. Elizabeth is such a mask. Austen entertains the reader with "follies . . . and inconsistencies" such as those of Mrs. Bennet, Mr. Collins, and Lydia. The reader laughs at these comic characters and also perceives what proper behavior is. Satire aims to correct folly, vice, or stupidity through ridicule. Horatian satire's purpose was to improve humanity, using wit as a weapon.

In this lesson, students explore the concept of propriety, consider examples of proper and improper etiquette from the novel, and define *satire.*

Procedure

1. Distribute **Handout 23**, and have students use print and online dictionaries to complete the four-square form.

   ### Suggested Responses

   - *Definition*—Propriety has to do with behaviors and attitudes generally considered to be dignified, polite, and tasteful.
   - *Etymology, History, Synonyms, and Antonyms*—The word originated in Latin, *proprietas*, meaning "property." It is also from the late Middle English with the sense of an essential quality and from the Old French, *propriete*. Synonyms include *decorum, civility, etiquette, decency, courtesy,* and *discretion*. Antonyms are *discourtesy, crudeness, imprudence, coarseness,* and *vulgarity.*
   - *Words from the Same Root*—Words related linguistically to *propriety* are *properly, proper, proprietary, improper, appropriate,* and *property*.
   - *Illustration, Symbol, Logo*—Illustrations could be of any etiquette book or action. For example, pouring tea correctly and with courtesy shows propriety.

2. After exploring the concept of propriety, explain the social conventions of Austen's time (particularly involving introductions, greetings, and polite conversation). Remind students of other types of etiquette involving being with the opposite sex, honoring rank, and conversing politely.

3. Distribute **Handout 24**, and direct small groups to complete the exercise.

   ### Suggested Responses

   One example for each is given, but there are many possible answers.

   1. A positive example of polite conversation is that which Elizabeth has with Colonel Fitzwilliam in chapter 33 (volume 2, chapter 10). Even though Elizabeth has learned distressing news about how Mr. Darcy broke up her sister's and Mr. Bingley's relationship, she maintains decorum and civility.

      An improper conversation occurs when Mrs. Bennet is at Netherfield Park while Jane is ill. Mrs. Bennet makes an assertion about the merits of country life which surprises everybody.

   2. When Elizabeth suddenly meets Darcy at Pemberley, even though she is in shock, she does not introduce her aunt and uncle until Mr. Darcy asks her to do so.

      Conversely, Collins rudely introduces himself to Mr. Darcy. Elizabeth is aghast at this breach of conduct, and Darcy's reaction is astonishment.

3. One positive example of good manners in honoring rank occurs when Lady Catherine entertains Elizabeth, the Collinses, and the Lucases at Rosings Park. She waits for them to be presented to her and rises to meet them. She also shows rank in seating at the table.

   On the other hand, Lydia rudely pushes Jane aside when the reunited family goes in to dinner with the newly married Mr. and Mrs. Wickham.

4. Being very concerned about proper decorum regarding chaperones, Elizabeth is troubled when Mrs. Bennet forces Catherine and her to leave the room so that Mr. Bingley and Jane can be alone in chapter 55 (volume 3, chapter 13). She "remained quietly in the hall till [Mrs. Bennet] and Kitty are out of sight, then returned to the drawing-room."

   Lydia, on the other hand, leaves the safety of her chaperones—Colonel and Mrs. Forster—to run off in the night with Wickham.

5. Jane and Elizabeth address their parents and their aunts and uncles with great propriety, using "Mr." and "Mrs." On the other hand, Lydia shows little respect. When she is telling Elizabeth all about the wedding, she mentions that her aunt (Mrs. Gardiner) kept nagging at her, "preaching and talking away just as if she was reading a sermon . . . I did not hear above one word in ten."

6. Darcy graciously invites Mr. Gardiner to fish with him while Elizabeth's aunt and uncle are visiting in the vicinity of Pemberley. This gracious reception of a tradesman is quite different from Lady Catherine's condescension to Elizabeth. At Rosings Park, Lady Catherine tells Elizabeth she can practice the pianoforte "in Mrs. Jenkinson's room." Even Darcy seems embarrassed at his aunt's rudeness.

4. Define *satire*, and explain that satires use humor and exaggeration to express criticism. Then distribute **Handout 25**, and ask students to begin the assignment. (Completed essays might mention that this is a humorous conversation primarily because the reader, along with Elizabeth, knows the truth behind the situation with Wickham and Darcy. When Wickham says, "Poor Reynolds, she was always fond of me," it becomes humorous because Elizabeth immediately lets him know that Reynolds was afraid Wickham had not turned out well. It is also humorous when Wickham replies to Elizabeth's gentle remonstrations with surprise, then a quick recovery, then a reminder that is what he meant all along. There are many other examples of this comedic timing and undercutting. The entire conversation is full of hidden meaning and irony. For example, Wickham says he thought

Miss Darcy was "unpromising," yet he once tried to seduce her. It is also ironic when Elizabeth suggests that Darcy was in London to prepare for his marriage with Miss de Bourgh. Wickham's vice of not telling the truth is made clear, as are his attempts to prejudice Elizabeth against Darcy. The institution of the church is gently ridiculed.)

5. Assign students to finish reading *Pride and Prejudice*.

 Name:

Four-Square Vocabulary—Propriety

Directions: Use dictionaries and online resources to fill in the four-square form with information about the word *propriety*. Use colored pencils or markers to draw a symbol or logo.

Definition	Etymology, History, Synonyms, and Antonyms
Words from the Same Root	**Illustration, Symbol, Logo**

 Name:

Good Manners and Bad Manners

Directions: For each of the following social conventions, describe situations in which characters in *Pride and Prejudice* exhibit proper and improper etiquette.

Social Convention	Positive Example	Negative Example
1. Polite conversation		
2. Remembering rank in introductions		
3. Honoring rank when entering a room		

 Name:

Social Convention	Positive Example	Negative Example
4. Being properly chaperoned		
5. Speaking with married people and respecting one's elders		
6. Being gracious to social inferiors		

Horatian Satire—Jane Austen Style

Directions: The following conversation between Elizabeth and Wickham takes place after Lydia and he have married. Read it carefully. Then, in a brief essay, analyze the satire in the passage by using the main attributes of satire: humor; irony; emphasis on human flaws; ridicule of society. Be sure to quote Austen's text in your composition.

She was roused from her seat and her reflections by someone's approach; and before she could strike into another path she was overtaken by Wickham.

"I am afraid I interrupt your solitary ramble, my dear sister?" said he, as he joined her.

"You certainly do," she replied with a smile; "but it does not follow that the interruption must be unwelcome."

"I should be sorry indeed if it were. *We* were always good friends; and now we are better."

"True. Are the others coming out?"

"I do not know. Mrs. Bennet and Lydia are going in the carriage to Meryton. And so, my dear sister, I find from our uncle and aunt that you have actually seen Pemberley."

She replied in the affirmative.

"I almost envy you the pleasure, and yet I believe it would be too much for me, or else I could take it in my way to Newcastle. And you saw the old housekeeper, I suppose? Poor Reynolds, she was always very fond of me. But of course she did not mention my name to you."

"Yes, she did."

"And what did she say?"

"That you were gone into the army, and, she was afraid, had—not turned out well. At such a distance as *that*, you know, things are strangely misrepresented."

"Certainly," he replied, biting his lips.

Elizabeth hoped she had silenced him; but he soon afterwards said—

"I was surprised to see Darcy in town last month. We passed each other several times. I wonder what he can be doing there."

"Perhaps preparing for his marriage with Miss de Bourgh," said Elizabeth. "It must be something particular to take him there at this time of year."

"Undoubtedly. Did you see him while you were at Lambton? I thought I understood from the Gardiners that you had."

"Yes; he introduced us to his sister."

"And do you like her?"

"Very much."

"I have heard, indeed, that she is uncommonly improved within this year or two. When I last saw her she was not very promising. I am very glad you liked her. I hope she will turn out well."

"I dare say she will; she has got over the most trying age."

"Did you go by the village of Kympton?"

"I do not recollect that we did."

"I mention it because it is the living which I ought to have had. A most delightful place!—Excellent Parsonage House! It would have suited me in every respect."

"How should you have liked making sermons?"

"Exceedingly well. I should have considered it as part of my duty, and the exertion would soon have been nothing. One ought not to repine; but, to be sure, it would have been such a thing for me! The quiet, the retirement of such a life, would have answered all my ideas of happiness! But it was not to be. Did you ever hear Darcy mention the circumstance when you were in Kent?"

"I *have* heard, from authority, which I thought *as good,* that it was left you conditionally only, and at the will of the present patron."

"You have!—Yes, there was something in *that*; I told you so from the first, you may remember."

"I *did* hear, too, that there was a time when sermon-making was not so palatable to you as it seems to be at present—that you actually declared your resolution of never taking orders, and that the business had been compromised accordingly."

"You did!—and it was not wholly without foundation. You may remember what I told you on that point, when first we talked of it."

They were now almost at the door of the house, for she had walked fast to get rid of him, and, unwilling for her sister's sake to provoke him, she only said in reply, with a good-humoured smile—

"Come, Mr. Wickham, we are brother and sister, you know. Do not let us quarrel about the past. In future, I hope we shall be always of one mind."

Lesson 10

A Quest for Self-Knowledge

Objectives

- To examine concepts of marriage in the novel
- To apply the motif of the hero quest to the narrative
- To write a literary analysis on the novel's theme of the journey to self-knowledge

Notes to the Teacher

During Jane Austen's time, husbands controlled all of their wives' rights. Arranged marriages such as the one Lady Catherine de Bourgh believed she and her sister attempted between Anne de Bourgh and Fitzwilliam Darcy were rare. Jane Austen mocks this type of arrangement as useless. Being married was the pathway to security and status for a woman. Charlotte Lucas, for example, settles for the security of marriage and a comfortable home. As Charlotte points out to Elizabeth, "Happiness in marriage is entirely a matter of chance." Charlotte gains the dignity of a wife, and her decision to marry Mr. Collins is a practical, rational one.

A dowry, the amount of money a woman brought to marriage, was often a key concern. After Elizabeth rejects Collins, he makes it very clear that her meager dowry of £1,000 is likely to gain her no other offers: "In spite of your manifold attractions, it is by no means certain that another offer of marriage shall ever be made you. Your portion [dowry] is unhappily so small that it will in all likelihood undo the effects of your loveliness and amiable qualifications" (chapter 19). On the other hand, Georgiana Darcy's enormous dowry of £30,000 makes her a great prize on the marriage market.

Handout 26 leads students to explore marriages in the novel (which range from the affair of Lydia and Wickham to the mature, stable relationship of Mr. and Mrs. Gardiner). A central issue in *Pride and Prejudice* is making a proper marriage. Elizabeth is driven by her own romantic notions and by a bright mind that is more independent than was typical for the time.

For Elizabeth to find happiness in marriage as well as a secure place in society, she must undergo a radical transformation. She is satisfied with her wit until Darcy tests it. After reading his letter of explanation, Elizabeth has an epiphany, the turning point of her journey, as she realizes that unless she truly knows herself, she will not find her place in the world. Certainly,

Elizabeth is charming, lively, loyal, and independent (all admirable traits), but she is not faultless. She cannot truly know herself until she confronts her faults. Her journey to self-knowledge and security begins with her humiliation and shaken pride.

The archetypal quest myth is based on a journey. In many ways, Elizabeth's journey is similar to the hero quest; it includes leaving home to enter into an unknown territory. Along the way of the journey, the hero undergoes trials and receives assistance. Returning home at the end of the journey, the hero has been transformed. Typically, the hero on a quest gains insight into his or her heart and soul. As a symbol, the quest motif represents the absolute necessity of a radical change in the individual's life. **Handout 27** applies the archetype of the quest to Elizabeth Bennet's transformation. *Pride and Prejudice* is dominated by journeys—some long and some short. These journeys are catalysts for change. **Handout 28** provides a prompt for the cumulative assessment for this unit, an essay on this theme of the quest for self-knowledge. **Handout 29** suggests a rubric to aid students in revision and teachers in evaluation.

Procedure

1. Provide students with information about marriage in Austen's time. Distribute **Handout 26,** and encourage students to work in groups to complete it. When discussing possible responses, inform students of two additional outcomes not mentioned in the novel. In comments that Austen made after the publication of *Pride and Prejudice*, she revealed that her view was that Mary marries one of Mr. Phillips' clerks and becomes, like Aunt Phillips, a resident of Meryton, married to a legal clerk with a small income. Also, according to Austen family lore, Kitty marries a clergyman and becomes a respected wife and mother.

Suggested Responses

1. Mr. and Mrs. Bennet married very young. Even though they have been married for twenty-three years, their marriage is not a happy one. Mr. Bennet, "captivated by youth and beauty . . . had married a woman whose weak understanding and illiberal mind had very early in their marriage put an end to all real affection for her. Respect, esteem, and confidence had vanished forever." Mr. Bennet is inadequate as a father and a husband, and Elizabeth realizes the "disadvantages which must attend the children of so unsuitable a marriage."
2. Mr. and Mrs. Gardiner are role models of decorum and happiness. Mr. Gardiner "was a sensible, gentlemanlike man, greatly superior to his sister as well by nature as education . . . . Mrs. Gardiner . . . was an amiable, intelligent, elegant woman" (chapter 25). It is significant that the last paragraph of the novel mentions that both Darcy and Elizabeth really

love the Gardiners, for they "had been the means of uniting them."

3. Charlotte chooses security. The marriage is a necessity for both her and Mr. Collins. She claims that her "chance of happiness with him is as fair as most people can boast on entering the marriage state" (chapter 22).
4. Lydia and Wickham's marriage seems destined for failure from the beginning. To Lydia, marriage is "very good fun." Wickham's affection for Lydia "was just what Elizabeth had expected to find it, not equal to Lydia's for him" (chapter 52). In the denouement of the novel, the reader learns that "his affection for her soon sunk into indifference; [Lydia's] lasted a little longer."
5. Jane and Bingley's marriage is one of great joy to both. Mr. Bennet jokingly claims that both are so easygoing that they will never make sound financial decisions, and "so easy that every servant will cheat [them]" (chapter 55). Jane exudes happiness and feels blessed. At the end of the novel, Mr. Bingley and Jane move to an estate in a neighboring county. To add to Jane's happiness, she ends up a mere thirty miles from her sister and dear friend.
6. Since Darcy also undergoes a transformation, both he and Elizabeth reap the benefits of a sound marriage. Instead of being bitter after Elizabeth turns him down, Darcy analyzes his flaws and strives to change them. He tells Elizabeth all that he does for Lydia and Wickham is for Elizabeth's sake.

2. Distribute **Handout 27**, and use it to explain the archetype of the hero quest. Give students time to apply the quest motif to Elizabeth's journey. Follow with discussion.

Suggested Responses

1. Elizabeth leaves Longbourn after Charlotte has married Collins and after Jane has gone to London brokenhearted. Elizabeth has a very low opinion of men and relationships at this point; she is sarcastic and almost bitter. On her second journey, Elizabeth once more leaves home disappointed by her father's negligence in allowing Lydia to go to Brighton.
2. On the second journey to Derbyshire, the Gardiners aid Elizabeth in many ways. They are her mentors, providing stability and decorum when she most needs it. Their good manners and gentility allow them to become friendly with Mr. Darcy. They are instrumental in Elizabeth's quest for happiness because they make the reunion of Darcy and Elizabeth possible.

3. The greatest challenge that Elizabeth faces on her first journey is the proposal from Mr. Darcy that is delivered with great pride and received with great disdain. The letter that Darcy writes explaining his views is instrumental in Elizabeth's transformation. Other trials on this first journey include the rudeness of Lady Catherine de Bourgh and anger that Darcy has broken up the relationship of Jane and Bingley. The challenge and trials on the second journey result from Lydia's indiscretion. Additionally, Elizabeth faces the distressing thought that Darcy might never want to see her again.
4. While Elizabeth is at Hunsford, she faces the difficult truth that her prejudice and pride in her powers of discernment have blinded her to the truth. After reading Darcy's letter, she is completely ashamed of herself. At Lamberton, in Derbyshire, Elizabeth realizes the truth of her family's general lack of propriety. After reading Jane's two letters regarding Lydia's elopement, Elizabeth falls completely apart in front of Mr. Darcy. Darcy's reserve after hearing of the disaster convinces Elizabeth that everything is headed toward ruin.
5. Elizabeth returns to Longbourn humbled.
6. The treasures that Elizabeth gains on her journey are self-knowledge and Mr. Darcy's love. Elizabeth assures Darcy that "all her former prejudices had been removed," and Darcy reveals that his pride and his being taught to be selfish from "eight to eight and twenty" have disappeared. They are worthy partners because they understand each other and their own selves.

3. Distribute **Handout 28**, and discuss the prompt. Tell students that literary analysis uses evidence from the text to prove a point, and point out that **Handout 27** has given them material for their essays. Next, give them **Handout 29**, and review the criteria.

The Marriage of True Minds

Directions: Below are several marriages in the novel *Pride and Prejudice*. For each one, determine whether the relationship is a positive or negative example of marriage. Justify your response with a discussion of the attributes for each marriage which make it either appealing or appalling. Include what is revealed about each marriage throughout the novel.

1. Mr. and Mrs. Bennet

2. Mr. and Mrs. Gardiner

3. Mr. and Mrs. Collins

4. Mr. and Mrs. Wickham

5. Mr. and Mrs. Bingley

6. Mr. and Mrs. Darcy

The Hero's Quest

Directions: Listed below are characteristics of the archetypal hero quest or journey, as described by Joseph Campbell and other mythologists. Describe how each one relates to the journey Elizabeth Bennet takes on her quest for self-knowledge and security. Use references from the text as proof for each step of the journey.

1. Leaving the familiar to go to the unknown

2. The assistance of a mentor along the route

3. Challenges and trials

4. A low point that involves a difficult truth

5. Transformation and return

6. Acquisition of a treasure

 Name:

A Literary Analysis of *Pride and Prejudice*

Directions: Respond to the following prompt, which focuses on the main character in the novel—Elizabeth Bennet. Use **Handout 27** for prewriting ideas, and organize a full response to the prompt. The paper should be between three and four pages in length, and at least three direct quotations from the novel should be used as proof. The opening paragraph should include a claim or thesis that is proved in the body of the paper. Avoid plot summary. The conclusion should touch on significance. **Handout 29** is a rubric to guide in revision.

> Poet Rainer Maria Rilke said, "The only journey is the one within." How does Elizabeth Bennet travel on a journey to self-knowledge? What ordeals does she face, and who aids her during her quest? What essential truths does she learn about herself, and what reward or treasure does she gain? Include a discussion of how Elizabeth's transformation affects those around her.

Evaluation Rubric

Directions: Use the following criteria as tools in writing and revising your essay.

Element	5	3	1
Unity	The essay is motivated by a clear, precise, thoughtful, controlling idea.	There is a thesis, but it could be more precise and in-depth, and its support could be more solid.	The essay lacks a coherent focus.
Order	The content is logically organized with clearly related supporting points and a consistent focus.	The essay is generally well ordered, but the focus is inconsistent and somewhat confusing.	The essay shows little attention to overall organization.
Development	Ample and specific evidence, including quotations, support the thesis and subpoints.	Supportive details tend to be vague and may be redundant.	The essay provides little supportive evidence and/or contains erroneous information.
Language	The essay demonstrates the writer's command of diction, syntax, and mechanics.	The essay is adequately written with few weaknesses in grammar, diction, or syntax.	Language problems seriously flaw the final piece.
Analysis	Logical analysis supports a complex and original thesis with convincing interpretations.	Ideas could be more fully developed, and some interpretations seem unclear.	The essay is missing an insightful basis and lacks analytical support.

Quiz: Chapters 1–23

Part A.

Directions: Match the location with the description.

_____ 1. The home of the Bennets
_____ 2. The town near the Bennets' home where the militia is temporarily stationed
_____ 3. The name of the place Bingley has rented
_____ 4. The county which includes the answers to items 1–3

a. Hertfordshire
b. Derbyshire
c. Longbourn
d. Meryton
e. Netherfield Park

Part B.

Directions: Match the Bennet daughter with her description.

_____ 1. The studious and plain Bennet daughter
_____ 2. The daughter described by Darcy as "tolerable, but not handsome enough to tempt me"
_____ 3. The youngest Bennet daughter, who is in public at an early age
_____ 4. The Bennet daughter called Kitty
_____ 5. The Bennet daughter who never finds fault with anyone

a. Catherine
b. Charlotte
c. Elizabeth
d. Jane
e. Lydia
f. Mary

Part C.

Directions: Match the speakers with the quotations.

_____1. "If I can but see one of my daughters happily settled at Netherfield and all the others equally well married, I shall have nothing to wish for."
_____2. "I was very much flattered by his [Bingley's] asking me to dance a second time. I did not expect such a compliment."
_____3. "Happiness in marriage is entirely a matter of chance. . . . [I]t is better to know as little as possible of the defects of the person with whom you are to pass your life."
_____4. "Whatever I do is done in a hurry . . . and therefore if I should resolve to quit Netherfield, I should probably be off in five minutes."

a. Bingley
b. Mrs. Bennet
c. Collins
d. Wickham
e. Miss Bingley
f. Elizabeth
g. Darcy
h. Mr. Bennet
i. Jane
j. Charlotte

_____ 5. "I cannot forget the follies and vices of others so soon as I ought, nor their offenses against myself. . . . My good opinion once lost, is lost forever."

_____ 6. "That would be the greatest misfortune of all! To find a man agreeable whom one is determined to hate!"

_____ 7. "Let me recommend you [Miss Bennet], as a friend, not to give implicit confidence to all his [Mr. Wickham's] assertions; for as to Mr. Darcy's using him ill, it is perfectly false; for, on the contrary, he has always been remarkably kind to him, though George Wickham has treated Mr. Darcy in a most infamous manner. . . . [B]ut really, considering [Mr. Wickham's] descent, one could not expect much better."

_____ 8. "I have been so fortunate as to be distinguished by the patronage of the Right Honourable Lady Catherine de Bourgh . . . whose bounty and beneficence has preferred me to the valuable rectory of this parish, where it shall be my earnest endeavour to demean myself with grateful respect towards her ladyship."

_____ 9. "A military life is not what I was intended for, but circumstances have now made it eligible. The church *ought* to have been my profession—I was brought up for the church, and I should at this time have been in possession of a most valuable living, had it pleased the gentleman we were speaking of just now [Darcy]."

Part D.

Directions: Write a short essay in response to the following prompt.

The events recounted in the first twenty-three chapters of the novel have had a profound influence on Elizabeth. Near the beginning of chapter 24, she says to Jane, "The more I see of the world, the more am I dissatisfied with it; and every day confirms my belief of the inconsistency of all human characters, and of the little dependence that can be placed on the appearance of either merit or sense." Explain how the actions of Collins, Charlotte, and Bingley lead to Elizabeth's sense of dissatisfaction.

Quiz: Chapters 24–42

Part A.

Directions: Match the location with the description.

_____ 1. The De Bourgh estate

_____ 2. The parsonage where the Collinses live

_____ 3. Where characters go when they say they are going "to town"

_____ 4. The location of the Gardiners' home

_____ 5. The location of the Hursts' home where Caroline Bingley stays

a. Brighton
b. Gracechurch St. near Cheapside
c. Grosvenor St.
d. Hunsford
e. London
f. Rosings

Part B.

Directions: Match the characters with the quotations.

_____ 1. Who is "a sensible, gentlemanlike man, greatly superior to his sister, as well by nature as education"?

_____ 2. Who says, "You are too sensible a girl, Lizzy, to fall in love merely because you are warned against it; and, therefore, I am not afraid of speaking openly. . . . Do not involve yourself or endeavor to involve him [Wickham] in an affection which the want of fortune would make so very imprudent"?

_____ 3. What woman is Elizabeth describing in this passage? "I like her appearance. . . . She looks sickly and cross. Yes, she will do for him very well. She will make him a very proper wife."

_____ 4. Who says to Elizabeth, "Your sister is crossed in love, I find. I congratulate her. Next to being married, a girl likes to be crossed a little in love now and then. It is something to think of, and it gives her a sort of distinction among her companions. When is your turn to come?"

a. Mr. Bennet
b. Mrs. Bennet
c. Elizabeth
d. Lydia
e. Darcy
f. Mr. Gardiner
g. Miss de Bourgh
h. Mrs. Gardiner
i. Colonel Fitzwilliam
j. Georgiana Darcy
k. Lady Catherine

_____ 5. Who says, "I have told Miss Bennet several times, that she will never play really well unless she practices more; . . . she is very welcome . . . to come to Rosings every day, and play on the pianoforte in Mrs. Jenkinson's room. She would be in nobody's way . . . in that part of the house"?

_____ 6. Who tells Elizabeth that Darcy "congratulated himself on having lately saved a friend from the inconveniences of a most imprudent marriage"?

_____ 7. Who says, "In vain I have 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"?

_____ 8. Who says, "I had not known you a month before I felt that you were the last man in the world whom I could ever be prevailed on to marry"?

_____ 9. Who is the person, that, having met Jane and Elizabeth returning from the Gardiners, "seldom listened to anybody for more than half a minute"?

_____ 10. Who says, "My comfort is, I am sure Jane will die of a broken heart; and then he [Bingley] will be sorry for what he has done"?

Part C.

Directions: In volume 2, Elizabeth changes. In a short essay, explain how she becomes more realistic about Wickham, Darcy, her family, and herself.

Quiz: Chapters 43–61

Part A.

Directions: Match the location with the description.

_____ 1. County in which the Darcy estate is located

_____ 2. Name of Darcy's estate

_____ 3. Town near Darcy's estate where Mrs. Gardiner lived for a time

_____ 4. Town to which the regiment moves from Meryton, with Lydia following

_____ 5. Town in Scotland, the destination of eloping English couples

a. Brighton
b. Derbyshire
c. Gretna Green
d. Lamberton
e. Newcastle
f. Pemberley

Part B.

Directions: Choose the correct character.

_____ 1. From whom does Elizabeth learn that Darcy has always been a good master, with never a cross word since he was four?

_____ 2. From whom does Elizabeth first learn that Darcy played a major role in halting the relationship of Jane and Bingley?

_____ 3. From whom does Darcy gain knowledge of Lydia's and Wickham's whereabouts in London?

_____ 4. From whom does Elizabeth first learn that Darcy was present at Lydia and Wickham's wedding?

_____ 5. From whom does Elizabeth learn that Darcy's financial support made Lydia and Wickham's marriage possible?

_____ 6. From whom does Mr. Bennet hear that Darcy wishes to marry Elizabeth?

_____ 7. From whom does Darcy learn that Elizabeth is still open to the idea of marrying him?

a. Jane
b. Lydia
c. Lady Catherine
d. Mr. Collins
e. Colonel Fitzwilliam
f. Mrs. Gardiner
g. Mrs. Reynolds
h. Mrs. Younge

Part C.

Directions: Hearing of the proposed marriage of Darcy and Elizabeth, several characters initially react negatively. In a short essay, give the reasons for three characters' negative reactions, and explain what their reactions reveal about the characters.

Answer Key

Quiz: Chapters 1–23

Part A.

1. c
2. d
3. e
4. a

Part B.

1. f
2. c
3. e
4. a
5. d

Part C.

1. b
2. i
3. j
4. a
5. g
6. f
7. e
8. c
9. d

Part D.

Collins is inconsistent in his choice of marriage partner, quickly passing from Jane to Elizabeth to Charlotte. Charlotte is inconsistent as a friend; accepting Collins as a husband does not show the sense Elizabeth knew her to have in the past. Bingley switches without reason from a real liking for Jane to ignoring her; he relies too much on others' opinions

Quiz: Chapters 24–42

Part A.

1. f
2. d
3. e
4. b
5. c

Part B.

1. f
2. h
3. g
4. a
5. k
6. i
7. e
8. c
9. d
10. b

Part C.

Elizabeth realizes that Wickham is interested primarily in money. She realizes that much of her negative view of Darcy was based on prejudice. She can see the many weaknesses in her family and in her own character.

Quiz: Chapters 43–61

Part A.

1. b
2. f
3. d
4. a
5. c

Part B.

1. g
2. e
3. h
4. b
5. f
6. d
7. c

Part C.

Jane fears that Elizabeth may be marrying without affection; her reaction is based on her love for her sister. Mr. Bennet realizes that Elizabeth must be able to esteem her husband; based on his own experience, he knows the unhappiness of an unequal marriage. Mr. Collins reacts to the disapproval of Lady Catherine. Lady Catherine's negative response is based on her class snobbishness.

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