

Jane Austen

PRIDE AND PREJUDICE

Mrs Bennet has five daughters and they're all unmarried. When rich, single Mr Bingley comes to live in the area, she's sure that he'll be the perfect husband for Jane, the eldest. Then proud Mr Darcy comes to stay with Bingley. Will any of the Bennet daughters be good enough for him? Lively, intelligent Elizabeth Bennet doesn't think so. She dislikes Mr Darcy immediately. Then Mr Collins comes to stay with the Bennets. Could he be the right man for Elizabeth?

In this reader you will find:

- Information about Jane Austen's life
- Sections focusing on background and context
- Glossary of difficult words
- Comprehension activities
- B1 Preliminary style activities
- Exit test

Tag

Love & Friendship

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Jane Austen

PRIDE AND PREJUDICE



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Book brief

- 1 *Pride and Prejudice*, a romantic novel of manners written by British writer, Jane Austen, and published in 1813, is one of the most popular novels in English literature.
- 2 Through Austen's often satirical descriptions, we learn about social classes during the Regency Period and their customs and values.
- 3 Set in the English countryside in the early 19th century, it tells the story of the Bennet family and in particular of one of their five daughters, Elizabeth Bennet.
- 4 Mr and Mrs Bennet have no sons so they must find at least one rich husband for one of their five daughters.
- 5 Main themes include the importance of marrying for love and not for money, and what can happen if you judge people too quickly by what you first see in them.

Jane Austen

Pride and Prejudice

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Contents

6	Main Characters	
8	Before you read	
10	Chapter One	The Bennets, the Bingleys and Mr Darcy
18	Activities	
22	Chapter Two	Mr Collins Comes to Stay
30	Activities	
34	Chapter Three	Mr Wickham's Story
42	Activities	
46	Chapter Four	Jane Goes to London
54	Activities	
58	Chapter Five	Lady Catherine de Bourgh
66	Activities	
70	Chapter Six	Mr Darcy's Letter
78	Activities	
82	Chapter Seven	Pemberley
90	Activities	
94	Chapter Eight	The Scandal
102	Activities	
106	Chapter Nine	An Unexpected Visitor
116	Activities	
118	Focus on...	Jane Austen
120	Focus on...	Everyday Life in Jane Austen's Times
122	Focus on...	Dangerous and Exciting Times
124	Focus on...	Travelling
126	Test yourself	
128	Syllabus	

Main Characters



Mr and Mrs Bennet live on the Longbourn estate with their five daughters. They are, in order of age, Jane (the eldest), Elizabeth, Mary, Kitty and Lydia.



*Mr Bingley is a rich young man. He has two sisters, **Caroline** and **Louisa**.*



*Mr Collins is a clergyman.
His patron is
Lady Catherine de Bourgh.*



*Lady Catherine de Bourgh is Mr Darcy's rich aunt. She has a daughter called **Anne**.*



*Mr Darcy is a rich friend of Mr Bingley's. He has a sister called **Georgiana**.*



Mr Wickham is a handsome soldier from the militia.



Charlotte Lucas is Elizabeth Bennet's best friend.

Before you Read

Vocabulary

- 1 A** Complete the table with words from the box. Check the meaning in a dictionary if necessary.

noun	adjective
	happy
pride	
arrogance	arrogant
prejudice	
	silly
beauty	
	excited
delight	
fear	
	intelligent

- 1 B** Choose the correct alternative in the sentences below. Use the table to check your answers.

- Jane Bennet was a very *happy/happiness* girl.
- Everyone agreed that Mr Darcy was very *proud/pride*.
- People didn't like his *arrogant/arrogance*.
- The title of this book is 'Pride and *Prejudiced/Prejudice*'.
- The three younger Bennet sisters were very *silly/silliness*.
- Everyone thought Jane Bennet was *beautiful/beauty*.
- There was a lot of *excited/excitement* about the ball.
- Mrs Bennet was *delighted/delight* that Mr Bingley was rich and single.
- Elizabeth wasn't *afraid/fear* of Mr Darcy.
- Mr Darcy liked Elizabeth's *intelligent/intelligence*.



Speaking

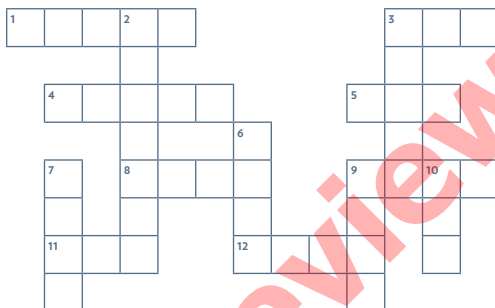
- 2 A** Use a dictionary if necessary. Are these adjectives positive (P) or negative (N), or both (B)?

sensitive	good-looking	polite
well-mannered	fashionable	kind
lively	clever	rude
sensible	noble	rich

- 2 B** Work in pairs. Use the adjectives in exercise 2A to talk about people you know.

Grammar

- 3** Use the clues below to complete the irregular verb crossword.



Clues Across

- 1 Jane a letter to Elizabeth. (5)
 3 Mr Darcy Mr Bingley in the distance. (3)
 4 When Mr Darcy's pen, Caroline offered to mend it. (5)
 5 Mr Collins married. (3)
 8 Mr Bingley some flowers to Jane. (4)
 9 Mary played the piano and Elizabeth her book. (4)
 11 Elizabeth Mr Darcy on the road. He gave her a letter. (3)
 12 Mr Bennet Mary to stop playing the piano. (4)

Clues Down

- 2 Mr Collins Elizabeth was very beautiful. (7)
 3 Mr Bingley quietly to Jane. (5)
 6 Lydia and Kitty to see their aunt. (4)
 7 Mr Bingley and Mr Darcy to visit. (4)
 9 Mr Darcy got on his horse and away. (4)
 10 Lady Catherine a lot of vegetables at dinner. (3)

The Bennets, the Bingleys and Mr Darcy

- ▶ 2 There's one thing that everybody knows is true. Everybody knows that it's true that any rich, single man must definitely want a wife. And, of course, all mothers think this rich, single man is the perfect partner for one or another of their daughters.

In 19th century England, people were very interested in marriages that would give them a better position in society.

Mr and Mrs Bennet had five daughters and none of them was married, so when rich Mr Bingley came to live at Netherfield Hall, Mrs Bennet was very, very excited.

'Mr Bennet,' she said to her husband one day, 'have you heard? Netherfield Park has been rented at last to a man called Bingley. This is such good news for our girls.'

'Why is that good news for our girls?' replied her husband calmly.

'Oh, Mr Bennet. He's single, he's rich and he's rented Netherfield. He'll definitely marry one of our girls. You must go and visit him as soon as you can.'

'No, you go,' he answered, 'Take the girls with you. Then he can choose the girl he likes best.'

Mr Bennet enjoyed teasing* his wife. He knew it was important for him to visit their new neighbour. If he didn't visit, it'd be impossible for his wife and daughters to meet Mr Bingley.

'Oh, Mr Bennet, you're so unkind to your family,' said his wife,

tease make fun of

Pride and Prejudice

‘Now they’ll never get married.’

A few days later, Mr and Mrs Bennet and their daughters were in their sitting room. Elizabeth, their second daughter, was putting a ribbon* on a hat.

‘That’s a beautiful hat, Lizzy,’ said her father, ‘I hope Mr Bingley will like it.’

‘We’ll never know what Mr Bingley likes,’ said Mrs Bennet crossly*. ‘We can’t visit him.’

Her husband continued speaking. ‘When’s the next ball in Meryton, Lizzy?’ he asked. Meryton was the local village.

‘Two weeks tomorrow,’ replied Elizabeth happily.

‘Oh no! In two weeks!’ cried Mrs Bennet, ‘Our girls won’t be able to dance with Mr Bingley. All the other girls in the village will dance with him. *They* have kind fathers who have visited Mr Bingley.’ She paused* and looked at Mr Bennet crossly. ‘Then he’ll marry one of them. He’ll marry a girl from the village. I hate the name Bingley already.’

Mr Bennet paused. His eyes were smiling. ‘I’m sorry that you hate the name Bingley, my dear, because I visited Mr Charles Bingley today.’

‘Oh girls, you have such a kind father! I knew you would visit him! Now you can all dance with Mr Bingley. Oh Jane, Lizzy, Mary, Kitty and Lydia, you have a very kind father!’

Mrs Bennet was overjoyed*. Her husband went into his study to read in peace and quiet. Mrs Bennet and her daughters spent the evening talking about Mr Bingley, Netherfield and the village ball.

ribbon 
crossly angrily

pause stop speaking for a moment
overjoyed very, very happy



The Bennet girls spent the next few days trying to find out about Mr Bingley. Their father had nothing to say about his looks or his personality*. In the end, they had to ask their neighbour, Lady Lucas. She described Mr Bingley as young, very good-looking, very pleasant and he liked dancing very much. She had some other exciting news; Mr Bingley was definitely coming to the ball and he was bringing a large group of friends. Lady Lucas's daughter, Charlotte, was Elizabeth's best friend and she was very excited about meeting Mr Bingley and his friends. Mrs Bennet was also very excited. She wasn't a very intelligent woman and she spent a lot of her life thinking about her daughters and their future marriages.

On the night of the Meryton ball, everyone was already dancing when Mr Bingley arrived. He came with his two sisters, who were very fashionable young women; Caroline, who was single and Louisa, who was married. Louisa's husband was also with them. Another young man was in the group. He was tall and very good-looking. The ladies from the village discovered that his name was Mr Darcy and that he was even richer than Mr Bingley. He had a large estate* in Derbyshire called Pemberley.

Mr Bingley was very popular, he danced with lots of young ladies and he was very kind to everyone. Mr Darcy wasn't as popular. He only danced with Mr Bingley's sisters and spent a lot of the evening walking around the room. The ladies of Meryton soon agreed that Mr Darcy was very rich, but he was also proud and arrogant.

Mr Bingley was dancing with Jane. He saw his friend watching the dancing. 'Come, Darcy, dance with one of these pretty girls,' he called.

'I hate dancing,' Mr Darcy replied, 'Except for your sisters, you're dancing with the only pretty girl in the room.'



‘Miss Bennet is the most beautiful girl in the world. But look,’ said his friend, pointing to Elizabeth, ‘her sister Elizabeth Bennet is also beautiful. She has no-one to dance with.’

‘She’s quite pretty, I suppose,’ replied Darcy coldly, ‘but not pretty enough for me. Go back to your partner, go back to Jane Bennet’s smiles. Leave me alone.’

Unfortunately for Mr Darcy, Elizabeth heard his comments*. She decided that she didn’t like Mr Darcy, but she had a good sense of humour. She and her friends were soon laughing about Mr Darcy’s behaviour. The Bennet girls enjoyed the ball. Elizabeth chatted with her good friend Charlotte Lucas and Jane danced with Mr Bingley twice. Kitty and Lydia, the two youngest girls, danced happily all night. Even Mary, who was very serious, seemed to enjoy herself. Mrs Bennet was the happiest of them all; Mr Bingley liked Jane. He was surely* going to marry her.

After the ball, Jane and Elizabeth were alone in their room at home. Jane told her sister that she liked Mr Bingley very much. She liked him because he was kind, sensitive, well-mannered and lively. Elizabeth agreed. ‘He’s also extremely handsome,’ she said.

Jane went on to talk about the other people in the group. ‘I like his sister, Caroline Bingley. She’s coming to live at Netherfield with her brother.’

Elizabeth wasn’t so sure. ‘I thought she was quite proud,’ said Elizabeth.

A few days later, the Bennet sisters and their mother visited Caroline Bingley and her sister at Netherfield. After the visit, Caroline and her sister agreed that Jane was a sweet girl. They also agreed that

comments (here) what he said

surely without question, definitely

Pride and Prejudice

Mrs Bennet was impossible and that the younger sisters had very bad manners*. Elizabeth still thought that Caroline Bingley was very proud.

One evening, Sir William Lucas, Charlotte's father, invited the Bennet family to a small party at his house. Mr Bingley, his sisters and Mr Darcy were also there. There was also a group of officers from the militia* who had just arrived in Meryton. They were staying in the village for the winter. After dinner, Mary played some tunes* on the piano. She wasn't very good, but she really enjoyed playing. Jane and Mr Bingley were dancing together and the younger Bennet girls were dancing with some of the officers. Elizabeth and Charlotte Lucas were chatting. Charlotte had noticed that Mr Bingley and Jane seemed to like each other very much. Charlotte thought Jane should tell Mr Bingley that she liked him. She was worried that Jane didn't show her feelings. Mr Darcy was watching Elizabeth. He remembered the ball when he had said she was only *quite* pretty. Now he was looking at her beautiful dark eyes and her intelligent face. He realised he had been wrong, she was very pretty indeed. 'I'd like to get to know* her better,' he said to himself. He was a little surprised.

'Miss Elizabeth,' called Sir William Lucas, 'why aren't you dancing? And you Mr Darcy, why don't you dance with this beautiful young lady?'

'Thank you, Sir William, but I don't want to dance,' said Elizabeth very quickly. She was a little embarrassed and not sure what to do. Mr Darcy was very polite. He asked Elizabeth to dance with him. Elizabeth was quite surprised, but she refused politely and walked away.

Caroline Bingley had seen everything. She went over to Mr Darcy and whispered*, 'I can imagine what you're thinking.'

have bad manners be rude or act in a rude way

the militia military men

tune a piece of music

get to know become friends with someone

whisper say something quietly to someone else so that others can't hear you

‘What’s that?’ asked Mr Darcy.

‘That it’s terrible to spend time with these people. They have such bad manners.’

‘Not at all,’ replied Mr Darcy, ‘I was thinking about Miss Elizabeth Bennet’s beautiful dark eyes.’

‘I’m very surprised,’ said Miss Bingley, who wanted to marry Mr Darcy herself. ‘So, Miss Elizabeth Bennet is your favourite. Are you going to marry her? You’ll have an excellent mother-in-law*. Mrs Bennet will be a mother-in-law to be proud of. And she’ll always be with you at Pemberley.’

Miss Bingley carried on talking. Mr Darcy didn’t interrupt her ironic* comments, so soon Miss Bingley felt better. No, Mr Darcy was safe.

Mrs Bennet was determined* to find husbands for her daughters for a very good reason. Mr Bennet wasn’t a rich man. He had a very fine house, but a very small income*. And there was one big problem; Mr and Mrs Bennet had no sons. When Mr Bennet died, the house and the estate would go to a cousin and not to the Bennet girls. Mrs Bennet’s family wasn’t a rich one, so they couldn’t help. She had a sister, Mrs Phillips, who lived in Meryton and a brother, Mr Gardiner, who worked in London.

Meryton was about a mile away from Longbourn where the Bennet family lived, so the girls often walked there to visit their aunt. Kitty and Lydia Bennet, however, began to visit Meryton much more often, now that the militia were there. Every time they went to Meryton, they came back with more information about the officers from the militia and their beautiful red coats. Lydia and Kitty were the happiest girls in Longbourn. Their father wasn’t so happy.

In the Regency Period, women couldn’t inherit estates, but only personal things like jewellery.

mother-in-law the mother of the person you marry

ironic saying the opposite of what you really think

determined when you won’t allow anyone or anything to stop you doing something you feel strongly about

income money you receive for work or what people pay you to stay on your land

Pride and Prejudice

‘I think you’re two of the silliest girls in England,’ he said one day at lunchtime, after listening to them talk about the officers.

Lydia just carried on chatting about Captain Carter and Colonel Forster.

‘Silly? Your daughters?’ exclaimed* Mrs Bennet, ‘Not at all. When I was a girl, I liked officers too.’

A servant* came into the room with a letter for Jane Bennet. Her mother was delighted*.

‘Who’s it from? What’s it about? What does he say? Come on, Jane, tell us all!’ she exclaimed.

‘It’s from Miss Bingley,’ said Jane and she read the letter to her family.

‘My dear friend,

You must come for dinner today. The gentlemen are having dinner with the officers, so Louisa and I will be alone. We’ll be very bored without your company.*

Yours ever,

Caroline Bingley’

‘It’s a shame the gentlemen are away,’ said Mrs Bennet.

‘Can I have the carriage*?’ asked Jane.

‘No! I think it’s going to rain. Take the horse. If it rains, you’ll have to stay tonight. Then you’ll meet the gentlemen again.’

Jane, Elizabeth and Mr Bennet were all quite shocked.

Soon after Jane left, it started to rain and Mrs Bennet was delighted. It continued to rain all evening and she was sure Jane would stay the night at Netherfield.

exclaim cry out suddenly in surprise

servant a person who works in someone’s house

delighted very happy

company being with other people

carriage 

Reading Comprehension

1 Choose the best answer – A, B or C.

- 1 How many daughters do the Bennets have?
☐ **A** Seven.
☐ **B** Three.
☐ **C** Five.
- 2 Who's Mr Bingley?
☐ **A** A rich, married man.
☐ **B** A rich, single man.
☐ **C** A friend of Mr Bennet's.
- 3 Why is Mrs Bennet cross with Mr Bennet?
☐ **A** Because he wants to visit Mr Bingley.
☐ **B** Because he's reading his newspaper.
☐ **C** Because he doesn't want to visit Mr Bingley.
- 4 What do the ladies of Meryton think about Mr Darcy?
☐ **A** That he's very proud.
☐ **B** That he's very shy.
☐ **C** That he's very angry.
- 5 What does Mr Darcy say about Elizabeth?
☐ **A** That she isn't pretty enough for him.
☐ **B** That she's too pretty for him.
☐ **C** That she's a bad dancer.
- 6 What does Mr Bingley think about Jane?
☐ **A** He likes her very much.
☐ **B** He thinks that she isn't as pretty as her sister.
☐ **C** He thinks that she is rude.
- 7 Why do Kitty and Lydia start going to Meryton more often than usual?
☐ **A** To visit Aunt Phillips.
☐ **B** To see the officers.
☐ **C** To see Mr Gardiner.

2 Match the characters to the things they say. You can use the characters more than once. Not all characters are used.

- 1 ☐ 'Mr Bennet, you're so unkind to your family.'
- 2 ☐ 'I'm sorry you hate the name Bingley, because I visited him today.'
- 3 ☐ 'I hate dancing. You're dancing with the only pretty girl in the room.'
- 4 ☐ 'It's terrible to spend time with these people. They have such bad manners.'
- 5 ☐ 'I think you're two of the silliest girls in England.'
- 6 ☐ 'Can I have the carriage?'

a Elizabeth Bennet

b Mr Darcy

c Mr Bennet

d Mrs Bennet

e Caroline Bingley

f Jane Bennet

g Mr Bingley

h Charlotte Lucas

Reading B1 Preliminary

3 Complete the text about Chapter 1 with one word for each space.

Mrs Bennet was very excited (1) rich Mr Bingley came to live at Netherfield Hall. She was sure that he (2) make an excellent husband for one of her five daughters. Mr Bingley came to the ball in Meryton with his two sister and a (3) friends. One of his friends, Mr Darcy, didn't dance as (4) as Mr Bingley and spent a (5) of the evening walking around the room, so all the ladies thought he was proud and arrogant. At first, Mr Darcy was rude to Elizabeth but when he saw her at Charlotte's house (6) evening, he realised that he wanted to get to know her better.

