

Jane Austen

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Elinor is careful but Marianne isn't. They both meet the man of their dreams, but will they find true happiness? *Sense and Sensibility* is Jane Austen's classic story of two sisters who have a lot to learn about love.

In this reader you will find:

- Background information about this novel
- A short biography of Jane Austen
- Glossary of difficult words
- Comprehension activities
- B1 Preliminary-style activities
- Exit test

Tags

Love Society

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Jane Austen

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Jane Austen

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY



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Book brief

- 1 *Sense and Sensibility* is the first novel published anonymously by English author, Jane Austen, in 1811.
- 2 The novel is set in South West England, London and Sussex probably between 1792 and 1797 and gives us a vivid picture of middle-class life at that time.
- 3 It tells the story of the Dashwood sisters, Elinor and Marianne. Elinor represents the qualities of 'Sense' while her sister, Marianne represents the qualities of 'Sensibility'.
- 4 The two sisters experience love, romance and heartbreak and learn from one another, through both sense and sensibility.
- 5 Main themes include love, marriage and women in society.

Jane Austen

Sense and Sensibility

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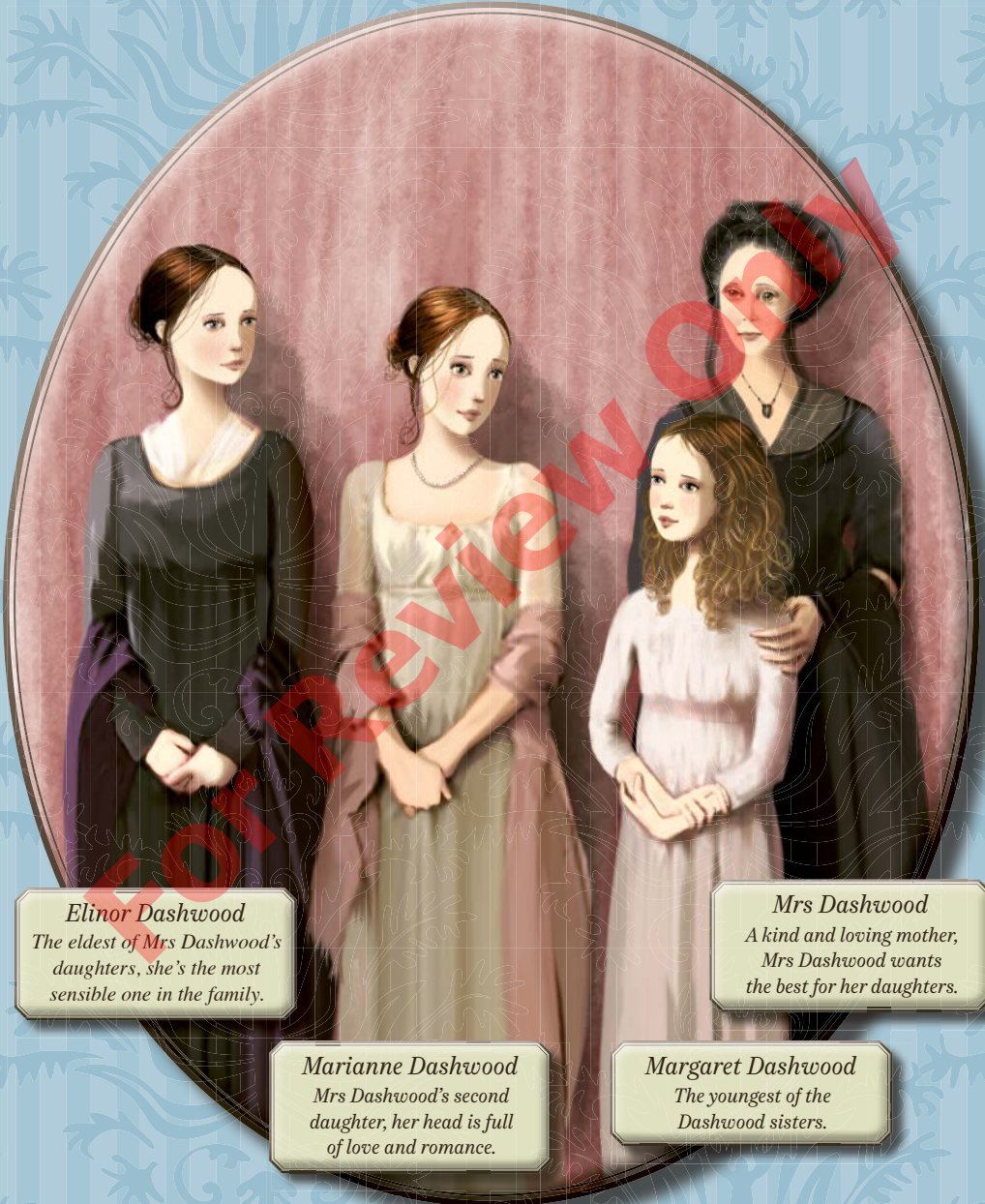
Barbara Baldi Bargiggia

For Review Only

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Main Characters



Elinor Dashwood

The eldest of Mrs Dashwood's daughters, she's the most sensible one in the family.

Mrs Dashwood

A kind and loving mother, Mrs Dashwood wants the best for her daughters.

Marianne Dashwood

Mrs Dashwood's second daughter, her head is full of love and romance.

Margaret Dashwood

The youngest of the Dashwood sisters.



Lucy Steele

Mrs Jennings' cousin, she's a selfish, insecure young woman.



Colonel Brandon

Once an officer in the army, he's a friend of Sir John Middleton and a kind man.



Edward Ferrars

The elder brother of Fanny Dashwood and Robert Ferrars, he's a friendly young man.



Fanny Dashwood

The selfish wife of John Dashwood and the sister of Edward and Robert Ferrars.



John Willoughby

An attractive, young man who wins Marianne's heart but he can't be trusted.



Sir John Middleton and Mrs Jennings

*Sir John is Mrs Dashwood's cousin and he invites her and her daughters to stay at Barton Cottage after they lose their home
Mrs Jennings is Lady Middleton's mother. She loves talking about everyone.*

Before you Read

Vocabulary

- 1 A** Family relationships are important in *Sense and Sensibility*. Read this short summary of Chapter 1, then answer the questions below to understand who's who.

Henry Dashwood lives in his uncle's house, Norland Park. He has a wife and three daughters, Elinor, Marianne and Margaret. Henry also has a son from his first marriage. This son is called John. John is married to Fanny Ferrars, she's Henry's daughter-in-law. She and John have a young son. Fanny has an older brother called Edward and a younger brother called Robert.

- 1 Who owns Norland Park?
.....
- 2 Who are Henry Dashwood's children?
.....
- 3 Who are John Dashwood's sisters?
.....
- 4 Who's John Dashwood's wife?
.....
- 5 Who's Henry Dashwood's daughter-in-law?
.....
- 6 Who are John Dashwood's brothers-in-law?
.....

- 1 B** In this story, if you have a big house and lots of money you have a good position in society. Match each word with its definition below.

a a cottage b an estate c to save d to belong to

- 1 ☐ to keep your money to spend in the future
- 2 ☐ small house usually in the country
- 3 ☐ to be the property of
- 4 ☐ large area of land in the country with a large house

- 2 Read this summary of Chapter 1, then decide which adjectives refer to the characters in the box. Some of the adjectives describe more than one character. Use a dictionary to help you.**

Mrs Dashwood is sad when her husband dies, and she's very angry when Fanny soon arrives at Norland. Fanny says that the house now belongs to her. Mrs Dashwood wants to move out of the house immediately. Marianne and Margaret also want to leave. Elinor doesn't think this is a good idea, she says they must first find a new, inexpensive house.

Edward Ferrars arrives at Norland to stay with his sister Fanny. He's so quiet that at first only Elinor likes him. Fanny isn't happy about Edward's friendship with Elinor.

John made a promise to his father before he died. He promised to help his sisters. Fanny tells him not to give them any of his money. He always listens to his wife. In the end he doesn't give his sisters any money.

Edward Ferrars • Elinor • Fanny Dashwood • John Dashwood •
Marianne • Margaret • Mrs Dashwood

- 1 careful
- 2 sensitive
- 3 strong
- 4 selfish
- 5 sensible
- 6 shy
- 7 weak

Speaking B1 Preliminary

- 3 Look at the front cover of this book and take turns at describing the picture with a partner. Answer these questions to help you.**

- How many people are there in the picture?
- What are they doing?
- What are they wearing?
- Where do you think they are?
- What else can you see in the picture?



A New Home

- ▶ 2 Mr and Mrs Henry Dashwood lived a peaceful and respectable* life at Norland Park. Norland was a fine house in the centre of a large estate* that belonged to Henry's uncle. Henry had a son called John and when his first wife died, Henry married again. He and his second wife had three daughters, Elinor, Marianne and Margaret.

In the UK, most women then, and also now, use their husband's surname after they get married.

John was a young man who lived in London. When his mother died, he got a lot of money. He became even richer by marrying Fanny Ferrars. John and Fanny now had a son. This made the uncle very happy – the old man loved the child.

Unfortunately, this happy situation soon changed. The old man died and in his will* gave Norland Park and the estate to John's son. The old man kindly said John's father, Henry, could live at Norland with his wife and daughters until Henry died.

Henry was worried though. When he died, his wife and daughters would have nowhere to live and little money. 'But, I'm not old,' he thought, 'We'll live here for years. In that time, I'll save as much money as I can for my family.'

Henry couldn't complete this sensible* plan however, because only twelve months later he was dying.

respectable that society thinks is good and correct

estate a large house with a large area of land

will a document you prepare with a lawyer, which says who'll get your money, house etc. when you die

sensible clever, intelligent

Sense and Sensibility

Henry called his son to see him before he died. 'I'm worried about my wife and your sisters, John,' he said. 'When I die, this house and the estate will belong to you, and they'll have to find a new place to live. They only have a little money. Promise me you'll help them so that I can die in peace.'

John, who wasn't a bad man, made his promise.

'I'll give them three thousand pounds,' he said to himself after his father died. 'They'll be able to live very well on* that,' he thought.

Only a short time after Henry's funeral*, John's wife Fanny arrived to live at Norland Park with their three-year-old son. 'I have every right* to come and live here,' she said. 'Now that Henry is dead, this house belongs to my son.'

Fanny had never been a popular member of the family. When she moved into the house so soon after Henry died, she showed exactly how selfish she was.

Mrs Dashwood was very sad when her husband died, and after Fanny arrived she wanted to leave Norland immediately. Like their mother, Marianne and Margaret were passionate* and sensitive*. They also wanted to leave. The eldest daughter, Elinor, was always more sensible than her mother and sisters. 'Mama,' she said, 'we haven't found a new place to live in. We must stay here until we do.'

When Fanny Dashwood moved to Norland, Mrs Dashwood and her three daughters became visitors in their own home. What was worse, Fanny didn't agree with her husband's plan to give his sisters three thousand pounds. 'They aren't really your sisters if you don't have the same mother,' she said to John one evening. 'I don't

In 19th century Britain, there was a system called 'Primogeniture' which meant that, when a father died, all land was left to the eldest son in the family rather than being equally divided between all the brothers and sisters.

live on have enough money to buy the things you need

funeral when you bury someone after they die

right (here) be allowed by law

passionate having strong feelings

sensitive easily hurt



understand why you want to give away all your money. Think about our poor little son. Why do you want to give so much of our money to people who aren't even your family?'

'I promised my father I'd help them, Fanny dear,' he said.

'Yes, but you only promised to *help* them, your father didn't tell you how much money to give them.'

'Perhaps you're right,' John replied. 'I'll give them half.'

'That's extremely generous, John,' his wife continued. 'I don't know another man who'd be so generous. In fact, when your father asked you to help them, I'm sure he didn't mean that you should give them *money*.'

'Perhaps you're right,' John said. 'They have a little money of their own, maybe they don't need any more from me.'

'Of course they don't need any more!' his wife exclaimed*. 'They'll soon move to a small house where they'll need only one servant* or perhaps two. They won't have an expensive life. In fact, they'll need almost nothing to live on.'

'I believe you're right, my love,' John agreed, 'Now I think about it, I feel my father only wanted me to be kind to them, as a neighbour would. One of our servants can help them when they move out.'

'You have a kind and generous spirit*', Fanny answered.

For John, his wife was always logical* and always right.

exclaim say something showing surprise

servant a person who works for you to cook, clean etc.

spirit character, heart

logical straight-thinking



Mrs Dashwood and her daughters felt very unwelcome in Fanny's home. They looked for a new house nearby, but most were too expensive. Elinor had to remind her mother how little money they had.

Three months passed in this way, then a visitor arrived at the house. This new person made Mrs Dashwood and her daughters much happier, especially Elinor. It was Edward Ferrars, Fanny's elder brother.

Edward's mother and sister weren't pleased with him. They'd decided Edward must become someone important, a politician* perhaps. He must become friends with the greatest men in society. Unfortunately, Edward didn't want that. He only wanted a quiet, comfortable life. Edward's family were more pleased with his younger brother, Robert. He was very ambitious*.

At first, Mrs Dashwood didn't like Edward. He wasn't handsome and he was extremely shy. As Elinor spent time with him, as she talked to him, she saw that he was kind and loving.

'He's completely unlike* his sister Fanny,' she said to her mother one day.

'Well, if he's unlike Fanny, then I love him already!' Mrs Dashwood replied.

'I think you'll like him, when you know him,' Elinor said.

'Like him!' replied her mother with a smile, 'If I like someone, I can feel nothing less than love for them.'

Mrs Dashwood spent more time with Edward and got to know him better. She understood that his quiet manner* hid a warm heart. She saw what a gentle, honourable* young man he was. She was happy because she thought that he'd fallen in love with Elinor. She was sure

politician a person who decides the laws of a country

ambitious wanting to be successful and rich

unlike different from

manner behaviour, way of being

honourable honest and good

Sense and Sensibility

they'd soon be married. 'In a few months, my dear Marianne,' she said to her second daughter one day, 'Elinor will be married. We'll miss her; but she'll be happy.'

'Oh! Mama, how will we live without her?' Marianne replied.

'My love, I'm sure we'll live only a few miles from each other and so we'll see them every day. If Elinor marries, you won't lose a sister but get a new brother, a real, loving brother.'

Marianne wasn't quite as enthusiastic* about Edward. 'Edward is nice and I like him,' she said, 'but he doesn't have that fire that a young man should have. He doesn't love music as I do, and last night he read that beautiful poem with so little emotion*. If I were in love with him, it'd break my heart to hear him read poetry so badly. Mama, the more I see of the world, the more I'm sure I'll never meet a man I can really love. He'd have to be as nice as Edward but have much more charm* and spirit than him.'

'My dear,' said Mrs Dashwood, 'you aren't even seventeen. It's too early for you to give up hope of finding happiness.'

Marianne decided to speak to her sister about Edward. 'What a pity that Edward doesn't love drawing as much as you do,' she said one day.

Elinor was surprised by what her sister said about Edward. 'He doesn't draw, it's true, but he's always interested in my drawings.'

'Don't be angry, Elinor,' Marianne said, 'Perhaps I don't know him as well as you do.'

'I agree, he doesn't seem handsome when you first see him. Now that I know him so well I find him quite handsome.'

'I know I'll love him more, Elinor, when he becomes your husband.'

enthusiastic very keen about something
emotion strong feeling

charm what makes a person interesting and attractive to other people

‘But Marianne, he hasn’t asked me to marry him! I think he likes me very much, but I don’t think he’s free to choose who’ll become his wife. I’m not rich or well-connected*. I’m sure his family will want him to marry someone who is.’

Marianne saw that she and her mother had been wrong, perhaps Elinor and Edward wouldn’t be able to get married.

Elinor certainly didn’t believe she and Edward would ever get married. She was sure that he loved her, but he often seemed sad. Elinor thought his mother wouldn’t let them be together because her family had no money.

During this time, Fanny watched her brother with Elinor. She wasn’t pleased by what she saw. ‘My mother wants both her sons to marry well,’ she told Mrs Dashwood one day. ‘A young woman who thinks she’ll persuade Edward to marry her should remember that.’

Mrs Dashwood understood immediately what Fanny was saying and was very angry. ‘Whatever Elinor says,’ she thought, ‘we’ll leave this place immediately.’

At this point, Mrs Dashwood received a letter from a distant relative, Sir John Middleton. He explained that he’d recently heard about their situation, and offered her a cottage on his estate, in the county of Devon. This was many miles away from Norland.

Mrs Dashwood didn’t hesitate* for a moment. She wrote back to Sir John the same day accepting* his kind offer.

When the time came to leave Norland, Mrs Dashwood and her daughters were extremely upset.

‘Dear, dear Norland,’ cried Marianne as she walked through each room to say goodbye. ‘I’ll never be able to feel happy in another house.’

well-connected having important and powerful friends

hesitate stop for a moment because you’re undecided about what to say or do

accept say yes to an offer

Sense and Sensibility

How I'll miss everything here, though the house and garden won't even know that we've gone!

John said they could use his carriage* for the journey. As they sat in the carriage, Mrs Dashwood, Marianne and Margaret were all crying. The only person who didn't cry was Elinor.

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carriage a closed 'car' pulled by horses

Reading Comprehension

1 Choose the correct answer.

- 1 Why do Elinor, her mother and sisters leave Norland Park?
☐ A They don't like Edward.
☐ B The girls' father died, so Norland now belongs to John's son.
☐ C A relative tells them to move to Devon.

- 2 Before Henry dies, what does John promise to do?
☐ A Help his sisters after Henry dies.
☐ B Buy his sisters a house.
☐ C Give Norland to his sisters.

- 3 What happens when Fanny and her son move to Norland?
☐ A The Dashwoods begin to like her.
☐ B She wants the Dashwoods to feel happy at Norland.
☐ C The Dashwoods feel like visitors in their own home.

- 4 Fanny doesn't want John to give his sisters any money. Why?
☐ A She says they need it more than the Dashwoods.
☐ B She says the Dashwoods don't need it.
☐ C She says he didn't make a promise.

- 5 Elinor says Edward hasn't asked her to marry him because...
☐ A he's too shy.
☐ B his mother and sister would say no.
☐ C he doesn't really love her.

- 6 Why does Mrs Dashwood decide to leave Norland?
☐ A Fanny tells her to leave.
☐ B Sir John Middleton invites them to live near him.
☐ C Fanny says she doesn't want Elinor to marry Edward.



- 2 Read these sentences from Chapter 1 about what Mrs Dashwood thinks and says about Edward Ferrars. Discuss the questions with a partner and write your answers.

'At first, she didn't like Edward. He wasn't handsome and he was extremely shy.'

'If he's unlike Fanny, then I love him already!'

'If I like someone, I can feel nothing less than love for them.'

- 1 What do these sentences tell us about Mrs Dashwood's character?

.....
.....
.....
.....

- 2 How does she judge people?

.....
.....
.....
.....

- 3 Is she sensible or sensitive or both?

.....
.....
.....
.....

Grammar

- 3 Put the correct verb in the gaps below.

becomes • choose • likes • love • know • marry • see • seem

'I agree, he doesn't (1) handsome when you first
(2) him. Now that I (3) him so well,
I find him quite handsome.'

'I know I'll (4) him more, Elinor, when he
(5) your husband.'

'But Marianne, he hasn't asked me to marry him! I think he
(6) me very much, but I don't think he's free to

(7) who'll become his wife. I'm not rich or
well-connected. I'm sure his family will want him to (8)
someone who is.'