



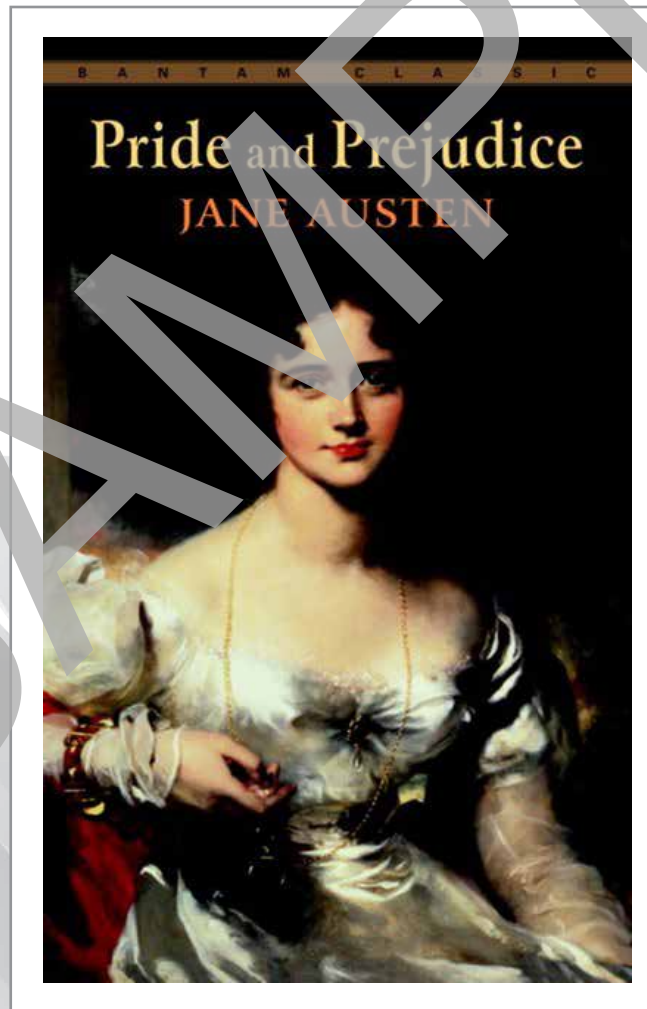
TEACHER GUIDE

GRADES 9-12

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

Pride and Prejudice

Jane Austen



READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT

Pride and Prejudice

Jane Austen

TEACHER GUIDE

NOTE:

The trade book edition of the novel used to prepare this guide is found in the Novel Units catalog and on the Novel Units website. Using other editions may have varied page references.

Please note: We have assigned Interest Levels based on our knowledge of the themes and ideas of the books included in the Novel Units sets, however, please assess the appropriateness of this novel or trade book for the age level and maturity of your students prior to reading with them. You know your students best!

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Plot Summary

Pride and Prejudice is Jane Austen's witty masterpiece about husband-hunting in the comfortable English country society in which she lived. The story takes place at the turn of the 18th century, but the themes still have appeal for today's students—a Cinderella love story, growth in self-knowledge, back-stabbing among "friends," interference by parents, marital tensions, sibling strife. Austen has a mercilessly acute sense of social satire, and students today will still recognize many of the elements at which she pokes fun—class consciousness, materialism, snobbery, the difficulty men and women often have in expressing themselves directly.

Volume 1

Chapter 1: The story opens with Mrs. Bennet's announcement to her husband that a rich, eligible bachelor is about to take up residence at nearby Netherfield Park. Mrs. Bennet urges her husband to visit their new neighbor soon—for their five daughters' sake. Chapter 2: Mr. Bennet teasingly reveals to his happy brood that he has paid a call on Mr. Bingley. Chapter 3: Mr. Bingley returns the visit, and a few days later arrives at a local ball with his small party (comprised of his two sisters, a brother-in-law, and a friend, Mr. Darcy). Mr. Bingley dances happily with Jane, the oldest and prettiest sister in the Bennet family; Elizabeth, on the other hand, is slighted by Bingley's haughty friend, Mr. Darcy. Elizabeth enjoys playfully spreading the story of how she overheard Mr. Darcy declare that she was not handsome enough to tempt him to dance with her. Chapter 4: After the ball, Jane praises Mr. Bingley to Elizabeth, and Mr. Bingley praises Jane to Mr. Darcy. Chapter 5: Lady Lucas and her daughter Charlotte pay a call to discuss the ball with the Bennets; Charlotte feels that Mr. Darcy has a right to be proud, but her friend Elizabeth points out that he mortified her own pride. Chapter 6: Mr. Darcy asks Elizabeth to dance and she refuses, unaware that he has begun to take an interest in her. Chapter 7: Caroline Bingley invites Jane over; while at Netherfield, Jane comes down with a cold and is put to bed. Lydia and Catherine go off to flirt with some officers while Elizabeth walks to Netherfield to be with Jane. Chapter 8: The Bingley sisters criticize Elizabeth behind her back. Mr. Darcy spars with Elizabeth about what constitutes an "accomplished" woman and Mr. Bingley busies himself in making Jane comfortable. Chapter 9: Mrs. Bennet and her daughters visit Netherfield Park; Mrs. Bennet declares that Jane is too ill to be moved and returns home. Chapter 10: Mr. Darcy writes a letter to his sister while Miss Bingley tries unsuccessfully to flirt with him. Mr. Darcy's interest in Elizabeth becomes increasingly evident to a jealous and increasingly catty Miss Bingley. Chapter 11: Elizabeth tells Mr. Darcy that his defect is a propensity to hate everybody. Chapter 12: To Mrs. Bennet's dismay, Jane and Elizabeth borrow a carriage and return home; Mr. Darcy resolves to be careful not to show that he admires Elizabeth. Chapter 13: Mr. Bennet's cousin, pompous Mr. Collins, writes that he is coming for a visit. The Bennets waste no affection on this clergyman, who

Chapters 18-23

Pages 77-113

Vocabulary

mortification 78	taciturn 79	<i>éclat</i> 79	<i>hauteur</i> 79
allusion 80	unappeasable 81	prejudice 81	steward 82
complacency 82	conditionally 83	discourse 83	patroness 84
laity 84	contempt 85	perverseness 86	animating 86
vexation 86	gravity 87	entreaties 87	conciliatory 88
manoeuvre 89	repulsed 89	eclipsed 90	injunction 91
incessant 91	disservice 91	composure 91	vivacity 92
sanctioned 95	vestibule 95	felicitations 95	estimation 99
peevish 99	abatement 99	forbearance 100	partiality 102
desponding 104	conjecture 105	diffident 105	irksome 106
courtier 109	vent 110	rectitude 111	abode 111

Discussion Questions

1. Why isn't Mr. Wickham at the Netherfield ball? (He's avoiding Darcy.) Is Elizabeth disappointed? (yes) Have you ever been in a situation like hers?
2. Do Mr. Darcy and Elizabeth enjoy dancing with each other? (Their conversation is awkward.) Why do you think Mr. Darcy looks over at Bingley and Jane—who are dancing together—"with a very serious expression" (p. 80)? What do you suppose he is thinking?
3. What does Miss Bingley tell Elizabeth about Mr. Wickham? (that Wickham has treated Darcy badly) What do you think Miss Bingley's motives are? After all, doesn't she have a better chance with Mr. Darcy if Elizabeth stays interested in Mr. Wickham?
4. How does Mrs. Bennet embarrass Elizabeth? (by talking loudly of Jane's prospects for marrying Bingley) How does Mary embarrass Elizabeth? (by singing poorly, with affectation) What would you do if you were Elizabeth? Have you ever been in a situation like hers?
5. How does Elizabeth turn down Mr. Collins? (She tells him flatly that he could not make her happy.) Why? What else could she have said—and done? Is Mr. Collins crushed? (He assumes she will change her mind.) Is there anything Mr. Collins—or anyone else—could have said or done to convince Elizabeth to change her mind?

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6. Are Elizabeth's parents both disappointed by her turning Mr. Collins down? (just her mother) Do you think Elizabeth would have changed her mind if her father had insisted? Why do you suppose Elizabeth is her father's favorite daughter—but "the least dear to her [mother] of all her children"? Do most parents have a favorite child?
 7. What happens to chill the friendship between Elizabeth and Charlotte? (Charlotte accepts Mr. Collins's proposal.) Do you think Charlotte has let Elizabeth down? Has she let herself down? Why does she accept him? (material security) Why did Mr. Collins set his sights on Charlotte—and so soon after his rejection by Elizabeth? Is this a case of "catching someone on the rebound"?
 8. Why does the letter from Miss Bingley upset Jane? (Miss Bingley reveals that the entire party—including her brother—has gone to London and does not plan to return.) How do Elizabeth and Jane read the letter differently? (Elizabeth reads between the lines that Bingley's sisters are trying to break things up between Bingley and Jane; Jane thinks that Miss Bingley is merely trying to warn her that Bingley has fallen out of love with her.) Which one do you suppose is closer to the truth?
 9. Why does Mrs. Bennet now regard Charlotte with "jealous abhorrence" (p. 112)? (As Mr. Collins' wife, Charlotte will one day inherit the Bennets' estate.) In what tone of voice do you imagine Mr. Bennet saying, "...Let us flatter ourselves that I may be the survivor"? (sarcastic) Does Mrs. Bennet respond to the feelings underneath her husband's words? (no)
 10. **Prediction:** Will Mr. Bingley and Jane ever get together?

Writing Activity

It is the evening after the Netherfield ball. Write journal entries from the points of view of Elizabeth, Jane, Mr. Bingley, Mr. Darcy, and Mr. Collins.

The Author's Craft: Theme

Explain that a **theme** is a general truth or commentary on life brought out through a literary work. Often the title and recurring incidents or phrases are a clue to the theme of a novel. Tell students to pay special attention to characters' conversations about "pride" and "prejudice." What does Elizabeth say to Mr. Darcy about prejudice on page 81? What might the author's message about prejudice be? (Elizabeth points out that for a person who is rigid in his or her judgments of others, it is particularly important not to be blinded by prejudice when first forming those opinions.)