

PRIDE AND PREJUDICE

3RD LECTURE

NOVEL BASICS

- **THE TITLE**

Pride and Prejudice

- **AUTHOR**

Jane Austen

- **YEAR PUBLISHED**

1813

- **GENRE**

Romance

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

- Jane Austen was born in Steventon, Hampshire, England, on December 16, 1775. She was the seventh child and second daughter of Cassandra and George Austen.
- The Austens were a close-knit family who fostered an environment of creativity and learning. As a youth, Jane read books from their father's library, and the siblings wrote and performed their own plays.
- When Austen was in her early 20s, she wrote a novel called *First Impressions*. This was the basis for the book that eventually became *Pride and Prejudice*.
- Her book was released in three volumes in 1813. That year, a second edition was published, followed by a third in 1817.
- *Pride and Prejudice* is Austen's most popular novel, and her personal favourite. In fact, she called it "my own darling child".
- Austen's novel explores themes of class, reputation, and love.
- Austen died on July 18, 1817, when she was 41.

IN CONTEXT

1. Historical Content

2. Social Context

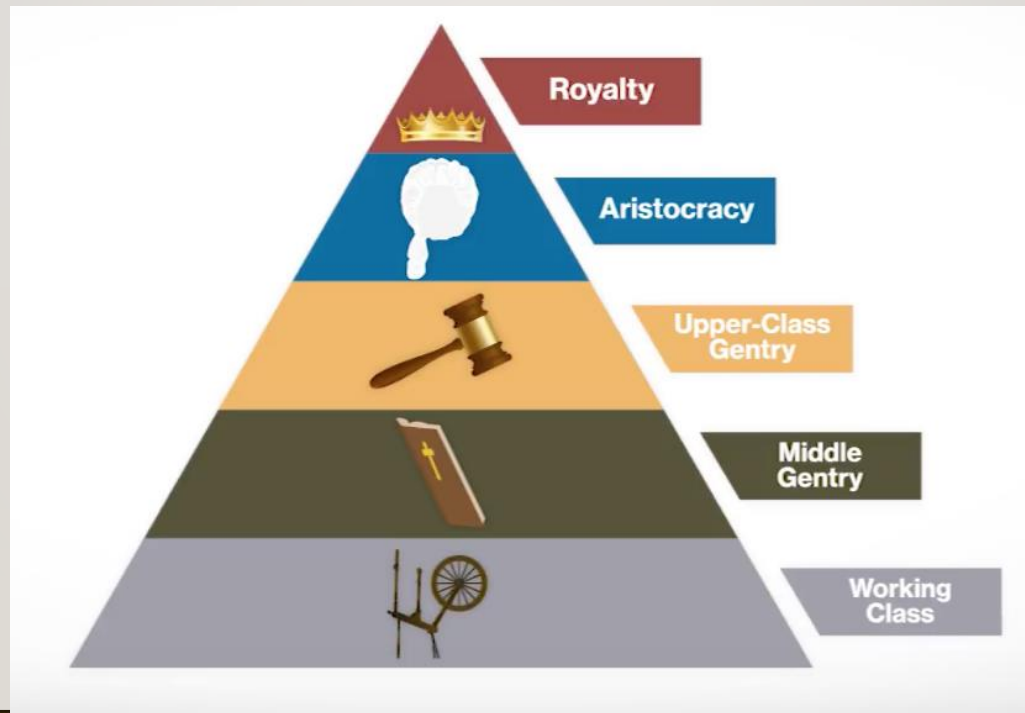
3. Literary Context

I. Historical Content

- Jane Austen wrote *Pride and Prejudice* in England's Georgian era. Austen revised the novel during the Regency era, which began in 1811.
- During the Regency era, the English worried that Napoleon Bonaparte might cross the English Channel. As a result, militias formed throughout England. The temporary posting of the militia in Meryton, the town where much of *Pride and Prejudice* takes place, reflects this concern about invasion.
- The Regency era also marked the beginning of the industrial revolution. Because of changes in the country's economic structure, more people had the opportunity to become truly wealthy through manufacturing and trade.

2. Social Context

In Austen's England, the social hierarchy can be likened to a five-level pyramid:



2. Social Context

For the most part, *Pride and Prejudice* represents the interactions of characters from the middle of the pyramid—the gentry.

Even though the members of this class often lacked the wealth and resources of the aristocracy, they were free to socialize with them.

Women of the gentry in the Regency period did not have careers, her only acceptable role was as a wife.

Austen herself never married. When her father died, she lived off money provided by her brothers.

3. Literary Context

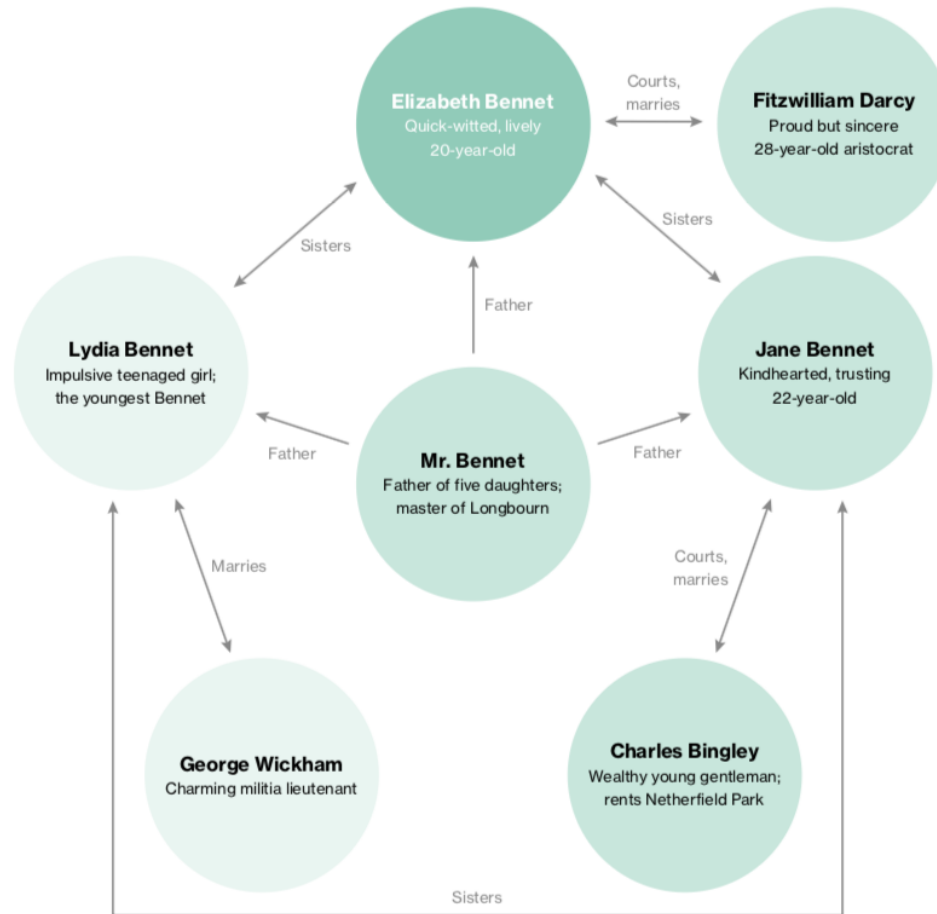
Unlike other writers of her period, Austen gave her novels everyday settings and characters who lead relatively normal lives.

Her genius lay in her use of satire to ridicule the follies and vices of early 19th-century English society, through lively dialogue, sharply drawn characters.

MAIN CHARACTERS

Character	Description	Traits
<u>Elizabeth Bennet</u>	Elizabeth, also known as Lizzy, is the second oldest of the five Bennet sisters and a keen observer of the personalities that interact in her social circle.	witty, lively, confident
<u>Fitzwilliam Darcy</u>	Darcy, or Mr. Darcy, is a wealthy and proud man who initially seems aloof and snobbish but is ultimately proven to be an honourable and generous person.	proud, sincere
<u>Jane Bennet</u>	Jane Bennet, Elizabeth's confidante, is the eldest and loveliest of the five Bennet girls and also the most kind-hearted and trusting.	gentle, trusting
<u>Mr. Bennet</u>	Mr. Bennet is a member of the lesser gentry. He has a biting wit and little interest in the emotional needs of his wife and five unmarried daughters.	disengaged, mocking
<u>Charles Bingley</u>	Charles Bingley, the son of a wealthy industrialist, is Mr. Darcy's best friend. When he leases the estate of Netherfield, he sets the novel's plot in motion.	pleasant, well-meaning, pliant
<u>Lydia Bennet</u>	Lydia, the youngest Bennet daughter, is immature, self-absorbed, and irresponsible.	immature, impulsive
<u>George Wickham</u>	George Wickham is a militia officer, a handsome gold digger who ends up running off with and marrying Lydia Bennet.	dishonest, charming

Character Map

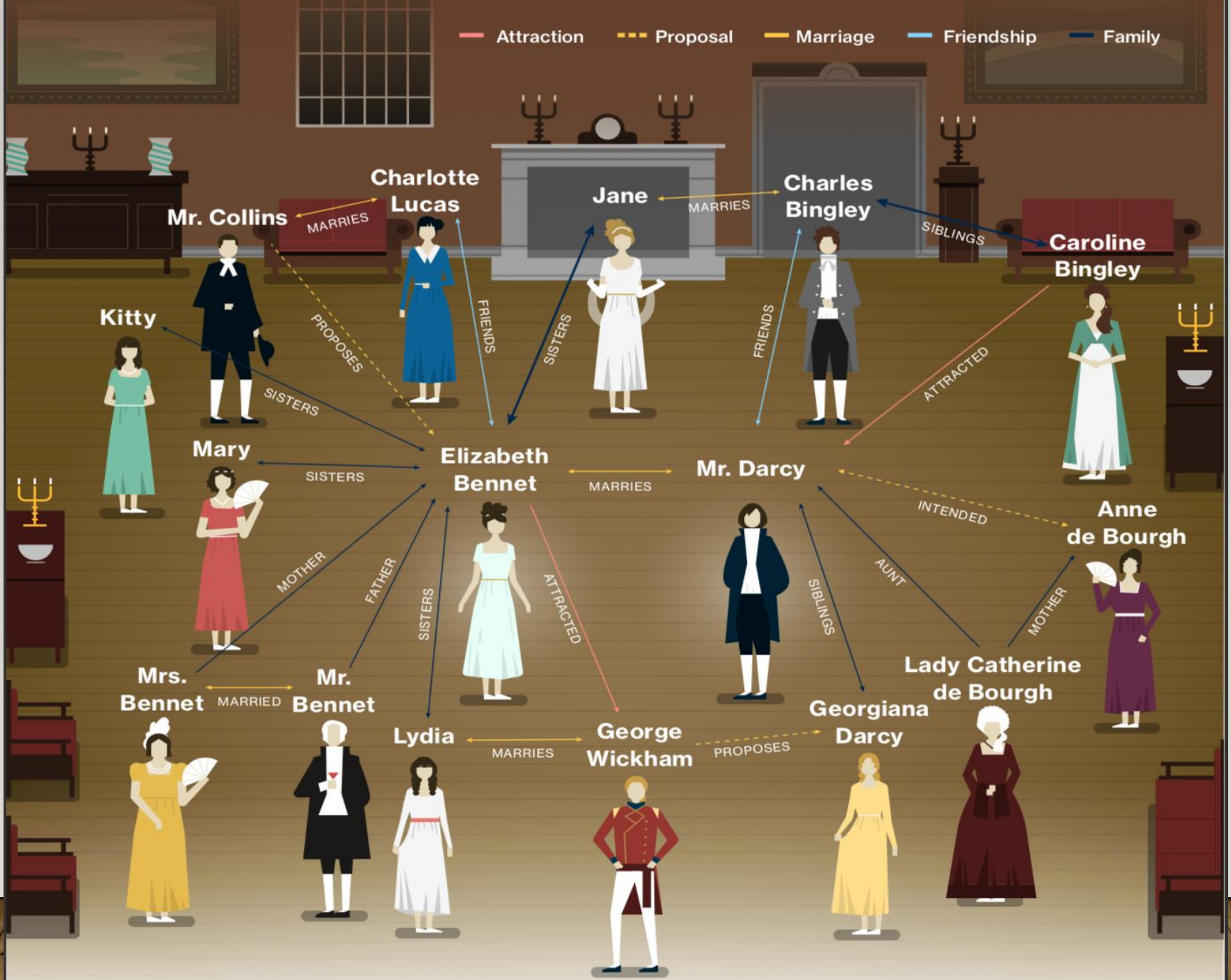


- Main Character
- Other Major Character
- Minor Character

Mrs. Bennet	Mrs. Bennet is the frivolous wife of Mr. Bennet. The mother of five daughters, her primary concern is to find suitable—that is, wealthy—husbands for her children.	shallow, talkative, unsophisticated
Charlotte Lucas	Charlotte is Elizabeth's dear friend. She is more pragmatic than romantic and is willing to marry for security rather than love.	kind, practical
Catherine Bennet	Catherine, also known as Kitty, is the fourth Bennet daughter. She especially enjoys joining her younger sister in flirting with soldiers.	lively, easy going
Mary Bennet	Mary Bennet, the middle daughter, is less likely than her sisters and prefers to distinguish herself through accomplishments, like reading and practicing piano.	bookish, serious, pedantic
Caroline Bingley	Miss Bingley is Charles's sister, a social climber who is jealous of Elizabeth's hold on Darcy and unenthusiastic about her brother's attraction to Jane, a member of the lower end of the gentry class.	insincere, plotting
Mr. Collins	Mr. Collins, a clergyman and the Bennet cousin destined to inherit Longbourn, behaves like a pompous fool around everyone except aristocrats, whom he fawns over.	pompous, foolish, obsequious
Lady Catherine de Bourgh	Lady Catherine is a noblewoman, Mr. Darcy's aunt, and the patron of Mr. Collins, having granted him the parish that provides his living.	snobbish, self-assured, meddling
Mr. Gardiner	A well-mannered example of the rising merchant class, Mr. Gardiner is Mrs. Bennet's brother.	helpful, sensible

Mrs. Gardiner	Mrs. Gardiner is Mrs. Bennet's sister-in-law and is very attentive to her five Bennet nieces.	caring, gracious
Georgiana Darcy	Georgiana, Mr. Darcy's sister and twelve years his junior, is a shy teenager and an accomplished musician.	shy, sweet, impressionable
Sir William Lucas	Sir William Lucas is a friend of the Bennet family, Charlotte Lucas's father, and resident of Lucas Lodge. He is an affable neighbour though a bit vain about his knighthood.	friendly, vain
Mrs. Hurst	Mrs. Hurst is Charles Bingley's sister. She is arrogant, conceited, and married to Mr. Hurst.	arrogant, conceited
Mr. Hurst	Mr. Hurst is Charles Bingley's brother-in-law. He looks like a gentleman but is in fact only interested in eating.	indolent, preoccupied with food
Colonel Fitzwilliam	Darcy's cousin and the younger son of an earl, Colonel Fitzwilliam is a congenial character who is evidently charmed by Elizabeth Bennet.	friendly, honourable
Mrs. Philips	Mrs. Philips, Mrs. Bennet's sister and every bit as frivolous, lives in the town of Meryton, where the Bennet girls frequently visit her.	unsophisticated, gossipy
Mrs. Annesley	Mrs. Annesley is companion to Georgiana, Darcy's younger sister.	Courteous

Attraction Proposal Marriage Friendship Family



PLOT SUMMARY

- 1. A New Tenant at Netherfield**
- 2. Courtship and Complications**
- 3. Journeys**
- 4. A Scandal**

I. A New Tenant at Netherfield

- *Pride and Prejudice* opens with the news that a wealthy young man, Charles Bingley, is arriving at Netherfield Park, a large estate. The news is met with great excitement by the members of the Bennet family, who live in the neighbouring estate of Longbourn. To Mrs. Bennet, the news is especially welcome. As the mother of five unmarried daughters, her most pressing goal is to see each of her offspring married. The sisters—Jane, Elizabeth, Mary, Catherine (Kitty), and Lydia—are intrigued by this new arrival and thrilled when the family is invited to attend a ball where Mr. Bingley will appear.
- At the ball, Jane, and Mr. Bingley form a mutual attraction. One of Mr. Bingley's friends, Fitzwilliam Darcy, also attends the ball. His aloofness and his insulting behaviour toward Elizabeth, stand in contrast to Mr. Bingley's gracious and cheerful manner.
- As the weeks unfold, at various events, Mr. Darcy is intrigued by Elizabeth, but she maintains a poor impression of him based on his earlier behavior. However, a courtship between Jane and Charles Bingley seems to be developing, and the Bingley sisters invite Jane to visit Netherfield. On her way there, she is caught in a rainstorm and falls ill. Elizabeth sets out for Netherfield to tend to her sister. Her appearance and stay at Netherfield creates some tension for Mr. Bingley's sister Caroline, who jealously notices Mr. Darcy's growing interest in Elizabeth. Caroline considers herself a better match for the wealthy gentleman.

2. Courtship and Complications

- One of Mr. Bennet's cousins, Mr. Collins, visits the Bennet home. Mr. Collins, a clergyman from Hunsford, stands to inherit the Bennet estate, Longbourn. Lady Catherine de Bourgh, Mr. Collins's patroness, has instructed him to marry one of the Bennet daughters. He proposes to Elizabeth. She finds him pompous and obnoxious and she him down, against her own mother's wishes. Deeply offended, Mr. Collins next proposes to Elizabeth's friend Charlotte Lucas. She accepts his proposal.
- The Bennet sisters meet a group of militia officers who are stationed near their home. Elizabeth becomes interested in a handsome soldier, George Wickham, who tells her about his past relationship with Mr. Darcy. Wickham explains how cruel Darcy was to him, even cheating him out of money. This information confirms Elizabeth's bad impressions of Mr. Darcy.
- Mr. Darcy and the Bingleys leave Netherfield unexpectedly to go to London. Jane is upset because she had hoped her relationship with Mr. Bingley would blossom. When Jane travels to London shortly thereafter, Caroline Bingley treats her rudely, and Jane fails to see Mr. Bingley at all.

3. Journeys

- Elizabeth travels to visit her friend Charlotte, who is now married to Mr. Collins. While visiting her friend, Elizabeth sees Lady Catherine de Bourgh, Mr. Collins's patroness, who is also Mr. Darcy's aunt. During Elizabeth's visit to the Collins' home, Darcy makes several appearances. During one of his visits, he shocks Elizabeth with a clumsy marriage proposal. She refuses him, telling him that she finds his superior attitude and his intervention in Jane's affair intolerable. She also accuses him of conspiring to keep Jane and Mr. Bingley apart. Finally, she scolds him for his cruel behaviour to Wickham.
- After Elizabeth's refusal, Darcy reappears with a letter that explains everything. He tells her that he did encourage Bingley to separate from Jane because he did not think they were truly serious about each other. He also reveals Wickham as a scoundrel.
- Elizabeth begins to rethink her feelings about Darcy. When she arrives home, she snubs Wickham. At this time, the local militia is to relocate to Brighton. Lydia, particularly consumed by flirtation with the officers, is upset. She successfully begs her father to allow her to stay with a family friend in Brighton for the summer.
- During the summer, Elizabeth goes on holiday as well, this time with her uncle and aunt, Mr. and Mrs. Gardiner. They travel to the north of England, in the neighbourhood of Pemberley, Mr. Darcy's estate. Once reassured that Darcy is not anywhere nearby, Elizabeth feels free to explore Pemberley and its buildings and grounds. Just as her attitude about him becomes even more favourable, Darcy shows up unexpectedly. He treats Elizabeth and the Gardiners graciously and encourages Elizabeth to spend time with his sister, Georgiana. During the course of this visit, Elizabeth receives shocking news from home. Her youngest sister, Lydia, has apparently eloped with Wickham. Knowing that Lydia's actions could potentially disgrace the Bennet family, Elizabeth confides her news to Darcy, then rushes home.

4. A Scandal

- Mr. Gardiner and Mr. Bennet search for Lydia and Wickham. Eventually, Gardiner locates them and reports that a benefactor has arranged for Wickham to marry Lydia in exchange for receiving an annual income, thus saving the Bennet family from scandal. The family is relieved. Elizabeth later learns that Mr. Darcy is the source of the money that will be paid to Wickham. She is mortified that her family has caused such a scandal but also touched by Darcy's intervention.
- After a brief return to Longbourn, George and Lydia Wickham leave for the north of England, where Wickham is now stationed. Soon after, Mr. Bingley returns to Netherfield and seeks out Jane once again. He proposes to her, and the family is thrilled. Darcy has also reappeared and seems uncomfortable around Elizabeth. Lady Catherine de Bourgh comes to Longbourn and, to Elizabeth's astonishment, tries to extract a promise from her to refuse any proposal from her nephew. Elizabeth does not agree to this, even though no proposal has been made. A short time later, Darcy tells Elizabeth that his feelings for her have not changed, and he asks her to marry him. She gladly accepts. The two older Bennet sisters are married to the two friends and settle near each other, making a happy ending to the novel.

PLOT DIAGRAM



PLOT SUMMARY

- Introduction

1. The Bennets learn of a wealthy new neighbour, Mr. Bingley.

- Rising Action

2. The Bennets attend a ball. Bingley dances with Jane.

3. Bingley's friend Darcy behaves snobbishly to Elizabeth.

4. Mr. Collins visits Longbourn in order to find a wife.

5. Mr. Collins proposes to Elizabeth, but she refuses him.

6. Mr. Collins proposes to Charlotte and they marry.

7. The Bingleys and Darcy depart for London. Jane is upset.

8. Elizabeth goes on holiday with the Gardiners.

PLOT

- Climax

9. Darcy proposes to Elizabeth, but she refuses him

- Falling Action

10. A letter from Darcy makes Elizabeth rethink prejudices.

11. Lydia runs off with Wickham. Darcy pays him to marry her.

- Resolution

12. Darcy marries Elizabeth, Bingley weds Jane.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS



- **Late November**

After unsuccessfully proposing to Elizabeth, Mr. Collins proposes to and is accepted by Charlotte.

- **Late December**

Jane goes to London with the Gardiners, hoping to see Bingley.

- **Late April**

After Darcy's unsuccessful proposal to Elizabeth, he writes to her about Wickham's villainy.

- **Early August**

Wickham and Lydia create scandal by eloping, but Darcy bribes Wickham to marry her.

- **Early October**

Darcy proposes again to Elizabeth, and she accepts.

- **Late September**

Bingley and Darcy arrive at Netherfield; Wickham arrives in Meryton.

- **A few days later**

The Bingleys and Darcy leave Netherfield for London.

- **Late March**

Elizabeth visits the Collinses, meets Lady Catherine de Bourgh, and runs into her nephew, Darcy.

- **Late July**

Elizabeth and the Gardiners go on holiday to Derbyshire, where Elizabeth encounters Darcy.

- **Late September**

Bingley and Jane become engaged; Lady Catherine tries to ensure that Elizabeth and Darcy do not.

