



Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen

Review by Tamara P

Altrincham Grammar School for Girls

“It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife.”

This line, definitive in its simplicity, is perhaps the most well-known quote in 18-19th century English literature, and belongs to the writer of this book – Jane Austen. This is a starting line which manages to perfectly sum up the key theme of this book, in this case marriage and romantic relationships in the Georgian era, whilst marking the start of an extraordinary work of literary art.

The story revolves around the middle-class Bennet family, with the main focus being on their second-born daughter Elizabeth - a very strong-willed and intelligent female lead, which, alongside her progressive opinions on topics such as love and women's roles in society, mark her as an interesting, if slightly unusual, heroine. The book itself reflects many of Austen's views about her society; the subtle criticisms of the misogyny and prejudice within England's hierarchical system make a modern reader deeply reflect on the messages Austen is trying to get across, allowing them to further understand and question their own opinions of the topics mentioned in the novel.

Pride and Prejudice begins with the arrival of Mr Bingley to Pemberley, along with his two sisters and best friend, Mr Darcy. The eldest Bennet sister is instantly enraptured by Mr Bingley's kind and approachable nature, whilst Mr Darcy catches Elizabeth's eye, albeit for being too arrogant and aloof to be even remotely likeable. This is followed by about 400 more pages of proposals, intrigue and scandal, which follow the Bennet sisters as they try to navigate Georgian high society and desperately get married to the richest man they can find.

Tea-sipping ladies in silk gowns aside, the book explores some very relevant topics relating to our society and gives valuable life lessons to the reader, teaching them to always follow their heart and not be swayed from their chosen course of life by society's expectations and family pressure.

I believe that this book is suitable for all ages and backgrounds as the diverse situations of the characters speak to the vast majority of readers in one way or another. Although the subplots and context may take time for younger readers to understand, it promises to be an interesting read for anyone and comes with a selection of films of the same name to watch in case readers prefer a visual representation to help them get more immersed into the story.

I would personally recommend *Pride and Prejudice* due to its enthralling development of the characters and Austen's unique view of the world, which she masterfully crafts through her writing. In my opinion, this is a

book not created for the purpose of boring students in a stuffy English classroom, but one made to cater to the imaginations of romantics, history fans and, above all, readers.