2.23 Literature: Pride and Prejudice (Jane Austen): 2-hour Pack

AQA 8702 · about 120 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions.

Extract: Pride and Prejudice, Chapter 34 (Mr Darcy's first proposal)

From Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen (1813, public domain). In this extract, Mr Darcy proposes marriage to Elizabeth Bennet at the Hunsford parsonage, and she refuses him.

"In vain have I struggled. It will not do. My feelings will not be repressed. You must allow me to tell you how ardently I admire and love you."

Elizabeth's astonishment was beyond expression. She stared, coloured, doubted, and was silent. This he considered sufficient encouragement, and the avowal of all that he felt and had long felt for her, immediately followed. He spoke well, but there were feelings besides those of the heart to be detailed, and he was not more eloquent on the subject of tenderness than of pride. His sense of her inferiority--of its being a degradation--of the family obstacles which judgment had always opposed to inclination, were dwelt on with a warmth which seemed due to the consequence he was wounding, but was very unlikely to recommend his suit.

"In such cases as this, it is, I believe, the established mode to express a sense of obligation for the sentiments avowed, however unequally they may be returned. It is natural that obligation should be felt, and if I could feel gratitude, I would now thank you. But I cannot--I have never desired your good opinion, and you have certainly bestowed it most unwillingly. I am sorry to have occasioned pain to any one. It has been most unconsciously done, however, and I hope will be of short duration."

"And this is all the reply which I am to have the honour of expecting! I might, perhaps, wish to be informed why, with so little endeavour at civility, I am thus rejected."

"I might as well inquire," replied she, "why with so evident a design of offending and insulting me, you chose to tell me that you liked me against your will, against your reason, and even against your character? Had not my own feelings decided against you, had they been indifferent, or had they even been favourable, do you think that any consideration would tempt me to accept the man who has been the means of ruining, perhaps for ever, the happiness of a most beloved sister?"

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1 'Elizabeth Bennet is guided more by prejudice than by good judgement.' Using details from elsewhere in the novel, evaluate how far you agree with this statement.

(Total for Question 1 is 6 marks)

2 In Chapter 6, Charlotte Lucas tells Elizabeth: "Happiness in marriage is entirely a matter of chance." Explain how Charlotte's attitude to marriage differs from Elizabeth's, and how each is shown through their choices in the novel.

(Total for Question 2 is 6 marks)

3 In Chapter 56, Lady Catherine confronts Elizabeth, calling her an "obstinate, headstrong girl" for refusing to promise never to marry Darcy. Explain what this confrontation reveals about class prejudice in the novel.

(Total for Question 3 is 6 marks)

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4 Explore how Austen uses language in this extract to present Mr Darcy's pride.

(Total for Question 4 is 6 marks)

5 Analyse how Austen structures this extract to show the argument between Darcy and Elizabeth escalating.

(Total for Question 5 is 6 marks)

6 Explain what this extract reveals about Elizabeth's character and independence of mind.

(Total for Question 6 is 6 marks)

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7 Explore how Austen's use of free indirect discourse, blending the narrator's voice with a character's own thoughts, shapes the reader's understanding of characters elsewhere in the novel.

(Total for Question 7 is 8 marks)

8 In Chapter 5, Mary Bennet observes: "Pride relates more to our opinion of ourselves, vanity to what we would have others think of us." Explore how Austen presents different types of pride through her characters in the novel.

(Total for Question 8 is 8 marks)

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9 Using your knowledge of the novel, explore how Austen uses irony in the novel's opening chapter to establish a satirical view of marriage.

(Total for Question 9 is 8 marks)

10 Analyse how Austen presents Mr Darcy's development, from the proud, self-assured man of this extract to the humbled figure who proposes again at the end of the novel.

(Total for Question 10 is 10 marks)

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11 Explore how Austen uses irony and the narrator's voice in this extract to comment on Darcy's proposal.

(Total for Question 11 is 8 marks)

12 Using this extract and your knowledge of the novel as a whole, explain what this proposal reveals about Mr Darcy's pride and how it changes by the end of the novel.

(Total for Question 12 is 8 marks)

13 Explain how this extract reflects ideas about marriage and social class in early 19th-century England.

(Total for Question 13 is 6 marks)

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14 Write about how Austen presents different attitudes to marriage and social class through the range of couples in the novel.

(Total for Question 14 is 12 marks)

15 Write about how Austen presents pride and prejudice as barriers to happiness in the novel, and comment on how far you think these barriers are shown to be overcome through self-knowledge.

(Total for Question 15 is 15 marks)

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16 Starting with this extract, write about how Austen presents pride as an obstacle to happiness in the novel as a whole.

In your response you should discuss:
- how pride is presented in this extract
- how Austen presents pride and its consequences in the novel as a whole
- the methods Austen uses to present these ideas

(Total for Question 16 is 30 marks)

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Mark scheme · 2.23 Literature: Pride and Prejudice (Jane Austen): 2-hour Pack

Question 1

Level 3 Detailed, well-supported evaluation weighing Elizabeth's early misjudgement of Darcy and Wickham against her later self-aware admission of prejudice and her generally perceptive judgement of others, reaching a considered conclusion. **5-6**

Level 2 Clear response, supported by relevant reference, showing some awareness of both Elizabeth's prejudice and her good judgement. **3-4**

Level 1 Simple, one-sided comment on Elizabeth, with little textual support. **1-2**

Indicative content:

- Elizabeth's instant, uncritical trust in Wickham's account of Darcy, formed on a single meeting, shows her judgement can be led by first impressions and personal charm
- her own admission after reading Darcy's letter, that till this moment she never knew herself, shows Austen presenting her as capable of recognising and correcting her prejudice, unlike more static characters such as Mrs Bennet
- elsewhere, her judgement of Charlotte Lucas's pragmatic marriage, of Mr Collins's absurdity and of Lydia's recklessness is shown to be largely accurate, suggesting prejudice affects her specifically where her pride has been wounded, rather than generally
- a balanced answer might conclude that Elizabeth is presented as intelligent and usually perceptive, but that the novel's central irony is that her one significant misjudgement, over Darcy, is the one that matters most to her happiness

Question 2

Level 3 Detailed explanation of the contrast between Charlotte's pragmatic acceptance of Mr Collins for security and Elizabeth's insistence on respect and affection, supported by relevant reference to both women's marriages. **5-6**

Level 2 Clear explanation of one difference between Charlotte's and Elizabeth's attitudes, with reference. **3-4**

Level 1 Simple comment that the two women view marriage differently, with little development. **1-2**

Indicative content:

- Charlotte accepts Mr Collins for the pleasantest preservative from want, prioritising financial security over affection, consistent with her stated belief that marriage is a matter of chance rather than compatibility
- Elizabeth is horrified by Charlotte's choice and initially struggles to respect it, believing marriage should be based on genuine esteem
- Elizabeth's refusal of both Mr Collins and, initially, Mr Darcy shows she is willing to risk financial insecurity rather than marry without respect
- the contrast presents two realistic responses to the limited options available to unmarried women of the period, without the novel simply condemning Charlotte's pragmatism

Question 3

Level 3 Detailed explanation of how Lady Catherine's demand and insults expose an assumption that rank should determine marriage, and how Elizabeth's calm refusal directly challenges this prejudice. **5-6**

Level 2 Clear explanation of one aspect of class prejudice shown in the confrontation, with reference. **3-4**

Level 1 Simple comment that Lady Catherine disapproves of the match, with little development. **1-2**

Indicative content:

- Lady Catherine's assumption that she has the authority to forbid the marriage reflects a rigid belief that rank should dictate personal choices
- her description of Elizabeth's family connections as inferior echoes the objections Darcy himself raised in his first proposal, showing class prejudice shared across his family
- Elizabeth's refusal to be intimidated, insisting she is a gentleman's daughter and Darcy's equal in the ways that matter, directly challenges Lady Catherine's assumptions about rank
- the confrontation, later reported to Darcy, ultimately helps bring the couple together, since it gives Darcy hope that Elizabeth's feelings towards him have changed, showing class prejudice failing to achieve its intended effect

Question 4

Level 3 Detailed exploration of how a range of language choices combine to expose Darcy's pride, using precise subject terminology and showing awareness of the narrator's ironic distance. **5-6**

Level 2 Clear explanation of how one or two language choices, such as inferiority or degradation, show his pride, using some relevant subject terminology. **3-4**

Level 1 Simple identification of a word or phrase connected to pride, with little or no comment on its effect. **1-2**

Indicative content:

- the noun degradation reveals that Darcy still, even while proposing, sees marrying Elizabeth as beneath him
- the repeated abstract nouns inferiority, obstacles and consequence build a lexical field of social rank that overwhelms the language of ardently admire and love
- the narratorial comment that he was not more eloquent on the subject of tenderness than of pride directly names pride as equal, in his speech, to love
- the phrase very unlikely to recommend his suit shows the narrator ironically anticipating Elizabeth's reaction, undercutting Darcy's confidence before she even replies

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Question 5

Level 3 Detailed analysis of how the extract's turn-taking structure, moving from declaration to formal refusal to open confrontation, mirrors the rising conflict. **5-6**

Level 2 Clear explanation of one structural feature, such as the shift from long declaration to short, clipped question, marking escalation. **3-4**

Level 1 Simple comment on a structural feature, with little explanation. **1-2**

Indicative content:

- the extract opens with Darcy's short sentences, such as It will not do, before a lengthy narratorial explanation, building steadily to his full declaration
- Elizabeth's reply is structured formally, echoing the established mode of polite refusal, before her tone visibly hardens into direct accusation
- Darcy's shorter, exclamatory retort, And this is all the reply..., structurally breaks the pattern of long speeches, marking the point the argument turns openly hostile
- Elizabeth's closing question is extended by a list of conditional clauses, had not... had they been... had they even been..., building structurally to her accusation about her sister, so the sentence's structure mirrors her rising anger

Question 6

Level 3 Detailed explanation of how Elizabeth's calm, articulate refusal, in the face of a proposal she was told to expect gratitude for, reveals her wit, integrity and refusal to be governed by rank. **5-6**

Level 2 Clear explanation of one aspect of Elizabeth's character shown in the extract, e.g. her directness. **3-4**

Level 1 Simple comment on Elizabeth's character, with little development. **1-2**

Indicative content:

- Elizabeth refuses a wealthy, high-status man without hesitation, showing she values personal respect over financial security, unlike Charlotte Lucas
- her measured, formally polite opening, the established mode, shows control and wit even while angry, refusing to give Darcy the satisfaction of an emotional outburst
- her direct accusation about her sister's happiness shows her loyalty to her family outweighs any concern for how her words will be received
- her willingness to challenge a man of Darcy's rank to his face reflects the novel's wider presentation of her as independent-minded, a quality also shown later in her refusal to be intimidated by Lady Catherine

Question 7

Level 4 Detailed, exploratory analysis of free indirect discourse across the novel, considering how this technique controls the reader's judgement of characters throughout. **7-8**

Level 3 Clear analysis of at least one further example of free indirect discourse or ironic narration, with relevant reference. **5-6**

Level 2 Some explanation of how the narrator's voice shapes understanding of a character. **3-4**

Level 1 Simple identification of an ironic or free indirect narrative moment, with little comment. **1-2**

Indicative content:

- the novel's famous opening sentence, that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife, uses free indirect discourse to voice the marriage-obsessed opinion of the neighbourhood while ironically distancing the narrator from it
- Mrs Bennet's single-minded ambition is summarised by the narrator's dry aside that the business of her life was to get her daughters married, a judgement delivered in the narrator's voice but coloured by Mrs Bennet's own preoccupations
- before receiving Darcy's letter, Elizabeth's confident inner conviction of Wickham's honesty is rendered so closely to her own thinking that the reader initially shares her misjudgement, until the narrative later exposes it as prejudice
- this technique lets Austen filter events through a character's limited or biased perspective while still allowing an attentive reader to detect the gap between how a character sees events and how they truly are

Question 8

Level 4 Detailed, exploratory analysis of how Austen dramatises several distinct forms of pride, considering how these are distinguished by the novel's methods. **7-8**

Level 3 Clear analysis of at least two different characters' pride, with relevant reference and some terminology. **5-6**

Level 2 Some explanation of one character's pride, with reference. **3-4**

Level 1 Simple identification of pride in a character, with little development. **1-2**

Indicative content:

- Darcy's pride, as shown in the proposal extract, is rooted in social rank and consequence, a pride he must actively learn to set aside
- Lady Catherine de Bourgh's pride is presented more crudely, through her open rudeness and assumption of authority over others' choices, such as her demand that Elizabeth promise never to marry Darcy
- Elizabeth herself admits her own pride in her judgement and perceptiveness has been wounded and misled by Wickham's flattery, showing pride can distort even an intelligent character's understanding
- Mary Bennet's own pedantic, borrowed definition is itself gently mocked by the narrator, since Mary recites moral commonplaces from books rather than showing genuine self-knowledge, adding a further ironic layer to a novel about pride

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Question 9

Level 4 Detailed, exploratory analysis of the layered irony of the opening chapter, considering the effect on the reader's expectations for the rest of the novel. **7-8**

Level 3 Clear analysis of how a specific ironic technique, such as the opening sentence or the dialogue between Mr and Mrs Bennet, satirises attitudes to marriage. **5-6**

Level 2 Some explanation of one ironic moment in the opening chapter. **3-4**

Level 1 Simple identification of an ironic statement, with little comment. **1-2**

Indicative content:

- the opening sentence states as a truth universally acknowledged what is really only the opinion of husband-hunting neighbourhood families, immediately establishing the narrator's ironic distance from this social world
- Mrs Bennet's excitement over Mr Bingley's fortune, before he has even been met, satirises the reduction of marriage to a financial transaction
- Mr Bennet's dry, teasing responses to his wife, refusing to take her marital scheming seriously, provide a second, comic layer of irony within the same scene
- this opening irony prepares the reader to view the novel's marriage plots critically, rather than simply as romance, setting up the more serious examination of marriage and class explored later in the novel

Question 10

Level 4 Convincing, well-structured analysis: tracks Darcy's development through clearly identified stages, with confident, well-integrated reference across the whole novel and precise subject terminology. **9-10**

Level 3 Clear analysis: explains at least two stages of Darcy's development with clear reference to the novel. **6-8**

Level 2 Some analysis: identifies one relevant stage in Darcy's development with some supporting reference. **3-5**

Level 1 Simple, limited analysis: makes a simple, undeveloped point about Darcy changing. **1-2**

Indicative content:

- at Hunsford, Darcy's pride is at its most visible, believing his rank alone should secure Elizabeth's gratitude and acceptance
- Elizabeth's refusal, and particularly her charge that he had not behaved in a gentlemanlike manner, forces Darcy into genuine self-examination, expressed in his letter the following day
- his considerate treatment of Elizabeth and the Gardiners at Pemberley shows a marked change in manner, no longer relying on rank to command respect
- his secret, costly intervention to secure Lydia and Wickham's marriage, undertaken purely to protect Elizabeth's family without seeking credit, shows humility acted on rather than merely felt
- by his second proposal, Darcy explicitly thanks Elizabeth for having taught him a lesson and properly humbled him, showing he now recognises pride, rather than rank, as the obstacle that nearly cost him her love

Question 11

Level 4 Detailed, exploratory analysis of narratorial irony, including how the narrator's voice merges with Darcy's own perspective through free indirect discourse to expose his self-deception, considering the effect on the reader's judgement. **7-8**

Level 3 Clear analysis of how the narrator's ironic commentary, such as not more eloquent... of tenderness than of pride, undercuts Darcy, using relevant terminology. **5-6**

Level 2 Some explanation of how one moment of narratorial comment creates irony. **3-4**

Level 1 Simple identification of an ironic comment, with little development. **1-2**

Indicative content:

- the narrator's aside that Darcy was not more eloquent on the subject of tenderness than of pride is directly ironic, praising his eloquence while condemning what he is actually eloquent about
- the free indirect discourse blending the narrator's voice with Darcy's own reasoning, were dwelt on with a warmth which seemed due to the consequence he was wounding, lets the reader see Darcy's self-satisfaction from the inside while still judging it
- the narrator's prediction that his manner was very unlikely to recommend his suit creates dramatic irony, since the reader senses Elizabeth's refusal before it happens
- this ironic narrative voice invites the reader to judge Darcy more harshly than Darcy judges himself, a technique Austen uses throughout the novel to expose characters' blind spots

Question 12

Level 4 Detailed, well-supported explanation of how this proposal exposes Darcy's pride at its height, and of how his later actions show a genuine change, tracked convincingly across the novel. **7-8**

Level 3 Clear explanation of how Darcy's pride is shown here and how it is later modified, supported by relevant reference. **5-6**

Level 2 Some relevant comment on Darcy's pride and change, supported by a reference to the extract or novel. **3-4**

Level 1 Simple, general comment on Darcy's character, with little textual support. **1-2**

Indicative content:

- in this extract, Darcy's pride is shown through his emphasis on Elizabeth's inferiority and the degradation of the match, revealing he still expects gratitude for the offer
- his letter, written the following morning, begins Darcy's self-examination by forcing him to answer Elizabeth's accusations point by point
- his quiet intervention to arrange Lydia and Wickham's marriage, undertaken without seeking credit or thanks, shows humility that directly contrasts with his behaviour in this extract
- Elizabeth's visit to Pemberley, where the housekeeper Mrs Reynolds praises his kindness, gives the reader evidence of change independent of Darcy's own account
- his second, humbler proposal, in which he thanks Elizabeth for having properly humbled him, shows that the pride displayed in this extract has been genuinely, not just superficially, overcome

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Question 13

Level 3 Detailed explanation of how the extract dramatises contemporary assumptions that marriage should reflect and preserve social rank, integrated closely with textual detail. **5-6**

Level 2 Clear explanation of one relevant contextual idea, such as the importance of rank in marriage, linked to the extract. **3-4**

Level 1 Simple, general awareness that the period had different attitudes to marriage, with little development. **1-2**

Indicative content:

- in Austen's period, marriage was one of the few routes by which a woman could secure financial security, since most professions were closed to women of Elizabeth's class
- Darcy's references to family obstacles reflect a real social expectation that a gentleman of his rank should marry within, or above, his own social circle
- the Longbourn estate's entail away from the female Bennet line, established elsewhere in the novel, means marriage carries urgent financial stakes for Elizabeth's family that a modern reader may not immediately recognise
- Darcy's assumption that Elizabeth should feel only gratitude reflects the period's expectation that a woman without fortune would rarely refuse an advantageous offer, which is exactly what makes Elizabeth's refusal so striking

Question 14

Level 4 Convincing, well-structured response: sustained analysis comparing several relationships across the novel, with confident subject terminology and clear evaluation of Austen's overall commentary on marriage and class. **10-12**

Level 3 Clear response: explains how marriage and class are presented through at least two relationships, with relevant reference. **7-9**

Level 2 Some response: identifies relevant moments relating to marriage or class with some supporting reference, though development may be limited. **4-6**

Level 1 Simple, limited response: makes a simple, undeveloped point about marriage or class. **1-3**

Indicative content:

- the Bennet parents' unhappy, mismatched marriage, formed from Mr Bennet's early infatuation with youth and beauty rather than compatibility, is presented as a cautionary example that shapes Elizabeth's own caution about marrying without respect
- Charlotte and Mr Collins's marriage of practical convenience shows a realistic, class-conscious response to limited options for women without fortune, presented with sympathy rather than simple mockery
- Lydia and Wickham's hasty, financially rescued marriage, built on infatuation and scandal rather than judgement, is presented as the novel's clearest warning against ignoring both class consequence and personal character
- Jane and Bingley's marriage, delayed largely by Darcy's and Bingley's sisters' class-based objections to the Bennet family's connections, shows how class prejudice can obstruct even a mutually affectionate match
- Elizabeth and Darcy's marriage, achieved only once both overcome pride and prejudice rooted in class difference, is presented as the novel's ideal: a union of genuine respect that also, realistically, improves Elizabeth's financial and social position

Question 15

Level 4 Convincing, critical response: sustained, perceptive analysis of pride and prejudice as intertwined barriers across the whole novel, using confident subject terminology; the point about self-knowledge integrated fully and convincingly into the argument, with relevant context woven in. **12-15**

Level 3 Clear, relevant response: explains how pride and prejudice are presented through several methods; makes a clear, appropriate point about self-knowledge overcoming these barriers. **8-11**

Level 2 Some, generic response: identifies relevant moments relating to pride or prejudice; makes a generic or partly relevant comment on self-knowledge. **4-7**

Level 1 Simple, limited response: makes a simple, undeveloped point about pride or prejudice; little or no comment on self-knowledge. **1-3**

Indicative content:

- Darcy's pride of rank and Elizabeth's prejudice against him, formed at their first meeting where he calls her tolerable, but not handsome enough to tempt him, are presented as mirrored obstacles that each must recognise in themselves before happiness is possible
- Darcy's letter is the structural turning point that forces Elizabeth to re-examine her prejudice against him and her misplaced trust in Wickham, directly enabling her later change of heart
- Elizabeth's admission that till this moment she never knew herself explicitly links self-knowledge to overcoming prejudice, presenting this recognition as the novel's central moral achievement
- context: in a period when marriages were frequently arranged around rank and fortune, Austen's insistence that pride and prejudice, rather than social difference itself, are the true obstacles was a notably individualist, morally focused view of marriage
- the novel's title itself, originally drafted as First Impressions, signals that both faults, Darcy's initial pride and Elizabeth's initial prejudice, stem from a shared failure to look beyond first impressions
- not every barrier is shown as fully dissolved: Lady Catherine's reconciliation is grudging and comes only after the marriage, and class prejudice persists elsewhere in society, suggesting Austen presents personal self-knowledge, rather than any wider social change, as the limit of what the novel can achieve

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Question 16

Level 4 Compelling, critical response: sustained, sophisticated exploration of pride and its consequences across the whole novel; judicious, precisely selected references, including to this extract; perceptive analysis of Austen's methods with consistently precise subject terminology; contextual understanding woven fully into the argument.	**26-30**
Level 3 Critical, exploratory response: clear line of argument sustained across the extract and novel; well-chosen range of references; analyses the effects of Austen's methods with accurate subject terminology; relevant context integrated where appropriate.	**16-25**
Level 2 Detailed, well-structured response: consistently clear response to the question; well-chosen range of references from the extract and, or, the novel; explains the effects of some of Austen's methods with some subject terminology; some awareness of context.	**6-15**
Level 1 Simple response: simple response with some relevant reference to the extract or the novel; simple or limited comment on Austen's methods; little or no awareness of context.	**1-5**

Indicative content:

- in the extract, Darcy's pride is shown at its most damaging, since his emphasis on Elizabeth's inferiority and the degradation of the match causes her angry, decisive refusal
- the narrator's ironic voice, noting Darcy was not more eloquent on the subject of tenderness than of pride, uses free indirect discourse to expose his self-satisfaction from within his own perspective
- Darcy's pride is repeatedly associated with rank and consequence, presenting it as a social, learned fault rather than an innate flaw, which is why it can eventually be unlearned
- elsewhere, Lady Catherine's cruder, more openly aggressive pride, shown in her confrontation with Elizabeth, offers a contrasting, less redeemable version of the same fault, since she never revises her views
- Elizabeth's own pride in her judgement is shown to have consequences too, blinding her to Darcy's true character and to Wickham's dishonesty until his letter forces a reassessment
- Darcy's pride is finally overcome through action rather than words alone, most clearly in his secret arrangement of Lydia's marriage, which costs him money and effort with no expectation of thanks
- Austen's structure, moving from this proud, insulting proposal to a second, humbled one that explicitly thanks Elizabeth for teaching him a lesson, frames pride's defeat as the novel's central arc
- context: writing in a society where a man of Darcy's rank and fortune had little practical incentive to change his behaviour towards a woman of Elizabeth's lesser social standing, Austen's insistence that he must do so reflects her distinctively moral, rather than purely social, resolution of the marriage plot

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