

Character Analysis

For: Everyone

Due: 27 February by midnight

Length: 3 pages double-spaced, plus 1-2-paragraph artist's statement

This creative writing assignment asks you to analyze one or two secondary characters in *Pride and Prejudice* by getting as deep as possible into their minds and by mimicking their voice. A secondary character is any of the important characters who are not Elizabeth or Darcy; examples include Jane, Bingley, Charlotte, Mr. Collins, Mr. or Mrs. Bennet, Lydia, Wickham, or Lady Catherine. As we have discussed in class, each character in *Pride and Prejudice* is characterized by very specific mannerisms, behaviors, and figures of speech that tell us a lot about their psychology and underlying motives: Jane is unfailingly trusting, Mr. Bennet is sarcastic, etc. Your creative piece should show me that you have deeply analyzed what makes this character distinct and what makes them tick.

You should have fun with this assignment; extra (non-existent) points if you can make me laugh. Note that your piece will be read by at least one other student in a peer review activity; think about creating a piece that will be enjoyable for others to read.

You can approach the assignment in one of two ways.

Option #1: The Letter

Write a letter in the voice of your character that expresses their views on one of the following elements of the plot:

- Bingley and Darcy's appearance at Netherfield (Vol. 1)
- Elizabeth's rejection of Mr. Collins' proposal (Vol. 1)
- Mr. Bingley leaving Netherfield without proposing to Jane (Vol. 2)
- Lydia and Wickham's elopement (Vol. 3)
- Elizabeth and Darcy's engagement (Vol. 3)

The letter should explain the event that took place and explore your character's thoughts and feelings on that event, what it means to them, and what they think it means for

other characters in the novel. This means that, in order to write your letter, you should closely read the sections of the novel that deal with this event as well as closely study the voice and perspectives of your chosen character. For example, Lydia, Wickham, Jane, and Mrs. Bennet may all have very different perspectives on Lydia's elopement and what it means for each of them and for others! The letter may be addressed to another character in *Pride and Prejudice* or to a character of your invention (e.g. Mr. Collins' university chum; Mrs. Bennet's neighbor).

Option #2: The Screenplay

Write a new scene for *Pride and Prejudice* in the form of a screenplay that shows us plot events that we otherwise do not see. Your scene should be a dialogue between two characters. Your options include:

- Lady Catherine advising Mr. Collins that he should get married and the qualities he should look for in a wife (Vol. 1)
- Mr. and Mrs. Bennet discussing Mr. Bingley leaving Netherfield without proposing to Jane (Vol. 2)
- Jane and Kitty discussing Lydia's elopement with Wickham (Vol. 3)
- Wickham convincing Lydia to elope with him (because he will definitely, totally marry her afterwards) (Vol. 3)
- Jane and Bingley discussing Darcy and Elizabeth's engagement (Vol. 3)
- Something else I haven't thought of (run it by me by email)

To write your screenplay, you should closely read the passages of the novel that address the plot event that you are depicting. For example, what do we know from Collins' proposal about how his motivations for getting married are tied to Lady Catherine? You should also closely study the voices and perspectives of your characters. For example, based on what we know about Lady Catherine, how do you think she would advise Collins to marry? How do you think Collins would respond to her advice?

You are not required to use formal screenplay formatting like you would in a screenplay class, but if you want to explore some of the [devices you can use in a screenplay](#) and incorporate them, you are welcome to do so.

Artist's Statement

Your creative writing assignment should be accompanied by an artist's statement that explains the intentions behind your piece and the creative decisions you made. In 1-2 paragraphs, please answer some of the following questions:

- How did you “research” your creative assignment using close reading of *Pride and Prejudice*?
- How did you try to recreate the voice(s) of your character(s)?
- How did you interpret the thoughts, feelings, and perspectives of your character(s) towards plot events?
- What did you learn about *Pride and Prejudice* from creating your piece? How did your interpretation of the novel deepen or change?
- Reading over your piece, what is something that you are proud of?
- How would you improve your piece if you had more time?