

Name _____

Resolutions and Revelations: Chapters 41-50 of Pride and Prejudice

Open-Ended Response Answer Key

1. Elizabeth Bennet's character undergoes significant development throughout the novel. Initially marked by her sharp wit, independent spirit, and strong opinions, she is also prejudiced and quick to judge. However, her encounters with Mr. Darcy challenge her preconceived notions and prompt her to reevaluate her prejudices. Her journey culminates in her acceptance of Mr. Darcy's proposal, reflecting her growth, self-awareness, and capacity for love.
2. Societal expectations play a substantial role in the resolutions and marriages of the main characters in the final chapters. Mr. Bingley's return and proposal to Jane align with the societal norm of marrying within one's social class, while Mr. Collins' proposal to Charlotte Lucas is influenced by practicality and social security rather than romantic love. Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy's engagement, however, defies societal expectations by transcending class barriers, emphasizing the theme of love conquering societal constraints.
3. Mr. Darcy's character transformation is evident throughout the novel. He starts as a proud and reserved individual, seemingly detached from the social world around him. His initial proposal to Elizabeth reflects these traits, marked by arrogance and criticism. However, by the time of his second proposal, he has evolved into a humble, sincere, and self-aware man who is willing to set aside his pride for the sake of love. His character contributes to the novel's themes by demonstrating that personal growth and genuine love can overcome societal expectations.
4. Jane and Mr. Bingley's reconciliation and engagement are significant in the context of the novel's themes and plot. Their love story represents a traditional, harmonious relationship that aligns with societal expectations. It contrasts with the more complex and initially tumultuous relationship between Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy. The juxtaposition of these two love stories highlights the variety of romantic experiences and outcomes, emphasizing the theme of love's ability to shape lives in different ways.

