

Jane Austen's *Emma*

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Name _____

Pre-Reading Considerations**Variations on the Themes—to be answered individually or in small groups:**

1. Has a friend ever set you up with a date? If so, what was the experience like? How did you feel about your friend, the matchmaker?
2. Have you ever had a friend who seemed to be in everybody's business, not in a bad way, but just a persistent way? How are such friends perceived by others? How do you kindly tell them if/when they have gone over the line with their busybody behavior?
3. Are their class structures in your personal social sphere? If so, what are they? Are they positive or negative? Is it possible to rise above one's level? Are there restrictions about marrying (or even being friends) between different classes?

Pre-Writing—Write a short essay about the following:

Share the story about yourself or someone you know who meddled in his/her friends' lives. How did it work out?



Jane Austen's *Emma*
While You Read

Name _____

Answer the following questions based on your reading of *Emma*:

1. Music and dance are key social elements in *Emma*. Keep track of the incidents involving each. How do these elements advance the plot throughout the book?
2. It is important in *Emma* to see who is dancing with whom, and what dance they are dancing. So, who *is* dancing with whom throughout the book? What music do they dance to? Who ends up with whom?
3. The characters in *Emma* play a lot of charades and enjoy telling riddles. Charades and riddles are metaphors for the misunderstandings throughout the story. Trace these misunderstandings and the word games that surround them. Draw some conclusions about the games people play in relationships.
4. Writing and reading letters takes up a good amount of time for some of the characters. Who writes letters? Who gets them? What do letters represent for the writer? The receiver?



Jane Austen's *Emma*
Post-Reading Discussion

Name _____

Answer the following questions on your own or in small groups:

1. Describe Emma. What are her strengths, her weaknesses? What are her joys, her frustrations? How are these details revealed to the reader?
2. How does Austen feel about Emma? How can you tell? How do you think Austen wants her readers to feel about Emma? What are they supposed to learn from her?
3. Discuss Emma's sense of superiority to others in the book. Is it legitimate? Do you share her belief? What about her manipulations of others? What lies behind these?
4. What's the secondary meaning behind the argument between Emma and Mr. Knightly in chapter 16 over Frank Churchill?



5. Describe and discuss the various experiences of the women in *Emma*. What conclusions can we draw from them about women in the 19th century and what Austen wants her readers to learn (or do) from them?
 6. What do readers know about Emma that other characters do not? What purpose does this serve?
 7. What if you were Jane Fairfax? How would you feel about Frank Churchill's flirtations with others that were denied to you because of your social status?
 8. Why does Austen take three chapters to describe a single dinner party? What are we supposed to learn from such attention? What do we see, what do we learn about the characters?
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Post Reading Considerations

Name _____

Choose one of the following options and write a 5-paragraph essay exploring the topic or question. Be sure to support your response with evidence from the book.

1. "And you have forgotten one matter of joy to me, said Emma, and a very considerable one--that I made the match myself. I made the match, you know, four years ago; and to have it take place, and be proved in the right, when so many people said Mr. Weston would never marry again, may comfort me for anything (9)." Emma says this to Mr. Knightley and her father about the marriage of Miss Taylor and Mr. Weston. Why was it significant to Emma to make this match? What does this quote reveal about her? Does it foreshadow anything about her, too?
2. "She would notice her; she would improve her; she would detach her from her bad acquaintances, and introduce her into good society; she would form her opinions and her manners. It would be an interesting, and certainly a very kind undertaking; highly becoming her own station in life, her leisure, and powers (21)." What does this quote reveal about Emma? Is she the kind of person you would be friends with? Why or why not?
3. "You have been no friend to Harriet Smith, Emma (57)." Mr. Knightley says this to Emma after he realizes that she has persuaded Harriet not to marry Mr. Martin. What are other instances where Mr. Knightley corrects or criticizes Emma for the way she treats others? Why do you think her character matters so much to him?
4. "My dear Mrs. Weston, do not take to match-making. You do it very ill" (205). Emma says this after Mrs. Weston has suggested that Mr. Knightley might be in love with Jane. Explain the irony of this statement.
5. "Her own conduct, as well as her own heart, was before her in the same few minutes. She saw it all with a clearness that had never blessed her before. How improperly had she been acting by Harriet! How inconsiderate, how indelicate, how irrational, how unfeeling, had been her conduct! What blindness, what madness had led her on! (375)." What is that Emma realizes? What has brought her to this realization?



Jane Austen's *Emma*
Post-Reading Projects

Name _____

Choose one of the following projects regarding *Emma*:

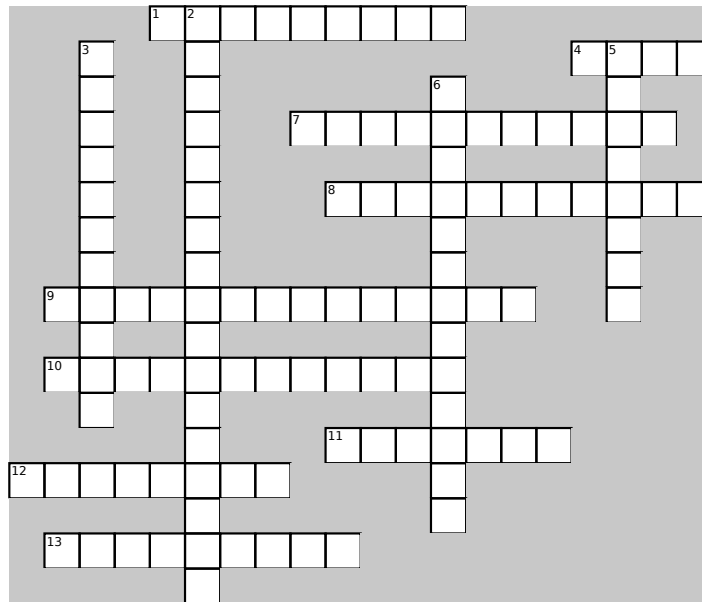
1. Write a series of letters between any two characters that summarizes the main storyline.
2. Start with the opening paragraph of *Emma* and write your own story, with your own truth about life to make. Set it wherever and whenever you want; just make it believable and alive.
3. Create a series of podcasts between various pairs of characters from *Emma* that will not only reveal those characters but the key themes of *Emma*.
4. Create a soundtrack album for *Emma* complete with liner notes and a cover for your CD.

Austen



Who's Who in Emma?

Provide the name of the character from Emma in the short descriptions below.

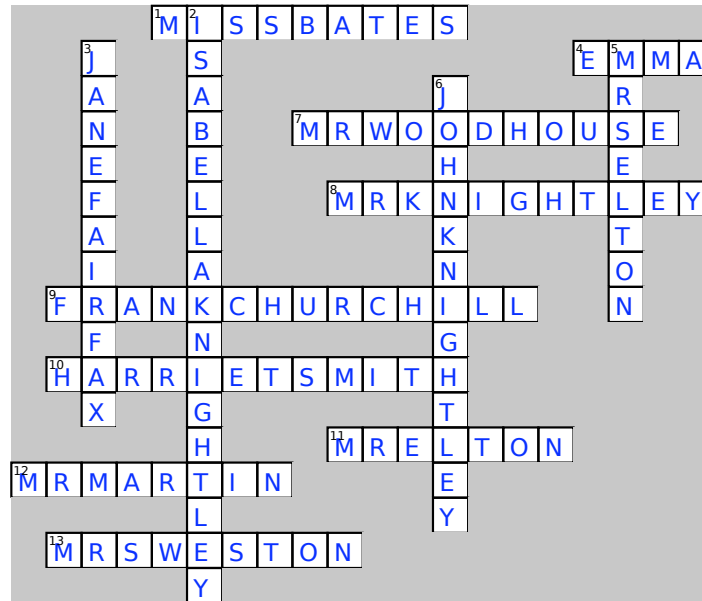


- | Across | Down |
|--|---|
| 1 The talkative neighbor of the Woodhouses | 2 Emma's sister |
| 4 The main character of the book who in the beginning is mainly concerned with matchmaking. | 3 The niece of Miss Bates who has been raised by the Campbells. |
| 7 Emma's eccentric father who does not like change of any sort, especially marriages | 5 The wife that Mr. Elton brings to Highbury. |
| 8 a neighbor of the Woodhouses who visits them almost every day and has a habit of correcting Emma. | 6 Mr. Knightley's brother |
| 9 The son of Mr. Weston who has been raised by the Churchills, his aunt and uncle. | |
| 10 Lives at the boarding school and does not know who her parents are. | |
| 11 The vicar of Highbury, and in the beginning Emma thinks it her duty to find him a wife. | |
| 12 Mr. Knightley thinks very highly of him and encourages him to ask Harriet to marry him, but Emma will not hear of Harriet marrying someone in so low a station. | |
| 13 Emma's governess before she married Mr. Weston; Emma's closest friend | |



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