

Consider the following groupings of characters. By examining characters in groups, the reader is able to better discern Austen's social commentary. Remember to include textual references and language techniques to support your responses to each question.

Group 1 Gentlemen – Mr Darcy, Mr Bingley and Mr Wickham:

- a. In what ways are these gentlemen similar? In what ways are they different?
- b. What does the reader learn about the context and social values through these contrasts?
- c. Which of these characters best embodies the Regency ideal of a Gentleman?
- d. What do these characters reveal about Austen's values?

Group 2 Ladies – Elizabeth, Jane and Miss Bingley:

- a. In what ways are these ladies similar? In what ways are they different?
- b. What does the reader learn about the context and social values through these contrasts?
- c. Which of these characters best embodies the Regency ideal of a lady?
- d. What do these characters reveal about Austen's values?

Group 3 Caricatures – Mrs Bennet, Mr Collins and Lady de Bourgh:

- a. What characteristics has Austen exaggerated in each of these characters?
- b. What does the reader learn about the context and social values through these characters?
- c. What aspects of society is Austen satirizing through each of these characters?
- d. How do you think a Regency reader would respond to these characters?

Group 4 – Couples – Jane and Bingley, Darcy and Elizabeth, Lydia and Wickham, Charlotte and Collins

- a. In what ways are these couples similar? In what ways are they different?
- b. What does the reader learn about the context and social values through these contrasts?
- c. Which couple best embodies the Regency ideal?
- d. What do these characters reveal about Austen's values?

