



Pride and Prejudice

Lesson 5: Pemberley

Lesson Plan and Resources

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Clip Resources

How film and television adaptations have approached the presentation of Pemberley

Main Adaptation: *Pride and Prejudice* (1995)

Adapted by Andrew Davies; directed by Simon Langton.

Clip 1 [▶ Watch here](#) 

Clip 2 [▶ Watch here](#) 

Secondary Adaptation: *Pride and Prejudice* (2005)

Adapted by Deborah Moggach; directed by Joe Wright.

Clip 1 [▶ Watch here](#) 

Clip 2 [▶ Watch here](#) 

Skills and Objectives

GCSE Literature Assessment Objectives

AO1	Read, understand and respond to texts
AO2	Analyse the language, form and structure used by a writer to create meanings and effects, using relevant subject terminology where appropriate
AO3	Understanding of the relationships between texts and the contexts in which they were written

GCSE Language Assessment Objectives

Reading AO2	Explain, comment on and analyse how writers use language and structure to achieve effects and influence readers, using relevant subject terminology to support their views
Reading AO3	Compare writers' ideas and perspectives, as well as how these are conveyed, across two or more texts
Writing AO5	Communicate clearly, effectively and imaginatively, selecting and adapting tone, style and register for different forms, purposes and audiences
Spoken Language AO8	Listen and respond appropriately to spoken language, including to questions and feedback to presentations

Scene Setting

Where we are in the novel and television adaptation:

At the end of Chapter 42, Mrs Gardiner suggests to Elizabeth that they visit Pemberley, but her niece only agrees once she has heard that Darcy is not at home. Their carriage journey takes them onto the estate and the splendours of its parkland before the house is revealed. In Chapter 43, after a tour of Pemberley's treasures and hearing from the housekeeper of Darcy's kindness and generosity, Elizabeth is surprised by Darcy's early return home. Darcy is equally shocked and excuses himself, but soon catches up again with Elizabeth, her aunt and uncle on the estate. He asks if he may introduce her to his sister Georgiana and invites Mr Gardiner to fish in the river during his stay. All three are surprised by his civility and his generosity. The challenge for adaptors is to demonstrate how Elizabeth's and Darcy's feelings are affected when she comes to Pemberley and to ensure her chance meeting with Darcy is forms a successful and credible plot pivot as she reassesses what she thinks she knows of him. Austen portrays Elizabeth as seduced as much by Darcy's changed behaviour as she is by the opulence and charms of his estate; that balance needs to be maintained in adaptations.

Starting Points

Pre-reading option

Share Austen's description of arriving at Pemberley from the start of Chapter 43 using **Resource 5.1**, as seen through Elizabeth's eyes. Ask students to think of three words to describe it. Then share these responses as a class to reveal students' first impressions of the setting and possibly how these are influenced by Elizabeth's own response to encountering Pemberley.

Post-reading option

Once students have read the extract from Chapter 43 (**Resource 5.1**), where the Gardiners and Elizabeth are shown around the house, encourage them to think about how Austen portrays Pemberley from the inside looking out and also how the interior reflects the Darcy family's taste. What effect does this have on Elizabeth?

Introduce the idea of the '18thC picturesque'. Despite its popularity at the time, this fashion for moulding parkland into what Austen terms an 'artificial appearance' is not strongly reflected at Pemberley where the estate is not 'falsely adorned'. (See **Context** extension below for more on this.)

Revision option

Ask students to consider what Pemberley symbolises in the novel. Divide the class into groups and number them 1, 2 or 3. 1s consider what the setting symbolises to Darcy; 2s what it symbolises for Elizabeth and 3 what it symbolises to Austen. Feedback and create a class list of the groups' findings.



Main Activities

How Pemberley sells Darcy to Elizabeth ([click here to launch the digital tool](#))

Re-read Chapter 43 up to where Elizabeth and the Gardiners have completed their tour of the house. Then ask students for their immediate reactions on how Pemberley presents Darcy to her in an increasingly favourable light from the carriage journey to this point. Ideas emerging might include:

- The unspoilt beauty and extent of the woods and parkland
- The house revealed in all its scale, splendour and wealth
- The housekeeper's praise of Darcy's good nature
- The responsibility he shows towards his estate and tenants
- His power and physical presence through first the miniature and the portrait

Play the 1995 and 2005 clips that correspond to this activity and Chapter 43. Invite students to compare how each adaptation portrays each point above, using **Resource 5.2** to record their ideas and relate them back to Austen's description. Elicit how visualising the Pemberley landscape and house helps to convey many of these ideas and accentuate the impression they make on Elizabeth. For example, the jaw-dropping moment of first seeing the house in both adaptations. Other ways in which Pemberley endears itself to Elizabeth might be linked to her aunt's local roots. These are all preparations for Elizabeth to meet Darcy again in person.

Darcy's favourite place

Darcy seems a different man when he arrives at Pemberley. Invite students to think of a favourite place where they are transformed and write a description of arriving there and how they feel. It might be a natural setting or a place where they enjoy a particular activity. They could contrast this with other places where they feel differently, for example settings where they need to conform or where they relax.

The unexpected meeting ([click here to launch the digital tool](#))

In the novel, the Gardiners are standing only 'a little aloof' from Elizabeth and Darcy when they meet. Ask the students to watch the clips from 1995 and 2005 that portray this meeting. Elicit the way that the scene accentuates the physicality of the relationship by having Darcy dive into the lake and then greet Elizabeth half-undressed, notably his clinging wet shirt. Elicit that as Darcy arrives 'home' his act of throwing off his coat, and with them the trappings of town life, social rank and shyness, he longs for a cleansing swim and to be at one with his surroundings. The fact that Elizabeth perceives this in him is as important as their physical attraction for the viewer. Darcy's love of his estate becomes even clearer as he shows his guests around the parkland.

By contrast – in the 2005 film, Joe Wright isolates Elizabeth and Darcy for their encounter. Ask students to describe what difference this makes – i.e. it is altogether more intimate. The script departs further from the novel when Elizabeth takes off across the park to walk back alone to Lambton and only hears of Darcy's wish to introduce Miss Darcy from her aunt and uncle when she arrives at the inn. Explore with students what effects this has? For instance, it may make Elizabeth seem more independent or impulsive in her actions - what Miss Bingley refers to in Elizabeth as an 'abominable sort of conceited independence' (Chapter 8). It may also be depicting her in the Romantic style as a person who embraces the natural and individualism.

Character and performance: Elizabeth in shock ([click here to launch the digital tool](#))

Ask students to trace the emotions that Elizabeth goes through in the novel when she unexpectedly encounters Darcy in the grounds at Pemberley. Then compare and how these are portrayed on screen. How do Jennifer Ehle (1995) and Keira Knightley (2005) interpret these?

Students could be asked to write a director's note to the actor playing Elizabeth guiding them on how to react.

Creative writing – Elizabeth's diary

After meeting Darcy at Pemberley, Elizabeth admits to the Gardiners that 'she had liked him better when they met in Kent than before, and that she had never seen him so pleasant as this morning'. Privately her mind is in turmoil: 'she could do nothing but think, and think with wonder, of Mr. Darcy's civility, and above all, of his wishing her to be acquainted with his sister' (Ch.43) – a sign of serious interest. The You're Dead to Me radio podcast on Georgian Courtship offers more detail on the distinct stages: [Georgian Courtship: love and marriage in 18th-century England | You're Dead to Me](#).

Invite students to write Elizabeth's diary entry for the visit to Pemberley to show how her feelings for Darcy have developed. They can use the starter provided in **Resource 5.4**, if preferred.

To round off, invite a few to read their diary entries? Compile a class list of the feelings, emotions and reflections of Elizabeth on this day that is a milestone in her development. This list might be worked up as mood board for Elizabeth for homework.



Extensions

Drama – Invite student pairs to write a short dialogue between Mr and Mrs Gardiner reflecting on what they have seen while at Pemberley in the feelings developing between their niece and Darcy. It might start like this:

Elizabeth: Goodnight then, aunt and uncle.

Aunt G: Goodnight, my dear. [Elizabeth exits]

Well, husband, it's certainly been a long day and a surprising one too.

Mr G: Indeed, the grandeurs of Pemberley were, I think, not lost on our Lizzie.

Aunt G: Not just the grandeurs of the estate, either... Mr Darcy...

With you reading the part of Elizabeth, ask pairs to share their dialogues with the class.

Language – For a more detailed way of analysing how Austen's language softens when describing Mr Darcy during the Pemberley visit, use the free word search (Control F) in the digital tool to scan the text for 'master' and 'son' and ask students to note down the words the writer has chosen to describe his nature and behaviour. Fine person; handsome; had evidently great pleasure in talking of her master; always the sweetest-tempered, most generous-hearted, boy in the world; affable to the poor; the best master and the best landlord; how many people's happiness were in his guardianship? Encourage students to use this facility to explore other key themes or character traits via the digital tool.

Extensions (Continued)

Art at Pemberley – In Chapter 43, Elizabeth, her aunt and uncle are first shown a miniature and then a grand portrait of Darcy:

In the gallery there were many family portraits, but they could have little to fix the attention of a stranger. Elizabeth walked on in quest of the only face whose features would be known to her. At last it arrested her --and she beheld a striking resemblance of Mr. Darcy, with such a smile over the face, as she remembered to have sometimes seen, when he looked at her. She stood several minutes before the picture in earnest contemplation, and returned to it again before they quitted the gallery.

This moment – and the artistic representation of Darcy – plays out differently in adaptations of *Pride and Prejudice*. While the 1995 television episode shows Elizabeth gazing at the portrait, the 2005 film changes the artistic medium to a marble bust of Darcy, displayed among other heroic figures in the Pemberley sculpture gallery, not a feature of Austen's Pemberley. Elizabeth is immersed in looking at this and almost gets left behind on the tour ([watch clip here](#)). The bust embodies Darcy more than the 2-D painting but both foreshadow the in-person meeting with him that follows shortly after.

Explore with students why are these pieces of art are so important? How do they contribute to a sense that Elizabeth is 'meeting' a new version of Darcy at Pemberley?

Setting – Pemberley presented a challenge to producers of the 1995 and 2005 adaptations. How do you find a house and grounds that are grand and beautiful enough to represent Darcy's home. Lyme Park provided the exterior shots for the 1995 Pemberley; the interior was shot at Sudbury Hall. Chatsworth is the setting for the 2005 Pemberley – the grandest Derbyshire stately home and one mentioned in Chapter 42 as a place Elizabeth visits separately on her trip with the Gardiners. View the clips again and ask students to focus solely on the settings that the producers have chosen. Discuss which best fits their idea of Pemberley and why. Students may want to again consider the importance of the picturesque. For more challenge show the aerial image of Lyme Park in Resource 5.5 – how does it fit with Austen's original description of Pemberley?

Adaptations across time – For a different interpretation of the shock encounter between Elizabeth and Darcy, [watch this clip from the 1980 BBC TV series](#) (adapted by Fay Weldon). Responding to the beauty of Pemberley, Elizabeth utters the words of Austen's narrator admitting, '[I've] never seen a place where nature has done so much or where natural beauty has been so little counteracted by an awkward taste'. The tranquil mood is interrupted by the appearance of a gun dog which can only be the master's. The immediate arrival of Darcy (David Rintoul) stuns this Elizabeth (Elizabeth Garvie) into one-word responses to his questions.

Invite students to discuss Elizabeth's reactions and compare them with those of 1995 and 2005 adaptations. This clip also allows for the discussion on the use of voiceover to convey the heroine's thoughts. How effective do students find this? Why might screen adaptors try to avoid this technique?

Context – The relevance of the picturesque to Pemberley – Resource 5.4 includes a definition of the picturesque and how it was both a cultural phenomenon and contested in Jane Austen's time. These materials can be used to prompt discussion of how the picturesque is reflected in her portrayal of Pemberley? Recent critical views of Pemberley have taken an ecological standpoint that may also interest students.

The novel makes clear that Mrs Gardiner, a native of Derbyshire, is a keen advocate of the wild and rugged terrain of the Peaks, and indeed the original plan was to visit the Lake District (the epitome of the English Romantic landscape). So, it is fitting that Pemberley's location and aspect reflect naturalism. Students could explore how this topographical connection is made in the two adaptations.

Glossary

From Chapter 43

Perturbation – apprehension; troubled feelings

Abruptness – sharpness

Adorned – decorated

Counteracted – acted against (to reduce the force of something)

Apprehensions – worries

Leisure – time; a moment

Civil – polite; well-mannered

Surveying – looking around

Proprietor – owner

Gaudy – overly bright or showy

Recollection – memory

Miniatures – tiny portraits of people

Steward – estate manager

Intimation – hint or indication

Accomplished – highly skilled

Attachment – fondness, affection

Affable – friendly, easy to get on with

Attributed – thought something caused by

Tenant – a person living in a rented property

Amiable – friendly, pleasant

Authority – source

Lobby – space leading to other rooms

Intelligible – easy to understand

Contemplation – thoughtfully looking

Trifling – unimportant, trivial

Bestow – give

Consigned over – passed/transferred to

Conjecturing – forming an opinion

Composure – calm, self-control

Aloof – at a distance

Impropriety – lack of correct behaviour

Sedateness – calm and dignified

Distraction – agitation

Engrossed – completely absorbed in

Vexation – annoyance, worry

Contracted into – narrowed into

Glen – deep valley

Coppice – area of woodland often cut back for firewood

Strike – adopt, take

Construed – interpreted (of meaning)

Decamping – to leave suddenly

Gratified – pleased

Reproofs – disapproving comments

Brink – edge

Accordingly – as a result

Application – request

Outstripped – got ahead of

Embargo – ban

Perseverance – determination

Tete-a-tete – private one-to-one conversation

Unassuming – modest

Attentive – polite and thinking of others

Whimsical – acting on a whim, changeable

Countenance – face, facial expression

Construction – interpretation

Environs – surrounding neighbourhood

Intercourse – conversation

Pride and Prejudice

Resources for Lesson 5

Resource 5.1 – Austen’s introduction to Pemberley

Pre-reading: Read the extract up to ‘leisure to wonder at her being where she was’.

How does Austen describe the landscape of Pemberley? Which three words would you choose to describe it?

CHAPTER 43

ELIZABETH, as they drove along, watched for the first appearance of Pemberley Woods with some perturbation; and when at length they turned in at the lodge, her spirits were in a high flutter.

The park was very large, and contained great variety of ground. They entered it in one of its lowest points, and drove for some time through a beautiful wood, stretching over a wide extent.

Elizabeth’s mind was too full for conversation, but she saw and admired every remarkable spot and point of view. They gradually ascended for half a mile, and then found themselves at the top of a considerable eminence, where the wood ceased, and the eye was instantly caught by Pemberley House, situated on the opposite side of a valley, into which the road with some abruptness wound. It was a large, handsome, stone building, standing well on rising ground, and backed by a ridge of high woody hills; and in front, a stream of some natural importance was swelled into greater, but without any artificial appearance. Its banks were neither formal, nor falsely adorned. Elizabeth was delighted. She had never seen a place for which nature had done more, or where natural beauty had been so little counteracted by an awkward taste. They were all of them warm in their admiration; and at that moment she felt, that to be mistress of Pemberley might be some thing!

They descended the hill, crossed the bridge, and drove to the door; and, while examining the nearer aspect of the house, all her apprehensions of meeting its owner returned. She dreaded lest the chambermaid had been mistaken. On applying to see the place, they were admitted into the hall; and Elizabeth, as they waited for the housekeeper, had leisure to wonder at her being where she was.

The housekeeper came; a respectable-looking, elderly woman, much less fine, and more civil, than she had any notion of finding her. They followed her into the dining parlour. It was a large, well-proportioned room, handsomely fitted up. Elizabeth, after slightly surveying it, went to a window to enjoy its prospect. The hill, crowned

with wood, from which they had descended, receiving increased abruptness from the distance, was a beautiful object. Every disposition of the ground was good; and she looked on the whole scene, the river, the trees scattered on its banks, and the winding of the valley, as far as she could trace it, with delight. As they passed into other rooms, these objects were taking different positions; but from every window there were beauties to be seen. The rooms were lofty and handsome, and their furniture suitable to the fortune of their proprietor; but Elizabeth saw, with admiration of his taste, that it was neither gaudy nor uselessly fine; with less of splendor, and more real elegance, than the furniture of Rosings.

“And of this place,” thought she, “I might have been mistress! With these rooms I might now have been familiarly acquainted! Instead of viewing them as a stranger, I might have rejoiced in them as my own, and welcomed to them as visitors my uncle and aunt.-- But no,”--recollecting herself--“that could never be: my uncle and aunt would have been lost to me: I should not have been allowed to invite them”

This was a lucky recollection--it saved her from some thing like regret.

Post-reading: Discuss how Austen portrays Pemberley from the inside looking out and how the interior reflects the Darcy family’s taste.

- What are Elizabeth’s views of what she sees inside and out?
- And what does her final reflection reveal about her feelings?

Resource 5.2 – How Pemberley sells Darcy to Elizabeth

How do each of the adaptations show these aspects of how Pemberley wins Elizabeth's heart?

Novel (Chapter 43)	1995 television series	2005 film
The unspoilt beauty and extent of Pemberley's parkland		
The house revealed in all its splendour and wealth		
The housekeeper's praise of Darcy's nature		
The responsibility Darcy shows towards his estate and tenants		
His power and physical presence through the portrait.		

Are there any other ways in which Pemberley sells Darcy to Elizabeth as a future partner?

Resource 5.4 Pemberley in context

Country houses and estates in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were often designed in the fashion of the picturesque. What was this and how does Jane Austen comment on it through her description of the imagined Pemberley?

The picturesque was an aesthetic ideal, a particular set of values about artistic merit and taste, which developed in the 18th century. The picturesque emerged around the same time and in relation to concepts such as the 'beautiful' or the 'sublime', during a larger reassessment of aesthetic value in the Enlightenment period.

In the words of William Gilpin who coined the term, picturesque landscapes had 'that peculiar kind of beauty which is agreeable in a picture'. Compare this to the sublime, where natural beauty is so awe-inspiring that it sparks wonder and despair because it reminds you of your own insignificance (looking up at a mountain, for instance). Appreciators of the picturesque thus enjoyed natural landscapes which looked like paintings, blurring the line between art and nature. Gilpin published guidebooks to destinations such as the Wye Valley and the Lake District so that tourists could seek out these picture-perfect sights themselves.

The values of the picturesque made its way into art, poetry and music but it was particularly fashionable as a way of landscaping gardens among wealthy landowners. Picturesque gardens would manipulate the natural landscape to create portrait-like moments of perspective that showcased the property owner's refinement, power and taste.

Indeed, Pemberley has some of the features of the picturesque according to Gilpin's rules, including the way that it suddenly reveals its beauty: 'the eye was instantly caught by Pemberley house into which the road with some abruptness wound' (p.271).

But Pemberley has little artificial ornamentation in the form of arbours, temples or hot houses or only 3 cows in each field in view from the house. Elizabeth, voicing Austen's own distaste for the fashion for the picturesque, thinks it unspoilt: 'where natural beauty has been little counteracted by an awkward taste'

[adapted from Janet Todd, *Persuasions*, Issue 45, pp.63-75, 2023]



Credit: ukgardenphotos © 2015

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/ukgardenphotos/22802937941/in/photostream/>

Stowe Gardens - a model picturesque landscape

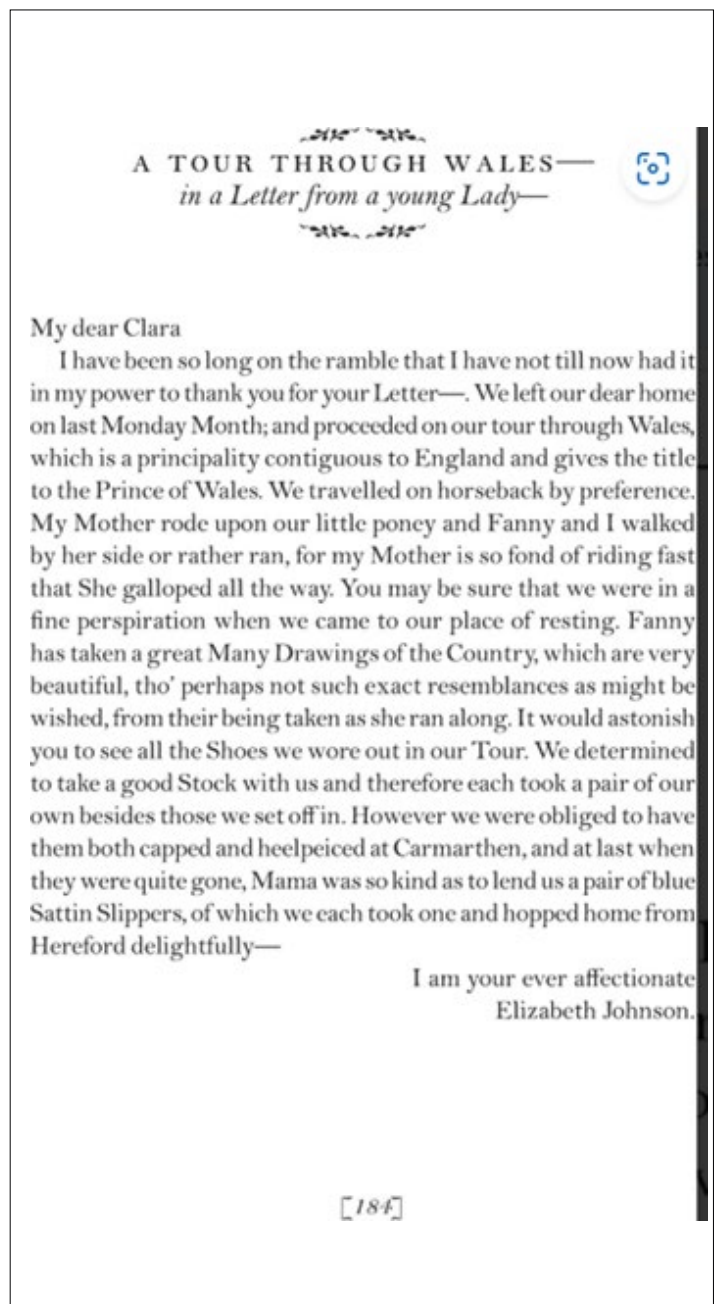
Certainly, while the picturesque was very popular, it had its critics who disliked how formulaic and artificial its beauty was. Jane Austen was one of them, and ridiculed these rules in her teenage writings including a fictitious letter 'A Tour through Wales' **A Tour through Wales - Childhood Writings.**

More recently, an ecocritical view of Pemberley has been put forward.

“REPRESENTATIONS OF NATURE AND ECOLOGICAL COLLAPSE IN THE NOVELS OF JA” by Faten Hafez 2021

“Every disposition of the ground was good; and she looked on the whole scene, the river, the trees scattered on its banks and the winding of the valley, as far as she could trace it, with delight. As they passed into other rooms, these objects were taking different positions; but from every window there were beauties to be seen.” (236)

By looking through the windows, Elizabeth gains a wide view of the landscape and while she is moving from one room to another, nature takes on different outlooks, “these objects were taking different positions” (236). Through these differing views Elizabeth is made aware of the variability of nature, especially the closer aspects of Pemberley and how they are designed to fit the owner’s landscape fantasies. This is what makes them, in every measure, human constructs. By contrast, in seeing the farthest aspects inclining more toward wilderness escaping humans’ manipulation, abounding freely in plants, and responding nicely to the laws of nature, we are assured that they are constructs made organically by nature.’



Resource 5.5 Lyme Park – the 1995 location for Pemberley

Re-read Austen's description of Pemberley again and then look closely at this aerial image of Lyme Park. Note down the features that make it a good match with Austen's Pemberley.



Credit: A.P.S. (UK) / Alamy Stock Photo

Features that match with Austen's description of Pemberley
