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# Study Guide Overview

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## 1. Beginning This Course

- Read "How to Teach Using This Guide," "How to Mark a Book," and the Introductory Essay in the front of this guide.

## 2. Delectare (To Delight): Read and Mark Your Book

- First and foremost, this text should simply be enjoyed – should be delighted in. The primary aim of this guide is to facilitate and intensify students' enjoyment of the text, not make it a dry or uninteresting "object of study." The Delectare section with which each lesson begins simply asks students to provide an honest response to the reading, identifying what they find particularly significant, beautiful, humorous – or, alternatively, frustrating or perplexing – in what they have read. While the guide will soon ask students to think beyond their own instinctive reactions to the text – to ask better questions, to appreciate the full potential of the language – their first job is simply to articulate the effect the story is having on them.
- *Vade Mecum*: In the lower school, important quotes and beautiful passages are highlighted in the study guides and often memorized. In the upper school, we encourage students to keep for themselves a *Vade Mecum* ("go with me"), a collected reference of True, Good, or Beautiful passages that they come across in their studies and compile throughout the course of upper school. This reference will be a catalog of students' progress through the history and thought of Western civilization and of their engagement with the Great Conversation. In a more practical sense it will also be a very useful resource for completing the Final Essay. This is optional, but we recommend that you help your students begin a *Vade Mecum* if they have not, or, if they have, remind them to continue recording Truth, Goodness, and Beauty in it as they read and when prompted.

## 3. Docere (To Teach): Grammar

- This section of the guide seeks to deepen students' understanding, first of all by removing impediments to that understanding. Depending on the text, there can be a sizeable "culture gap"

# How to Teach Using This Guide

## Daily Lesson Plan

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### PREPARING TO READ

- **Review:** Before reading, orally review the plot of the text as read so far. Periodically review the concepts of character, setting, and plot.
- **Background & Historical Context and Vocabulary:** The Background & Historical Context and Vocabulary sections are intended to close the "culture gap" and eliminate any obstacles to students' practical understanding of the people, places, and events in the text. Read through and discuss these before reading the text, and refer back to them as needed.
- It is a good idea to have students read through the Comprehension and Discussion Questions ahead of time to encourage purposeful reading.

### READING

- Students can read each chapter silently or you can read aloud together, alternating between teacher-read and student-read passages. Model good reading skills. Encourage students to read expressively and smoothly.
- **Mark Your Book:** While reading, students should be interacting with and responding to the reading by marking their books as they come upon key passages, common themes and allusions, and any passages they deem to be True, Good, or Beautiful. Demonstrate how to effectively mark and interact with a book if students need guidance (see "How to Mark a Book"). Students should also complete the Mark Your Book exercises assigned in the Delectare section of the study guide.

### POST-READING

- **Literary Devices:** Some lessons will include exercises on literary devices that are especially important to or prevalent in this particular text, or that provide some insight into the text. Have students read through the explanation and examples and complete the exercises.

# How to Mark a Book

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**CIRCLE** (unfamiliar vocabulary, terms, and language.)

*Revisit these words after reading and look up the definitions. This will increase your vocabulary knowledge and give you a more thorough understanding of the text.*

**BOX** major or unfamiliar characters.

*A visual marker of each character's introduction helps you focus on your first impression of him or her and keep track of the major players in the text.*

**UNDERLINE** important passages.

*Underline sentences or phrases that are integral to the plot or that speak to you personally as beautiful and noteworthy. This device will likely be your most-used.*

**VERTICAL LINE** emphasizes what you have underlined.

*A vertical line can further illuminate what you have underlined, or can be used in place of underlining for longer passages.*

**\* ASTERISK** main ideas or major plot developments.

*Use this device more sparingly than underlining or a vertical line. An asterisk denotes the **most** important passages in the text. You might have an underline, a vertical line, and an asterisk on the same passage if it is integral to the book.*

**DOUBLE LINE** what is quotable, wise, or beautifully stated.

*Use this mark to identify passages of singular wisdom or beauty, which transcend this particular text.*

**X USE AN "X"** in the margin for contributions to the Great Conversation.

*Make note of passages that deal with the True, the Good, and the Beautiful, and thus contribute to the Great Conversation. These are the elevated ideas you glean from a text and take with you.*

**? USE A "?"** for questions or research.

*Mark sections you'd like to revisit – a word or a passage that you don't understand or want to contemplate and investigate further.*

# LESSON 1: Vol. I, Ch. I-IV

## DELECTARE: To Delight

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### MARK YOUR BOOK

1. Underline **two quotations** in the reading: 1) What you consider to be the most important sentence and 2) A sentence that made you have a strong reaction. Be prepared to explain your selections to your teacher and/or classmates.
2. Record **one question** the reading raises in your mind.
3. Record True, Good, and Beautiful passages in your *Vade Mecum* as part of your participation in the Great Conversation.

## DOCERE: To Teach

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### GRAMMAR

#### Background & Historical Context

1. **Fortune:** "Four or five thousand a year" (p. 4) is the income (in pounds) that Mr. Bingley will receive from his inheritance and investments – that is, without having to do any work for it. A great house usually required an annual income of five thousand to six thousand pounds to run; a household with an income of just one thousand pounds a year could usually afford several servants, a carriage, and horses. During this period there were fewer than four hundred families in England with an annual income of ten thousand pounds or more; Mr. Darcy is in this wealthy group.
2. **Acquaintance:** Much of the opening chapters is taken up with Mrs. Bennet's consternation over how to "become acquainted" with Mr. Bingley. This was actually a somewhat complicated process. In order to visit or interact with a person socially, you had to be introduced to that person by someone already acquainted with him or her or else "call on" (pay a formal visit to) the person. Women could not call on unmarried men

without first being introduced to them by a third party. This is why Mrs. Bennet is so insistent that Mr. Bennet pay Mr. Bingley a visit as soon as possible and why Mr. Bennet's suggestion that they send their daughters to visit Mr. Bingley "by themselves" is obviously a joke, meant to aggravate his wife (p. 5).

3. **Candor:** In Chapter IV, Elizabeth tells Jane that she has genuine "candour," that she is truly "candid" in her judgments of other people (p. 18). These days we mainly use the term "candid" to mean open, straightforward, or transparent (as in, "I have to be candid with you: I hate your new haircut."). But at the time Austen was writing, candor usually referred to a way of judging things or people. To be candid was to either (1) be fair or unprejudiced in one's judgment or to (2) be positively generous and charitable in one's judgment—to give the benefit of the doubt. During her conversation with Jane, Elizabeth seems to be using the latter definition. She is saying that Jane is truly generous in her judgment, seeing only the good in people and ignoring the bad.

### Literary Devices: Speech as Character

Three times in these opening chapters Austen introduces us to important characters not by describing them for us but by allowing us to overhear their conversations. While she describes these characters later, our first exposure to them is through the way they talk to each other. Consider how realistic this is. In life we (usually) don't have a helpful narrative voice in our heads giving us information about the people we are meeting for the first time; we have to draw conclusions about them—about their personalities, their character—through the way they act and especially speak. In Austen's novels, the way characters talk always reveals a good deal about them, but readers must do the work of interpreting what they say just like their fellow characters do, which means that we risk *mis*interpreting what they say and drawing the wrong conclusions about them.

1. Look at these pieces of dialogue and write down some things that get revealed about each character and about their relationships with each other through these conversations.
  - a. **Mrs. Bennet:** "Mr. Bennet, how can you abuse your own children in such a way? You take delight in vexing me. You have no compassion on my poor nerves" (p. 5).

**Mr. Bennet:** "You mistake me, my dear. I have a high respect for your nerves. They are my old friends. I have heard you mention them with consideration these twenty years at least" (p. 6).

- b. **Mr. Bingley:** "Oh, she is the most beautiful creature I ever beheld! But there is one of her sisters ... who is very pretty, and I dare say very agreeable. Do let me ask my partner to introduce you" (pp. 13-14).

**Mr. Darcy:** "She is tolerable: but not handsome enough to tempt *me*; and I am in no humour at present to give consequence to young ladies who are slighted by other men. You had better return to your partner and enjoy her smiles, for you are wasting your time with me" (p. 14).

- c. **Jane:** "He is just what a young man ought to be ... sensible, good-humoured, lively; and I never saw such happy manners! so much ease, with such perfect good breeding!" (p. 17)

**Elizabeth:** "He is also handsome ... which a young man ought likewise to be if he possibly can. His character is thereby complete.... I give you leave to like him. You have liked many a stupider person" (p. 17).

2. Identify an additional quotation or piece of dialogue that illuminates a character or characters or their relationship. Explain how it does so.

## DOCERE: To Teach

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### LOGIC

#### Comprehension Questions

1. Consider the novel's opening line. Is this statement sincere – or ironic? *Is this a truth universally acknowledged?* Does the narrator expect us to believe this?
2. Consider the final sentence of the first chapter: "The business of [Mrs. Bennet's] life was to get her daughters married" (p. 6). Why has Mrs. Bennet made this her business? What, for her, does it mean to be "well married" (p. 10)?

3. What is Mr. Bennet's attitude toward Mr. Bingley's arrival and, by extension, the potential marriages of his daughters? What does this attitude show about him?
4. How would you describe the Bennets' marriage?
5. Why doesn't Mr. Darcy want to be introduced to Elizabeth?
6. How does Elizabeth respond to overhearing Mr. Darcy's insult? How might it make the reader feel about Elizabeth?
7. How are Jane and Elizabeth similar? How are they different? How would you describe their relationship?
8. How are Mr. Bingley and Mr. Darcy similar? How are they different? How would you describe their relationship?

**Discussion Questions:** Provide a quotation from the text in support of your answer.

1. What problems or questions get raised in this novel's opening? You might consider in particular the novel's opening line. What sorts of questions or problems does it raise?
2. Elizabeth appears to admire Jane's candor (see explanation of this term in the Background & Historical Context section) – she praises her for it – but she herself is more critical, less easily pleased. Is it good to be "blind to the follies and nonsense" of other people like Jane is – to make little of their bad qualities and much of their good qualities (p. 18)? Is it good to always assume the best of people? What are the benefits of such an attitude? What are the dangers?



# LESSON 11: Vol. III, Ch. I-III

## DELECTARE: To Delight

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### MARK YOUR BOOK

1. Underline **two quotations** in the reading: 1) What you consider to be the most important sentence and 2) A sentence that made you have a strong reaction. Be prepared to explain your selections to your teacher and/or classmates.
2. Record **one question** the reading raises in your mind.
3. Record True, Good, and Beautiful passages in your *Vade Mecum* as part of your participation in the Great Conversation.

## DOCERE: To Teach

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### GRAMMAR

#### Background & Historical Context

1. **Rattle away:** Mrs. Reynolds, the Pemberley housekeeper, speculates that some people consider Mr. Darcy proud simply because he does not "rattle away like other young men" (p. 287). To "rattle away" is to talk nonstop.

## DOCERE: To Teach

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### LOGIC

#### Comprehension Questions

1. What "lucky recollection" keeps Elizabeth from regretting the fact that she is not mistress of the beautiful Pemberley property (p. 284)?
2. Why is Mr. Wickham's portrait still hanging in one of the rooms of Pemberley?

3. According to the housekeeper, what is Mr. Darcy like?
4. What about Darcy's behavior when he arrives surprises Elizabeth?
5. What does Darcy particularly ask Elizabeth's permission to do?
6. How do Elizabeth's aunt and uncle account for Mr. Darcy's unexpected attention to them?
7. What is Miss Darcy like? How does her character line up with the description Mr. Wickham gave Elizabeth of her in Vol. I, Ch. XVI?
8. What are Elizabeth's feelings toward Darcy after their second meeting?
9. What strategies does Miss Bingley use to try to sabotage Elizabeth's relationship with Darcy? Is she successful?

**Discussion Questions:** Provide a quotation from the text in support of your answer.

1. As we have seen already, Austen loves to "show" rather than "tell" – to reveal things about her characters through their speech or mannerisms rather than through explicit narration. Another way she does this is by showing us the places people live. In Austen's novels, people's houses tend to represent their character; so when we get to visit Darcy's house, we should pay attention to details. What does Elizabeth notice about the outside and inside of Darcy's home? What do these details communicate about the kind of man Darcy is?
2. Remember that during the Netherfield ball, Elizabeth told Darcy that she was trying to take his "likeness" – to paint a portrait of his character in her mind (p. 112). We've seen now how inadequate that portrait was – how ill-equipped Elizabeth was at that time to do justice to Darcy's character. At Pemberley, Elizabeth comes face to face with an *actual* portrait of Darcy. What is her attitude toward this portrait? What are her reflections as she looks at his portrait? How has her approach to judging Darcy's character changed?

3. These first three chapters of Vol. III are full of surprise and astonishment: Elizabeth's surprise over the beauties of Pemberley and the testimony of the housekeeper; her surprise over Darcy's arrival and his surprise over finding her at his home; Elizabeth's – and her aunt and uncle's – surprise over his warm welcome and more particularly his desire to introduce her to his sister; their surprise over the attention he continues to show them. Did any of these things surprise you as a reader? Choose *one* of these surprises – preferably one that surprised you too – and consider whether the characters' or your assumptions and expectations were contradicted by the surprise. What was wrong with those assumptions and expectations? What did you or they fail to account for?
4. At Pemberley, Elizabeth recognizes her "astonishment" over the change in Darcy's behavior: "Why is he so altered? From what can it proceed?" (p. 293) What do you think accounts for this change? How would you explain it?