

The chapter 15 and 16 of "pride and prejudice" essay sample



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The Chapter 15 and 16 of “Pride and Prejudice” Essay Sample

The story of ‘Pride and Prejudice’ by Jane Austen revolves around the actual words ‘pride’ and ‘prejudice’. Pride is where a haughty attitude shown by somebody who believes, often unjustifiably, that he or she is better than others. Her pride prevented her from mixing with those she considered her social inferiors. Prejudice is where someone has a preconceived opinion of a notion.

In her book Austen uses a wide variety of different writing techniques. One of the countless numbers of techniques she uses is free indirect discourse.

Austen uses free indirect discourse plus her own narrating in order to present Wickham in the manner she wishes.

From the start of chapter 15, Austen introduces Wickham to us by exceedingly drawing attention to Wickham’s fine façade. “.. The attention of every lady was soon caught... “

Another way in which Austen describes Wickham to us is when she says: “... whom they had never seen before, of most gentlemanlike appearance”. This is Austen perceptibly saying that Wickham is like a gentleman but isn’t actually one.

This is a very significant part of the chapter as it leads consequently to us revealing his true character in the later chapters.

In these two (and many other) quotes she talks a great deal about his “fine countenance”, “good figure” and “pleasing address”. Another description of

<https://assignbuster.com/the-chapter-15-and-16-of-pride-and-prejudice-essay-sample/>

Wickham that she makes is: " His appearance was greatly in favour; he had all the best parts of beauty- a fine countenance, a good figure, and a very pleasing address."

All these descriptions of Wickham concentrate on merely his surface qualities and not his intellectual persona.

One example of FID (free indirect discourse) is: "...for the young man only wanted regimentals to make him completely charming". This is FID from Kitty and Lydia. This is a good example of their small-minded and one-dimensional personalities and that they are captivated by Wickham's easygoing physical qualities and not by his personality. The next imperative part of the book is where Austen shows us the difference in the status, hierarchy and class between Wickham and Darcy. We are shown this when we see Darcy and Bingley arriving on horse and Wickham and Denny arriving on foot. The overall impression we get of Wickham is a good one as we have not seen anything that could damage his image. However there is a saying which goes that if something looks too good to be true then it usually is.

We get the feeling that later on in the novel we'll see his true image being revealed.

Right the way through chapter 15 we see Wickham through Kitty and Lydia's eyes. We can tell this as all the descriptions of Wickham focus on his looks and not his personality. However more proof is that Jane, Lizzie and Mary are more rational, mindful and aware than the two younger sisters. As they are older and wiser they would try and see past the surface of Wickham and into

his opinions before judging him. They are generally more sensible and <https://assignbuster.com/the-chapter-15-and-16-of-pride-and-prejudice-essay-sample/>

responsible whereas Kitty and Lydia are childish. Out of all the sisters Kitty and Lydia are the most taken by Wickham. Clearly we can see that their aim on the outing was to look for good looking officers and look at shop windows so they were in luck when they saw Wickham.

“ Their eyes were immediately wandering up the street in quest of the officers...”

As the novel progresses Austen illustrates to us more and more about Wickham and the slow progress of his developing character. In this chapter we meet him at a dinner party with the Bennets and the Philips'. There is a quote which says: “ Elizabeth felt that she had neither been seeing him before, nor thinking of him since, with the smallest degree of unreasonable admiration...” Wickham's second appearance has confirmed that he's as good in person as he was in her mind. Overall though we can tell that she's beginning to admire him by falling for his deathly charming trap. She's fallen for the con like all the other ladies.

The elements of Wickham which are presented are his ' person', his ' countenance', his ' air' and his ' walk'. Yet again Austen is showing us the side of Wickham which is fully appearance-based. Jane Austen continually illustrates the fact that all they see is entirely superficial. So far in the novel Austen does not make any mention to Wickham's personality and therefore one (to be wise) must not base his opinion on somebody's appearance as, like Wickham, they could be entirely bogus.

After examining the conversation between Elizabeth and Wickham it suggests that Wickham is very cunning and hypocritical.

<https://assignbuster.com/the-chapter-15-and-16-of-pride-and-prejudice-essay-sample/>

For example he says: " I have no right to give my opinion..." but clearly that's the opposite of what's actually happening.

In the conversation: " I do not at all know..... of his father" Wickham uses the word ' me' and ' I' thirteen times. This shows his self-centred, hidden personality coming through. Throughout the story he's explaining about Darcy and late Mr Darcy, he completely exaggerates the story and emphasises all the parts which include him, making out that he's such a wonderful and kind hearted person. For example: "...but I verily believe that I could forgive him anything and everything, rather than his disappointing the hopes and disgracing the memory of his father".

A quote which shows the amplification that Wickham is showing us is: " He was my godfather, and excessively attached to me..."

He's saying that he was exceptionally attached to Wickham. Not close. Not amiable. Yet again Wickham is overstating and twisting the story in his favour to convince Elizabeth with his heartfelt story and sneaky nature.

He makes the biggest slip-up of all by contradicting himself.

" Till I can forget his father I can never defy or expose him"

Clearly he just has in front of Elizabeth.

One writing technique that Austen uses is bathos. This is where the writer builds up the suspense and rhythm and then ends it quickly with something silly or unimportant. For example: " I have a warm unguarded... ..he hates me"; a simple abrupt ending.

Overall these two chapters show that Wickham's entire importance in the novel so far has been entirely appearance based. Up until the conversation between Lizzie and Wickham, where we uncover Wickham's malicious character, Austen never makes reference to his personality. Austen continually illustrates the fact that all Wickham has to live off, is his outer shell and general good looks. By giving us these first impressions of Wickham, Austen is trying to show us that Wickham's principally external virtues is the philosophy of why he has any entire relevance to the novel at all.

This has many implications for the rest of the novel and the characters as both Lydia and Kitty become entrapped by Wickham's bogus act and Lydia eventually ends up marrying Wickham. When we see Elizabeth falling for the same trap, we already know the story and we don't want her to fall for the deceit. This is called dramatic irony. Dramatic irony is one of the many techniques that Austen uses in her excellent novel to capture the reader.