

English A



Candidate Marks Report

Series : M18 2018

This candidate's script has been assessed using On-Screen Marking. The marks are therefore not shown on the script itself, but are summarised in the table below.

Centre No :	Assessment Code :	ENGLISH A EE EXTENDED ESSAY in ENGLISH
Candidate No :	Component Code :	EE(ENG)TZ0
Candidate Name :		

In the table below 'Total Mark' records the mark scored by this candidate.
'Max Mark' records the Maximum Mark available for the question.

Examiner:	
Paper:	M18azengEEEE0XXXX
Paper Total:	33 / 34
Question	Total / Max Mark Mark
Criterion A	6 / 6
Criterion B	6 / 6
Criterion C	11 / 12
Criterion D	4 / 4
Criterion E	6 / 6

Coursework confirmation

Yes

Hours supervisor spent with candidate

4

Declaration

Yes

English Language and Literature Extended Essay

The function of letters as a narrative device in Jane Austen's novel "Pride and Prejudice"

How effectively does Austen employ letters as a narrative device within her novel "*Pride and Prejudice*"?

Word count: 3996

SEEN

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction	pg. 3
2. Analysis	pg. 4
3. Conclusion	pg. 11
4. Bibliography	pg. 11

Limited

SEEN

1. INTRODUCTION

The literary value of letters as powerful communicative means was first recognised by *Samuel Richardson*, inventor of the genre of the epistolary novel. They gave him "*the tools, the space, and the freedom to develop distinctly different characters speaking directly to the reader*"¹. Jane Austen, following the example of "*Pamela*"², wrote "*First Impressions*", the first version of "*Pride and Prejudice*", as an epistolary novel. Despite being later transformed into a traditional novel, letters still retain a fundamental role. Not only because of their number, but also because of the function and importance to them attributed by the author.

Letters had such an important role in Jane Austen's life, it is perhaps logical that she chose to also use them as a functional device in her novels. The secrecy behind Jane Austen's persona³ has led her readers to look for clues in the few traces of her existence left behind. The hunt to understand her intentions, values and ideas has led to an exploration of the works in which she did not take up the role of author but in which she showed the most personal side of herself: her letters. "*Letters, even when there are gaps of long periods, constitute the truest autobiography we can have*"⁴ as "*they reveal her close relationship with her family [...] and they reflect the current epistolary practices and conventions*"⁵. Just as biographers have turned to Jane Austen's personal letters to interpret her psyche, her character's letters are arguably the key to better understand their role in the narrative.

The worthiness of letters is also stressed in eighteenth-century letter-writing manuals which advise paying "*close attention to the form and function of the letter as a factor contributing to the building of social relationships*"⁶. It is therefore, necessary to analyse their function to fully appreciate the complexity of the relationships presented in the social context of the era.

To answer the question posed by the title I resolved to conduct a close literary analysis of primary and secondary sources, since the language used by Austen is what gave rise to most of my arguments. However, considering that the same words can be open to different interpretations, I also decided to investigate her personal letters as part of my background research. They offered valuable information about her purpose when writing the novel and the emotions she wished to evoke in her readers. "*I think her [Elizabeth] as delightful a creature as ever appeared in print*"⁷ shows Elizabeth as a mouth piece for Austen's ideas.

Furthermore, I also scrutinised secondary sources to explore a variety of interpretations. Claudia L. Johnson sees letters as "*vehicles of incisive social criticism*"⁸, while Edward Copeland and Juliet McMaster believe "*letters provide an excellent vehicle for formidable observation*"⁹. Margaret Kirkham however, perceives "*the interest of the writer and the quality of his language*"¹⁰ as a way of understanding a character's personality and become

¹ (Flynn, 1982)

² (Encyclopaedia Britannica)

³ Austen's identity remained a mystery until the posthumous publication of the "Biographical Notice" in 1818

⁴ (Handley, 1992, pg.60)

⁵ (pg.60)

⁶ (Anni and Nevala)

⁷ (Le Faye, pg.210)

⁸ (Johnson, 1988, pg.75)

⁹ (Copeland and McMaster, 1997, pg.110)

¹⁰ (Kirkham, 1986, pg.91)

SEEN

*“the best informed”*¹¹ reader. This final statement encouraged me to think about the importance of the language used by the author when considering wider themes, as well as enabled me to identify patterns, consider the effects of stylistic choices upon the readers and evaluate their overall effectiveness.

Modern critics of her novel have declared Austen’s letters to reflect themes of contemporary society. The values put forward are, in fact, intrinsically modern for having been written at the beginning of the 19th century. Austen gives particular consideration to the individual characters’ psyche, values and ideas showing not only an extreme sensibility and acuteness of observation, but also innovativeness. Rarely before, for instance, similar attention had been given to the, so called, “female voice”. Elizabeth’s desires and intelligence empower her, making her equal to her male counterparts. This embedded message can be seen as a sign of the underlying desire for gender equality that will lead, at the end of the century, to first-wave feminism.

Letters, therefore, offer a direct perspective both into the characters of the novel and into Austen’s values and purposes, effectively ensuring that the reader’s perception of the novel’s themes is complete.

2. ANALYSIS

2.1 Letters which influence the reader into having a “prejudiced” vision of the characters.

Austen uses letters to manipulate the reader’s sympathy or antipathy toward characters. Mr Collins’ letter to Mr Bennet for instance, introduces a new character, unknown both to the reader and the Bennets, allowing for speculations on the nature of his behaviour and revealing clues about the attitudes of the different members of the family.

Mr Collins, son of an illiterate man, writes in a pompous style, rich with pre-modifiers and Latinate vocabulary. He does so to give the impression of being member of a higher class. In the 19th century *“letter-writing often reflected social aspirations, since it was one way to measure social respectability. The entire style in which a person wrote letters was to correlate to his/her social position.”*¹² As a result, his use of terminology and style is not verisimilar but unveils to the reader the selfish, pretentious and drenched in false modesty persona Austen wishes to create. *“I flatter myself that my present overtures of good-will are highly commendable, and that the circumstance of my being next in the entail of Longbourn estate will be kindly overlooked on your side, as not lead you to reject the offered olive branch.”*¹³ The apparent selflessness of his intentions appears artificial and irritating.

¹¹ (Kirkham, 1986, pg.91)

¹² (Anni and Nevala)

¹³ (Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, Arcturus Publishing Limited, 2014, pg.63)

Moreover, the reactions this letter elicits in the Bennet family reveal their different disposition. Jane gives him credit for his desire for *“atonement”*¹⁴, which supports Elizabeth’s earlier claim of her being *“a great deal too apt to like people in general”*¹⁵ and *“never seeing a fault in anybody”*¹⁶. Kitty and Lydia’s disinterest for anyone not wearing a military coat is a hint to their vanity, thoughtlessness and superficiality. Mary’s analysis of composition and use of religious symbolism, such as the metaphor of the *“olive branch”*¹⁷ as a sign of peace, are the result of her obsessive studying. Elizabeth and her father’s interaction reveals their complicity in exposing Mr Collins’ hypocrisy and absurdity with irony. Mr Bennet’s surprise about his wife’s unexpected decision to welcome him with a *“degree of composure”*¹⁸, is a clue suggesting her lack of control and manners, as well as her stupidity.

Austen effectively uses this letter not to directly impose her view of the character but to let the reader first form their own. She then describes the different reactions to offer both an insight on the psyche of the other characters and different interpretations of the content of the letter. The readers are, therefore, successfully left with already prejudiced expectations for the arrival of Mr Collins.

2.2 Letters as means of indirect persuasion and of generating sympathy towards Jane and Elizabeth as central characters.

Austen employs letters to indirectly influence the readers’ views. For example, by describing Jane and Elizabeth’s scrutiny of the new information acquired through Caroline Bingley’s letter to Jane, explaining her sudden departure from Netherfield.

Differently from Mr Collins’, the audience is only made aware of some extracts of this letter, embedded in the overall narrative and separated by direct speech between Elizabeth and Jane. Reading this piece initiates a discussion between the two on the possible reasons behind such swift a departure and on the nature of Mr Bingley’s feelings.

At first it would appear to be a confidential letter between friends, since it is written in an informal register and Caroline voices her hopes and desires for the future. However, Miss Bingley’s ulterior motives and rudeness of manner are most clearly highlighted by her expression of repulsion toward being acquainted to the rest of Jane’s family, *“I do not pretend to regret anything I shall leave in Hertfordshire, except your society”*¹⁹, and of delight over the *“increasing intimacy”*²⁰ between her brother and Miss Darcy. Her lack of decency and the insensitiveness of behaviour are aggravated by her knowledge of Jane’s partiality for Mr Bingley and the selfishness of her purpose: marrying Mr Darcy. She indirectly states how

¹⁴ (pg. 64)

¹⁵ (pg 20)

¹⁶ (Ibid)

¹⁷ (pg 64)

¹⁸ (pg 65)

¹⁹ (pg 112)

²⁰ (pg 129)

SEEN

Jane's economic status and nearest connections, make her a persona non-grata; "*we are not rich enough, or grand enough for them*"²¹.

The same words are, however, differently interpreted by the two sisters, despite both having carried out an in-depth analysis of every passage. Austen uses this letter to show how each's disposition influences their point of view.

Jane, who always sees the goodness in others, believes Caroline "*incapable of wilfully deceiving any one*"²². Her humbleness, "*compliments always take you [Jane] by surprise*"²³, hence leads her to question the reality of his partiality for her. Her steadiness of mind, kindness of heart and rationality of thought will be further remarked at the arrival of a second letter from Miss Bingley. When approached by the writer's hurtful assertions she regards the whole situation as merely "*an error of fancy on her side*"²⁴ and resolves that "*he will be forgotten, and we shall be as we were before*"²⁵. Austen pushes the reader to agree with Elizabeth's exclamation: "*You are too good. Your sweetness and disinterestedness are really angelic.*"²⁶.

Elizabeth, on the other side, led by her own observations of Mr Bingley's behaviour toward her sister and belief in the necessity of love in marriage, is optimistic about the sincerity of his feelings. Moreover, having never been in the good graces of Miss Bingley she regards her insinuations regarding his fancy for Miss Darcy as based on personal interest rather than on proof. The second letter increases Elizabeth's resentment toward the Bingleys and Darcys, not only because their selfish behaviour hurt Jane's feelings, but also because of her criticism of financial considerations as a motivating factor for marriage. This aversion can be clearly seen in her response to her friend Charlotte Lucas' engagement to Mr Collins: "*Mr Collins is a conceited, pompous, narrow-minded, silly man [...] and the woman who marries him, cannot have a proper way of thinking. You shall not, [...], change the meaning of principle and integrity, nor endeavour to persuade yourself or me that selfishness is prudence, and insensibility of danger, security for happiness*"²⁷.

Austen indirectly, but effectively, reveals to the reader the character's true feelings and craftily manipulates the readers' opinion so as to coincide with Elizabeth's and her own.

2.3 Letters as agents of change within the psychological development of characters.

In the novel Elizabeth is confronted with Mr Darcy's letter explaining the reasons behind his "*arrogance, conceit and selfish disdain of others*"²⁸; faults of which he is accused in her refusal of his proposal of marriage. This letter is at the core centre of the novel since it is the cause

²¹ (pg.114)

²² (Ibid)

²³ (pg.20)

²⁴ (pg.130)

²⁵ (Ibid)

²⁶ (Ibid)

²⁷ (pg.131)

²⁸ (pg.180)

SEEN

of change in Elizabeth's and Darcy's character and the instrument that leads them to realize their faults of pride and prejudice.

Change of such great reach would not have happened if not thanks to Elizabeth's dedication to close-reading, in depth analysis and interpretation of every sentence that composed the letter. Re-reading enables her to overcome the *"strong prejudice against every thing he might say"*²⁹. While her *"remarkable display of judicious critical acumen, taking due note of the interest of the writer and the quality of his language, as well as of events and conduct which she had previously misunderstood"*³⁰ allows her to become a dynamic character and evolve to realise her past pride and prejudice. Elizabeth's approach resembles that of a scientist in search for clues to prove her hypothesis. Darcy's use of legal language, *"I hope, acquit me henceforth of cruelty toward Mr Wickham"*³¹, and compelling, detailed evidence causes the receiver to start doubting the foundations of her prejudice. This letter kick-starts the internal battling which will lead Elizabeth to her realisation that *"Darcy's central fault, after all, is to have been careless about pleasing other people, to have what Elizabeth stingingly terms "a selfish disdain of the feelings of others"*³².

Not only does her opinion of Darcy evolve to a more benevolent one, but his criticism causes her to carry out an introspective analysis of herself and of her closest connections. Mr Darcy's accusations of her family being driven by a *"total want of propriety"*³³ make her aware of their flaws. It would have been impossible to deliver such a criticism through dialogue without causing an immediate rejection of it on Elizabeth's side. Letters empower the author to be honest and direct, and offer the receiver time to re-read, process the information and interpret the meaning of every word without rushing to predetermined conclusions.

This letter leads Elizabeth to conclude *"that he has a solid virtue of head and heart which largely outweigh his tendency to solemnity and self-importance – qualities which his education and upbringing, as well as his wealth, have imposed upon a naturally affectionate heart and critical mind"*³⁴.

Darcy himself is not static. From a man who *"expects her to accept him simply because she is a woman, and poor, and must want a husband and a house of her own"*³⁵ he becomes one who acknowledges his faults and attempts to overcome them, even if it means having to deal with Wickham, whom he detests. The sole decision to write an apologetic letter is proof of how he has reflected upon Elizabeth's criticism of his *"sense of self-consequence characterized by a haughty determination to be mortified by everyone outside his small circle"*³⁶. He uses it as a means through which to explain his actions and provides additional information, fundamental for the further development of the plot and otherwise difficult to express in a dialogic form.

²⁹ (pg.190)

³⁰ (Kirkham, 1986, pg.91)

³¹ (Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, Arcturus Publishing Limited, 2014, pg.189)

³² (Johnson, 1988, pg.81)

³³ (Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, Arcturus Publishing Limited, 2014, pg.184)

³⁴ (Kirkham, 1986, pg.91)

³⁵ (Copeland and McMaster, 1997, pg.53)

³⁶ (Johnson, 1988, pg.80)

This letter is highly effective since it condenses all the fundamental functions of this text type: disclosing information the readers would have not otherwise been able to access, expressing feelings and criticisms that would have not been able to be expressed vocally, but most importantly initiating character development.

2.4 Letters as devices which contribute to the increase of tension, action and moments of crisis within the narrative.

“Pride and Prejudice” is based on the classic structure of novels; subdivided in five main parts: rising action, crisis, climax, consequences and denouement. Austen uses letters to activate the rise of tension, leading toward the climatic point: Lydia’s elopement. Observing characters through times of struggle allows the reader to fully understand their true values and to evaluate whether they remained static or developed.

1. Static characters

Lydia’s letter to Mrs Foster announcing her escape with Mr Wickham is proof of her in-existent morals, utter ignorance of decency and incapability of understanding the consequences of her actions. The elopement is the logical continuation of her search for immediate sources of pleasure, such as chasing after the officer’s attentions. Austen’s use of an informal register and a conversational tone supports the view of Lydia as vain and shallow. Her regard for the whole matter as a joke, “*what a good joke it will be! I can hardly write for laughing*”³⁷, shows how her “*high animal spirits*” and “*natural self-consequence*”³⁸ render her incapable of understanding the gravity of the effects that an elopement might have, not only on her reputation, but on her whole family’s. Mrs Gardiner’s attribution of responsibility for the affair mainly to Lydia, “*it is really too great a violation of decency, honour, and interest, for him to be guilty of it.*”³⁹, is expression of the feelings Austen wished to stimulate in the readers.

Another static character is Mr Collins whose perspective is seen through his letter to Mr Bennet. Through the novel, he proved multiple times to be a stubborn man ruled by unyielding, bigoted presumptions. An example is his inability to understand Elizabeth’s reasons to refuse his proposal of marriage, “*It does not appear to me that my hand is unworthy your acceptance, or that the establishment I can offer would be any other than desirable*”⁴⁰, or to reprehend his “*manner*”⁴¹. Austen again underlines his narrowness of mind and absence of empathy by bestowing him with an accusatory tone and religious lexis, such as: “*condole*”⁴², “*sorrow*”⁴³ and “*grievance*”⁴⁴, usually used in relation to mourning. His advice to “*throw off your unworthy child from your affection for ever, and leave her to reap the fruits*

³⁷ (Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, Arcturus Publishing Limited, 2014, pg.265)

³⁸ (pg.47)

³⁹ (pg.257)

⁴⁰ (pg.104)

⁴¹ (pg.110)

⁴² (pg.269)

⁴³ (pg.270)

⁴⁴ (pg.269)

*of her own heinous offence*⁴⁵ shows how for him there exists no compromise. This is shown by his choice of words. The phrase *“reap the fruits”*⁴⁶, in this case, has a non-literal meaning, as it refers to the consequences her *“heinous offence”*⁴⁷ will have. *“Heinous”*⁴⁸ itself, is an adjective repeatedly used in the Bible to refer to unacceptable acts such as adultery and prostitution; while the elopement is being referred as an *“offence”*⁴⁹ not only to the family but also to the religious morals.

Lydia’s disdain of religion and decency appear to him as a mortal offence and his highly formal and pompous tone and register admit no retort.

Both Lydia and Mr Collins’ opinions are expressed not through the reflective voice of the author but through their own direct words in the form of letters. Austen therefore, does not provide the readers with her own judgement on the two but gives them the instruments to reach their own conclusion. However, being two highly stereotyped characters, the author is sure of eliciting the same unfavourable opinion in everyone.

2. Letters which allow for the development of dynamic characterisation.

Elizabeth’s and Darcy’s reactions, on the other side, show the extent of their development as characters. Darcy’s mutation of character is impressive; he overcomes his bitter hatred for Wickham, whom he could not stand the sight of, and condescends to his pecuniary desires just so Wickham will marry Lydia, girl whom he detests. He goes against his pride and preconceptions due to the regard he holds for Elizabeth and in spite of having been refused and referred to as *“the last man in the world whom I [Elizabeth] could be prevailed on to marry”*⁵⁰. The confrontation with Elizabeth, in which she highlights his flaws, and the action of writing an apologetic letter have led him to reflect on his actions and recognise his selfishness and pride, *“my parents allowed, encourages, almost taught me to be selfish and overbearing; to care for none beyond my own family circle; to think meanly of the rest of the world; to wish at least to think meanly of their sense and worth compared with my own.”*⁵¹. He takes this opportunity as an attempt at redeeming himself in Elizabeth’s eyes and correct what he feels to be the result of his negligence. He considers Elizabeth as the reason behind such revolution, *“you taught me a lesson, hard at first, but most advantageous. By you I was properly humbled”*⁵², and this belief only strengthens his passion.

Elizabeth’s own feelings *“are now so widely different from what they were then”*⁵³. From this point onward, Austen abandons the neutrality as author to utilize the narrative technique of free indirect discourse, to convey Elizabeth’s thoughts and feelings; despair for her sister’s safety, anger at her stupidity and regret for not having acted to prevent this. For example, her

⁴⁵ (pg.270)

⁴⁶ (Ibid)

⁴⁷ (Ibid)

⁴⁸ (Ibid)

⁴⁹ (Ibid)

⁵⁰ (pg.180)

⁵¹ (pg.333)

⁵² (pg.334)

⁵³ (pg.333)

exclamation "*Oh! how acutely did she now feel it*"⁵⁴ combines both speech and reported thought.

While being torn between these distressing emotions the realization that "*her [Elizabeth's] power was sinking; everything must sink under such a proof of family weakness, such an assurance of the deepest disgrace.*"⁵⁵, sparks the acknowledgement of the extent of her renewed feelings for Darcy; "*never had she so honestly felt that she could have loved him, as now, when all love must be vain*"⁵⁶. Still anchored into believing his class pride so strong as to overcome any affection that might have been left for her, she feels hopeless facing the impossibility of the connection. Jane's letters to Elizabeth announcing the elopement are, therefore, the mean through which the readers can evaluate the extent of the change Darcy's apologetic letter elicited both on Darcy and Elizabeth. Austen effectively reaches her aim of exposing the reader to the reactions of static and dynamic characters to a crisis.

2.5 Letters as a means of advancing the plot.

The resolution of the plot is brought by Mrs Gardiner's letter to Elizabeth. The simple realisation of the main character's own past faults and modification of their behaviours would have not been enough to ultimately bring them together had it not been for Mrs Gardiner's intervention. Her disclosure to Elizabeth of the length to which Darcy went to save her sister's reputation, regardless of his spite for Wickham, gave her niece a "*flutter of spirits*"⁵⁷ and revived her hopes of marrying Darcy. Lizzy's love consequently, presents itself with renewed strength, encouraging her to break the tense, awkward cordiality that had created between the two lovers by thanking him for his "*generous compassion, which induced him to take so much trouble, and bear so many mortifications*"⁵⁸. The following conversation would ultimately lead to the materialization of their engagement.

Austen's notion of marriage as the most desirable conclusion to the narrative is much influenced by the social conventions of her time. Many feminist interpretations of the novel see it as a subjugation of Elizabeth's independent and rebellious nature to the traditional patriarchal society. However, it can also be viewed as the end of the couple's vicissitudes and the coronation of their love. Letters are therefore, used by the author as a crucial means of forwarding the plot and delineating the structure, in this case by revealing information that would contribute to reaching the climax of the narrative.

⁵⁴ (pg.255)

⁵⁵ (pg.253)

⁵⁶ (Ibid)

⁵⁷ (pg.294)

⁵⁸ (pg.330-331)

3. CONCLUSION

The use of letters as narrative devices in Jane Austen's novel "Pride and Prejudice" is highly effective in drawing the readers into the psychologies of Austen's characters and binding them into her narrative structure.

Throughout the novel Austen employs an omniscient over the shoulder narrator. Elizabeth is used as the lens through which we view the story as it unfolds. Letters represent a different mode of narration, since they are plot devices written in the first-person narrative. The use of this artifice enables the readers, through a suspension of disbelief, to interpret the implied meaning of Austen's stylistic choices, capturing the voice of the characters without the mediation of the author's narrative voice.

Plot and characterization cannot be separated as their interconnectedness leads the protagonists to express concepts and feelings impossible to deliver through dialogue, and consequently initiating more dynamic character development. Psychological realisation enables for a deeper and clearer character analysis on the part of the reader as well as a better understanding of their role in the novel and in the historical context.

It must be considered however, that letters are only one of the techniques used by Austen to achieve her aims. For instance, the use of free indirect discourse, irony and realism all add to the convincing quality of her third person narration. However, the importance of letters cannot be denied, as shown by all the evidence detailed in this essay. They contribute in the exposition and contrast between characters' personalities and attitudes. This indirectly persuades the readers to side with Elizabeth and those she values, to initiate character development, to express concepts or feelings that would be otherwise difficult to deliver through dialogue and to further the plot.

Austen's works will never cease to provoke debate. The interpretations that can be drawn from them are of such wide scope that each reader reaches an interpretation of characters' psychologies shaped and manipulated by Austen's use of the narrative voice. Nonetheless, a close analysis of the function of the letters leads to a new and revealing relationship with Austen's characters. The use of this technique is not confined to "Pride and Prejudice" but Austen extends it also to her other novels. The value of letters is in fact, of no less importance in "Mansfield Park", "Emma" or "Sense and Sensibility".

Her mastery of the novel form, in which letters play a crucial role, is therefore undeniable.

4. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Austen, Jane. *Pride and prejudice*. London: Arcturus Publishing Limited, 2014. Print.

Austen, Jane. *Emma, Mansfield Park, Northanger Abbey, Persuasion, Sense and Sensibility*. London: Arcturus Publishing Limited, 2014. Print.

SEEN

Copeland, Edward, and Juliet McMaster. *The Cambridge companion to Jane Austen*. Cambridge: Cambridge U Press, 1997. Print. The Cambridge companions to literature.

The Editors of Encyclopædia Britannica. "Epistolary novel." *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Encyclopædia Britannica, inc., 21 Feb. 2016. Web. 24 July 2017. <<https://www.britannica.com/art/epistolary-novel>>.

Flynn, Carol Houlihan. *Samuel Richardson: A Man of Letters*. Princeton University Press, 1982. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt7zvgnr>.

Gray, Martin, and Laura Gray. *Pride and prejudice: York notes advanced*. London: Longman, York Press, 2004. Print.

Handley, Graham. *Jane Austen*. London: Bristol Classical Press, 1992. Print. Criticism in focus.

Deirdre, Le Faye. *Jane Austen's Letters*. Fourth Edition ed. New York: Oxford U Press Inc., 2011. Print.

Jodi, Devine A. "Letters and their role in revealing class and personal identity in *Pride and Prejudice*." *The Free Library*. N.p., 01 Jan. 2015. Web. 23 July 2017. <[https://www.thefreelibrary.com/Letters and their role in revealing class and personal identity in...-a0147792427](https://www.thefreelibrary.com/Letters+and+their+role+in+revealing+class+and+personal+identity+in+...-a0147792427)>.

Johnson, Claudia L. *Jane Austen: women politics and the novel*. Chicago: U of Chicago Press, 1988. Print.

Kaplan, Deborah. *Jane Austen among women*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins U Press, 1994. Print.

Kirkham, Margaret. *Jane Austen, Feminism and Fiction*. New York: Methuen Inc., 1986. Print.

Sairio, Anni, and Minna Nevala. "Social dimensions of layout in eighteenth-century letters and letter-writing manuals." Research Unit for the Study of Variation, Contacts and Change in English (VARIENG). 2007. Accessed September 18, 2017. http://www.helsinki.fi/varieng/series/volumes/14/sairio_nevala/#references.

Shmoop Editorial Team. "Letters in *Pride and Prejudice*." *Shmoop*. Shmoop University, Inc. , 11 Nov. 2008. Web. 18 July 2017. <<http://www.shmoop.com/pride-and-prejudice/letters-symbol.html>>.

"*Pride and Prejudice*." *SparkNotes*. SparkNotes, n.d. Web. 15 Mar. 2017. <<http://www.sparknotes.com/lit/pride/>>

SEEN

A - Topic is focused and the methodology is very clearly explained.
B - A wide variety of relevant sources have been consulted and support the argument.
C - Highly insightful analysis.

Please refer to the EE guide and select from the Group 1 Language A categories:
Category 1: Studies of literature in the language A

EE/RPPF



International Baccalaureate®
Baccalauréat International
Bachillerato Internacional

For use from May/November 2018

Page 1 / 3

Candidate personal code

Extended essay - Reflections on planning and progress form

Candidate: This form is to be completed by the candidate during the course and completion of their EE. This document records reflections on your planning and progress, and the nature of your discussions with your supervisor. You must undertake three formal reflection sessions with your supervisor: The first formal reflection session should focus on your initial ideas and how you plan to undertake your research; the interim reflection session is once a significant amount of your research has been completed, and the final session will be in the form of a viva voce once you have completed and handed in your EE. This document acts as a record in supporting the authenticity of your work. The three reflections combined must amount to no more than 500 words.

The completion of this form is a mandatory requirement of the EE for first assessment May 2018. It must be submitted together with the completed EE for assessment under Criterion E.

Supervisor: You must have three reflection sessions with each candidate, one early on in the process, an interim meeting and then the final viva voce. Other check-in sessions are permitted but do not need to be recorded on this sheet. After each reflection session candidates must record their reflections and as the supervisor you must sign and date this form.

First reflection session

Candidate comments:

When first having to decide the topic on which to focus my extended essay I knew exactly what it would be. Having been an avid reader of Jane Austen's works, I caught the opportunity to pursue my personal interest and carry out a close reading analysis of the mechanisms of language she uses, with particular focus on letters, in "Pride and Prejudice". In the initial phases of my research I wanted to compare Jane Austen's personal letters to her characters' ones. However, I soon realised that my original question was too broad, since it might have led me to take a biographical viewpoint rather than a literary one. When researching material on primary sources I also discarded the idea of comparing letters from two separate novels and decided instead to discuss chronologically the most important ones in "Pride and Prejudice". The most difficult aspect in the planning progress was establishing a time dedicated to researching the topic and neglecting to make a detailed plan slowed down my progress. Having identified the issue, I resolved to prepare a clear schedule showing my objectives and by when to complete them. I now feel ready to approach this challenge in the most proactive manner.

Date: 04/05/2017

Supervisor initials:

Interim reflection

Candidate comments:

During the course of my research I encountered difficulties with finding secondary sources that specifically discussed the function of letters in Jane Austen's "Pride and Prejudice". This lengthened my research process since I had to go through many sources to find relevant material. However, analysing these sources, even though less-relevant to my topic, showed me how different themes of the novel had been interpreted and effectively strengthened my knowledge of the historical period when the novel was written. Comparing different opinions on the same topic enabled me to evolve and widen my own views as well as contributing to making my Extended Essay better-rounded. One drawback I faced when using numerous sources was that it led me to focus more on context and themes rather than increasing my knowledge of the specific functions of letters as a literary technique.

Date: 13/09/2017

Supervisor initials:

Final reflection - Viva voce

Candidate comments:

With hindsight, the process of researching and writing my Extended Essay has been challenging but it has enabled me to deepen my knowledge not only of the novel "Pride and Prejudice" itself but also of its author's attitudes and purposes and of the stylistic features characteristic of letter writing. This last aspect particularly stimulated my interest because it led me to understand the importance of this text type as a mean of communication and it gave me an insight on the cultural norms of the middle-high society of the 19th century. One of the most interesting aspects that particularly surprised me was to learn about the existence of letter writing manuals for people from the middle-class and it is undoubtedly an aspect of my Extended Essay I would like to study further in the future.

Date: 31/10/2017

Supervisor initials:

Supervisor comments:

Supervisor: *By submitting this candidate work for assessment, you are taking responsibility for its authenticity. No piece of candidate work should be uploaded/submitted to the e-Coursework system if its authenticity is in doubt or if contradictory comments are added to this form. If your text in the box below raises any doubt on the authenticity of the work, this component will not be assessed.*

As her supervisor, it has been quite astounding to witness the way in which this student approached this task. Fired with enthusiasm for Austen's works, having read most of her novels prior to the project, she came up with an original angle on these classic texts and worked with great dedication to uncover new insights into the impact of narrative techniques. Utterly independent, determined and with a wealth of original ideas, this student enjoyed every moment of this academically rigorous task and demonstrated an impressive depth of understanding and analytical ability. She worked meticulously and with an outstanding level of scholarly ability. Her management of the task was superb – she was highly controlled and methodical, adopting a highly efficient schedule in which she planned each aspect of the task and worked towards shorter deadlines, strategically ticking off tasks on the journey towards the final deadline. The final product was a highly astute and controlled analysis of the text, which offered very convincing arguments and judgements. Her use of evidence was outstanding and she was able to articulate her ideas in a highly sophisticated manner. This student was very skilled at responding to feedback and making incremental adjustments over time, with a great eye for precise detail. The final product is ambitious in scope, but also focused in its aims, and meets the requirements of the task very successfully.

Commentary to support marking

Subject: Studies in Language and Literature

Paper component: Extended Essay

Language: English

Exam session: May 2018

Essay code: 33 A

Essay category: Cat 1

Essay title: How effectively does Jane Austen employ letters as a narrative device within her novel *Pride and Prejudice*?

Criterion	Mark	Out of	Justification
A	6	6	The topic and RQ are clearly stated and focused; arguably the candidate's strength under this criterion lies in the fact that she has taken a popular novel and a potentially "well-worn" topic, and through an intelligent and wide-ranging choice of secondary sources, has successfully explored an independent interpretation.
B	6	6	The candidate is able to demonstrate a confident, in-depth knowledge and understanding of both the primary and secondary sources throughout the essay.
C	11	12	Informed and lively writing throughout; a clear introduction to the topic and task is followed by clearly-delineated chapters in which each type of letter is carefully analysed and its role in the narrative established. Perhaps a few "short cuts" have been taken in order to keep the Extended Essay within the word count (e.g. some of the quotations from the letters and events in the novel could have been explored in

			more context) but this is a quibble given the overall high quality of the analysis and evaluation.
D	4	4	The presentation is excellent, worthy of a professional academic paper.
E	6	6	Lively writing with a clear sense of engagement with the task and some appreciation of the way ideas /avenues of research have to be refined or discarded in the EE process.
Total:	33	34	