
REVISION QUESTIONS

1. Mary Lascelles has said that *Emma* 'presents a deliberately contrived antithesis between the world of actuality and illusion'. Show how Jane Austen presents and dramatises this antithesis in her novel.
2. With close reference to the novel, state what you think R. W. Chapman had in mind when he said '*Emma* is among other things a detective story'.
3. 'Though Emma's faults are comic, they constantly threaten to produce serious harm' (Wayne Booth). Discuss the blend of seriousness and comedy in the novel, and show how Jane Austen contrives to retain a prevailing comic mood.
4. It has been said that the subject of *Emma* is marriage. State your reasons for agreeing or disagreeing with this view.
5. Discuss the comment that while some of the people in the novel are well-developed characters (e.g. Emma, Mr Knightley), others are only caricatures (e.g. Mr Woodhouse, Mrs Elton).
6. Show how Jane Austen exploits social contrasts and social factors in spite of the limited social world that the novel presents.
7. Develop the suggestion that the action of *Emma* is presented in three stages like the acts of a three-act play, and show how this structure accommodates the author's theme.
8. An alternative title for the novel might be *The Education of Emma Woodhouse*. Show in what sense Emma is 'educated' in the course of the story, and how her education comes about.
9. Jane Austen often presents formal or semi-formal social occasions such as a dinner-party or a picnic. With reference to *three* examples of such scenes in *Emma*, discuss the uses to which they are put.

10. W. J. Harvey has said that 'Emma Woodhouse is a heroine who evokes a wide spectrum of critical response, ranging from almost total indulgence and sympathy to almost total hostility and disapproval'. What are your views on the heroine?
11. John Henry Newman complained of *Emma* that 'the action is frittered away in over-little things'. Defend the novel against this charge.
12. In his *Aspects of the Novel*, E. M. Forster says of Jane Austen: 'She is a miniaturist, but never two-dimensional. All her characters are round, or capable of rotundity'. Explain what you consider Forster to mean by 'round' characters, and consider the truth of his statement with reference to *Emma*.
13. ' . . . plain, unaffected, gentleman-like English, such as Mr Knightley used even to the woman he was in love with. . .'. Show how Jane Austen uses different varieties of speech to contribute to the creation of her characters.
14. Reviewing *Emma* in 1815, Sir Walter Scott found in it 'the merits of the Flemish school of painting' (i.e. a strong vein of scrupulous domestic realism). Discuss the ways in which this novel presents a convincing picture of life.

FURTHER READING

- Frank W. Bradbrook, *Jane Austen: 'Emma'* (London: Edward Arnold, 1961).
- J. F. Burrows, *Jane Austen's 'Emma'* (Sydney: Sydney University Press, 1968).
- Barbara Hardy, *A Reading of Jane Austen* (London: Peter Owen, 1975).
- Arnold Kettle, *An Introduction to the English Novel*, vol I (London: Hutchinson, 1951).
- Mary Lascelles, *Jane Austen and her Art* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1939).
- Marghanita Laski, *Jane Austen and her World* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1969).
- David Lodge (ed.), *Jane Austen: 'Emma' - A Casebook* (London: Macmillan, 1968).
- Norman Page, *The Language of Jane Austen* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1972).
- Stephen M. Parrish (ed.), *Jane Austen: 'Emma'* (New York: Norton, 1972).
- K. C. Phillipps, *Jane Austen's English* (London: André Deutsch, 1970).
- Brian Southam, *Jane Austen: The Critical Heritage* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1968).