

Jane Austen (B1)

A – Before you start

Answer the questions with a partner.

1. Do you like stories set in previous periods of history? Why (not)?
2. Do you like reading novels or do you prefer to watch the film versions of them?
3. Have you read any of Jane Austen's novels? If so, did you enjoy them?

B – Listen and answer

Read these statements. Then listen (without reading) and write T (True) or F (False).

1. Jane Austen wrote a large number of novels.
2. She was only 41 when she died.
3. She had seven brothers and sisters.
4. The family lived mostly in London.
5. She was married for a short time.
6. Her novels were published under her brother's name.
7. The public enjoyed reading her books.
8. By the time of her death, her fame had spread all over the country.

C – Read and answer

Read the article and answer the questions.

1. How were Jane Austen's novels different from those of Daniel Defoe and Henry Fielding?
2. What does the article say about her family background?
3. Why don't we know much about her personal life?
4. What did the literary critics of the time like about her works?
5. What was the main theme of her novels?
6. Why did readers find her books both amusing and entertaining?

D – Learn it! Use it!

Complete these sentences with words from the glossary. (You may have to adapt the expression in some way; e.g. change the verb tense, or change from plural to singular.)

1. This journalist's articles are very amusing. They're always full of _____ comments.
2. Our new neighbours aren't very _____. They never say hello.
3. The company sent the documents by first-class post to _____ they arrived in time.
4. The meeting was _____ because of the rail strike.
5. Although Charlotte is in her eighties, she still has _____ energy.
6. The hotel isn't very luxurious but it's in a beautiful _____ on the river bank.

E – Ready for the B1 PRELIMINARY English Exam? (Paper 1, Reading: Part 6)

Write one word only in each space.

Most critics agree that the 1995 BBC drama series *Pride and Prejudice* is the most faithful adaptation of a Jane Austen novel that has ever ¹ _____ made. The story was broadcast in six episodes that ² _____ 55 minutes. Jennifer Ehle and Colin Firth starred ³ _____ the main characters, Elizabeth Bennet and Fitzwilliam Darcy.

The series was a ⁴ _____ success with the public and ⁵ _____ several awards, including a BAFTA Television Award for Jennifer Ehle for “⁶ _____ Actress”. It inspired author Helen Fielding to write her popular Bridget Jones novels.

F – Write about it

Write about a classic novel written by one of your country's most famous authors. Mention:

- where the story is set;
- when it was written;
- who the main characters are;
- what the story is about;
- why it has become a classic novel.

Answers

B – Listen and answer

1. She only wrote six books/novels. 2. T 3. T 4. F – They lived in the country and visited London. 5. F – She was almost married. 6. F – They were published anonymously. 7. T 8. When she died she was still unknown to much of the country.

C – Read and answer

1. Her stories were realistic; they were about normal people living ordinary lives. 2. Her father was a rector in a country village and the family had land. They were minor landed gentry. 3. Because after her death her letters were censored or destroyed. 4. They liked her morality, her entertaining dialogues and character description. They also liked the domestic realism in her stories. 5. The main theme was young women's journeys of self-discovery through love to marriage. 6. Because she was witty and was very good at telling stories.

D – Learn it! Use it!

1. witty 2. sociable 3. ensure 4. called off 5. astonishing 6. setting

E – Ready for the B1 PRELIMINARY English Exam?

1. been 2. lasted 3. as 4. great/huge/big 5. won/got 6. Best