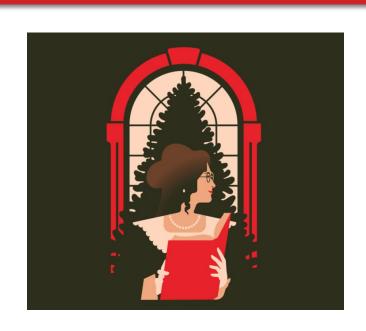


Study Guide 2019-2020

Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley

By Lauren Gunderson and Margot Melcon



Florida Standards

Language Arts

LAFS.910.RL.1: Key Ideas and Details LAFS.910.RH.1: Key Ideas and Details

LAFS.1112.SL.1: Comprehension and Collaboration

LAFS.1112.RL.1: Key Ideas and Details

Theater

TH.912.F.2: Careers in and related to the arts TH.68.S.1: The arts are inherently experiential TH.68.S.3: Artists learn to master techniques

PG

Romantic Themes

Most appropriate for Grade 6 and up.

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Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberly Introduction

Educators:

Thank you for taking the time out of your very busy schedule to bring the joy of theatre arts to your classroom. We are well aware of the demands on your time and it is our goal to offer you supplemental information to compliment your curriculum with ease and expediency.

Please take a moment to explore our website at <u>orlandoshakes.org/education</u> for the following ways to add to your curriculum.

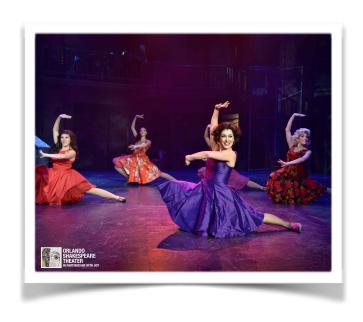
- "On your feet " activities to energize students
- Shortened Shakespeare scripts that range from 60 120 minutes long that are perfect for school productions
- Study Guide Spotlights for quick reference to the standards addressed in each production

We look forward to hosting you at the Lowndes Shakespeare Theater. Additionally, should you wish to bring our Actor/Educators into your classroom, we will work around your schedule. Feel free to contact us at Orlando Shakes should you have any questions or suggestions on how we can better serve you. We are always learning from you.

Thank you for your tremendous work in nurturing our audiences of tomorrow.

Anne Hering
Director of Education

Brandon Yagel Education Coordinator



Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberly Enjoying Live Theater

Theater is a Team Sport

The **Playwright** writes the script. Sometimes it is from an original idea and sometimes it is adapted from a book or story. The Playwright decides what the characters say, and gives the Designers guidelines on how the play should look.

The **Director** creates the vision for the production and works closely with the actors, costume, set and lighting designers to make sure everyone tells the same story.



Sound Designer -Britt Sanducky Photo: Rob Jones



Stage Manager -Stacey Renee Norwood Photo: Rob Jones

The **Actors** use their bodies and voices to bring the author's words and the director's ideas to life on the stage.

The **Designers** imagine and create the lights, scenery, props, costumes and sound that will compliment and complete the director's vision.

The **Stage Manager** assists the director during rehearsals by recording their instructions and making sure the actors and designers understand these ideas. The Stage Manager then runs the show during each performance by calling cues for lights and sound, as well as entrances and exits.



Costume Designer -Denise Warner Photo: Rob Jones

The **Shop** and **Stage Crew** builds the set, props and costumes according to the designer's plans. The Stage Crew sets the stage with props and furniture, assists the actors with costume changes and operates sound, lighting and stage machinery during each performance.



Windsor
Photo: Rob Jones

The **Front of House Staff** welcomes you to the theater, takes your tickets, helps you find your seat and answers any question you may have on the day of performance.

The **Theater** is where it all takes place. Orlando Shakespeare Theater In Partnership with UCF is the only professional, classical theater company in Central Florida, reaching students and audiences in the surrounding eight counties.

Mission:

To enrich our community with engaging professional theater, inspiring educational experiences, and thought-provoking new plays.

Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberly Enjoying Live Theater

The Actor/Audience Relationship

The Audience is the reason Live Theater exists. At Orlando Shakes, we cherish the Actor/Audience relationship, the unique give and take that exists during a performance which makes the audience an ACTIVE participant in the event. The actors see the audience just as the audience sees the actors, and every, laugh, sniffle, chuckle and gasp the audience makes effects the way the actor plays his next moment. We want you to be engaged, and to live the story with us!



Photo: Rob Jones

There are certain Conventions of the Theatrical Event, like, when the lights go down you know that the show is about to start, and that the audience isn't encouraged to come and go during a performance. Here are some other tips to help you and your classmates be top notch audience members:

- Please make sure to turn off your cell phones. And NO TEXTING!
- Please stay in your seat. Use the restroom before you take your seat and stay in your seat unless there is an emergency.
- Please do not eat or drink in the theater.

Talkback

After the performance, the actors will stay on stage for about 10 minutes to hear your comments and answer any questions you have about the play and the production. We'd love to hear what you felt about the play, what things were clear or unclear to you, and hear your opinions about what the play means. This last portion of the Actor/Audience Relationship is so important to help us better serve you and enrich your artistic experience.

Consider the Themes and Key Questions above and ask yourself:

- 1. What Key Questions did the play answer?
- 2. Do you agree with everything the play said about these themes?
- 3. How did the actors, directors, and designers all address these themes?
- 4. What opinion did the artists bring to the process, did those opinion change throughout the process (designing, rehearsing, performing) and how did that impact their work?

Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberly About the Play Meet the Playwright

Lauren Gunderson is the most produced living playwright in America, the winner of the Lanford Wilson Award and the Steinberg/ATCA New Play Award, a finalist for the Susan Smith Blackburn Prize and John Gassner Award for Playwriting, and a recipient of the Mellon Foundation's 3-Year Residency with Marin Theatre Co. She studied Southern Literature and Drama at Emory University, and Dramatic Writing at NYU's Tisch School where she



was a Reynolds Fellow in Social Entrepreneurship. Her work has been commissioned, produced and developed at companies across the US including the Denver Center (THE BOOK OF WILL), South Coast Rep (EMILIE, SILENT SKY), The Kennedy Center (THE AMAZING ADVENTURES OF DR. WONDERFUL AND HER DOG!), the O'Neill Theatre Center, Berkeley Rep, Shotgun Players, TheatreWorks, Crowded Fire, San Francisco Playhouse, Marin Theatre, Synchronicity, Olney Theatre, Geva, and more. Her work is published by Dramatists Play Service (SILENT SKY, BAUER), Playscripts (I AND YOU; EXIT, PURSUED BY A BEAR; and TOIL AND TROUBLE), and Samuel French (EMILIE). She is a Playwright in Residence at The Playwrights Foundation, and a proud Dramatists Guild member. She is from Atlanta, GA, and lives in San Francisco.

Meet the Playwright

Margot Melcon is a theater artist, administrator and writer. She was the Director of New Play Development at Marin Theatre Company for seven years, where she dramaturged over 30 productions—including six world premieres—and administered the company's two annual new play prizes and commissioning program. She has developed plays with TheatreWorks, Bay Area Playwrights Festival, Crowded Fire Theater, Shotgun Players, Berkeley Rep's Ground Floor, the Kennedy Center, the New Harmony Project, and the Playwrights' Center in Minneapolis. She is currently the

Program Executive for Promoting Culture at the Zellerbach Family Foundation. Margot is a graduate of California State University, Chico.

Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberly About the Play Summary and Overview

Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley is a witty and heartwarming sequel to Jane Austen's novel Pride and Prejudice. Set in England in 1815, the play picks up two years after the events of the book and finds the Bennet sisters gathering to celebrate Christmas at Pemberley, the stately home of Elizabeth and Fitzwilliam Darcy. Amid the festivities, Mary Bennet, the bookish and socially awkward middle sister, once again finds herself the odd-sister-out. Mary's charming elder sisters, Jane and Elizabeth, are both happy and secure in their marriages, and Mary's irrepressible younger sister, Lydia, finds every opportunity to brag about her exciting life with her "charming, handsome and clever" husband, Wickham, but Mary is beau-less, still living with her parents and facing an uncertain future. Mary's spirits are lifted, however, by the appearance of an unexpected guest at Pemberley - Lord Arthur de Bourgh; not only is Arthur "a single man in possession of a good fortune," but he happens to be absorbed in reading the exact same scientific tome as Mary. As Mary gets to know Arthur, her hopes for independence and for an intellectual match seem close to being fulfilled; but, as in any Austen novel, the route to love and marriage is never quite so simple.

Synopsis courtesy of ensembletheatre.com



Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberly About the Play Meet the Characters of the Play

Mary Bennet

Twenty years old. Finally coming in to her own, she is no longer the plain, boring girl she once was. She has a fire in her now. She is intelligent, curious, and lively, but her family only sees her as a future spinster. She does not suffer fools. She wants to live.

Arthur de Bourgh

Twenty-two years old. A studious, unsociable, only child who has never been around women or large families. He is a loner who prefers books to people. He has recently inherited a large estate and has no idea what to do next.

Elizabeth Darcy

Twenty-two years old and married to Mr. Darcy. Confident, charming, and witty. She makes a fun and surprising lady of the house. She is best friends with her sister Jane.

Fitzwilliam Darcy

Thirty years old and a loving, generous, and smart (if slightly stiff) husband. He is quiet and vigilant and thus sees what others often miss. He knows what being lovelorn is like.

Jane Bingley

Twenty-four years old and married to Mr. Bingley. She is 7 months pregnant with her first child and is sweet and optimistic as ever. The kindest heart in the house.

Charles Bingley

Twenty-five years old and gracious, happy, and ever-focused on the love of his life, Jane. A good friend and always ready with a smile.

Lydia Wickham

Seventeen years old and flirtatious, braggadocios and selfish. Her marriage to Mr. Wickham is a sham but she will not admit this. She also won't admit that she desperately needs the love of her family.

Anne de Bourgh

Twenty three years old. The only daughter of the late Lady Catherine de Bourgh. Lived in her mother's very large shadow, never having to ask for anything or speak for herself, her entire life. Judgmental and impatient, just like her mother.

Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberly About the Story Meet the Author of the Story

Jane Austen (16 December 1775 – 18 July 1817) was an English novelist known primarily for her six major novels, which interpret, critique and comment upon the British landed gentry at the end of the 18th century. Austen's plots often explore the dependence of women on marriage in the pursuit of favorable social standing and economic security. Her works critique the novels of sensibility of the second half of the 18th century and are part of the transition to 19th-century literary realism. Austen's use of



biting irony, realism, humor, and social commentary, have long earned her acclaim among critics, scholars, and popular audiences alike.

In life she published four novels *Sense and Sensibility*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Mansfield Park* and *Emma*, achieving success as a published writer. She wrote two additional novels, *Northanger Abbey* and *Persuasion*, both published posthumously in 1818. Her six full-length novels have rarely been out of print, although they were published anonymously and brought her moderate success and little fame during her lifetime.

Austen has inspired a large number of critical essays and literary anthologies. Her novels have inspired many films, from 1940's *Pride and Prejudice* to more recent productions like *Sense and Sensibility* (1995), *Emma* (1996), *Mansfield Park* (1999), *Pride & Prejudice* (2005), and *Love & Friendship* (2016).

Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberly About the Story Summary of Pride and Prejudice

The news that a wealthy young gentleman named Charles Bingley has rented the manor of Netherfield Park causes a great stir in the nearby Bennet household. The Bennets have five unmarried daughters-from oldest to youngest, Jane, Elizabeth, Mary, Kitty, and Lydia—and Mrs. Bennet is desperate to see them all married. The Bennets attend a ball at which Mr. Bingley is present. He is taken with Jane and spends much of the evening dancing with her. His close friend, Mr. Darcy, is less pleased with the evening and haughtily refuses to dance with Elizabeth, making him arrogant and obnoxious.

Over subsequent weeks, however, Mr. Darcy finds himself increasingly attracted to Elizabeth's charm and intelligence. Jane's friendship with Mr. Bingley also continues to blossom, and Jane pays a visit to the Bingley mansion. On her way she is caught in a storm and falls sick, forcing her to stay at Netherfield for several days. In order to tend to Jane, Elizabeth hikes through muddy fields and arrives with a spattered dress, much to the disdain of the snobbish Miss Bingley. Charles Bingley's sister. Miss Bingley's spite only increases when she notices that Darcy, whom she is pursuing, pays quite a bit of attention to Elizabeth.

When Elizabeth and Jane return home, they find Mr. Collins visiting their household. Mr. Collins is a pompous fool, though he is quite enthralled by the Bennet girls. Shortly after his arrival, he makes a proposal of marriage to Elizabeth. She turns him down. Meanwhile, the Bennet girls have become friendly with militia officers stationed in a nearby town. Among them is Wickham, a handsome young soldier who is friendly toward Elizabeth and tells her how Darcy cruelly cheated him out of an inheritance. At the beginning of winter, the Bingleys and Darcy leave Netherfield and return to London, much to Jane's dismay. A further shock arrives with the news that Mr. Collins has become engaged to Charlotte Lucas, Elizabeth's best friend. Charlotte explains to Elizabeth that she is getting older and needs the match for financial reasons. Jane visits the city to see "friends" (hoping also that she might see

Mr. Bingley). However, Miss Bingley visits her and behaves rudely, while Mr. Bingley fails to visit her at all. The marriage prospects for the Bennet girls appear bleak.

That spring, Elizabeth visits Charlotte. who now lives near the home of Mr. Collins's patron, Lady Catherine de Bourgh, who is also Darcy's aunt. Darcy calls on Lady Catherine and encounters Elizabeth, whose presence leads him to make a number of visits to the Collins's home, where she is staying. One day, he makes a shocking proposal of marriage, which Elizabeth quickly refuses. She tells Darcy that she considers him arrogant and unpleasant, then scolds him for steering Bingley away from Jane and disinheriting Wickham. Darcy leaves her but shortly thereafter delivers a letter to her. In this letter, he admits that he urged Bingley to distance himself from Jane, but claims he did so only because he thought their romance was not serious. As for Wickham, he informs Elizabeth that the young officer is a liar and that the real cause of their disagreement was Wickham's attempt to elope with his young sister, Georgiana Darcy.

This letter causes Elizabeth to reevaluate her feelings about Darcy. She returns home and acts coldly toward Wickham. The militia is leaving town, which makes the younger, rather man-crazy Bennet girls distraught. Lydia manages to obtain permission from her father to spend the where Wickham's regiment will be stationed. With the arrival of June, Elizabeth goes to the neighborhood of Pemberley, Darcy's estate. She visits Pemberley, after making sure that Darcy is away, and delights in the building and grounds, while hearing from Darcy's servants that he is a wonderful, generous master. Suddenly, Darcy arrives and behaves cordially toward her. Making no mention of his proposal, he entertains the Gardiners and invites Elizabeth to meet his sister.

Shortly thereafter, however, arrives from home, telling Elizabeth that Lydia has eloped with Wickham and that the couple is nowhere to be found. Fearful of the disgrace such a situation would bring on her entire family, Elizabeth hastens home.

Mr. Gardiner and Mr. Bennet go off to search for Lydia, but Mr. Bennet returns home empty-handed. A letter comes from Mr. Gardiner saying that the couple has been found and that Wickham has agreed to marry Lydia in exchange for an annual income. The Bennets are convinced that Mr. Gardiner has paid off Wickham, but Elizabeth learns that the source of the money, and of her family's salvation, was none other than Darcy.

Shortly thereafter, Bingley returns to Netherfield and resumes his courtship of Jane. Darcy goes to stay with him and pays visits to the Bennets but makes no mention of his desire to marry Elizabeth. Bingley, on the other hand, proposes to Jane, to the delight of everyone. While the family celebrates, Lady Catherine de Bourgh pays a visit corners Elizabeth and says that she has heard that Darcy is planning to marry her. Since she considers a Bennet an unsuitable match for a Darcy, Lady Catherine demands that Elizabeth promise to refuse him. Elizabeth spiritedly refuses, saying she is not engaged to Darcy, but she will not promise anything against her own happiness. A little later, Elizabeth and Darcy go out walking together and he tells her that his feelings have changed since the spring. She tenderly accepts his proposal, and both Jane and Elizabeth are married.



Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberly About the Story Meet the Characters from the Story

Elizabeth Bennet

The novel's protagonist. The second daughter of Mr. Bennet, Elizabeth is the most intelligent and sensible of the five Bennet sisters. She is well read and quick-witted, with a tongue that occasionally proves too sharp for her own good. Her realization of Darcy's essential goodness eventually triumphs over her initial prejudice against him.

Fitzwilliam Darcy

A wealthy gentleman, the master of Pemberley, and the nephew of Lady Catherine de Bourgh. Though Darcy is intelligent and honest, his excess of pride causes him to look down on his social inferiors. Over the course of the novel, he tempers his class-consciousness and learns to admire and love Elizabeth for her strong character.

Jane Bennet - The eldest and most beautiful Bennet sister. Jane is more reserved and gentler than Elizabeth. The easy pleasantness with which she and Bingley interact contrasts starkly with the mutual distaste that marks the encounters between Elizabeth and Darcy.

Charles Bingley - Darcy's considerably wealthy best friend. Bingley's purchase of Netherfield, an estate near the Bennets, serves as the impetus for the novel. He is a genial, well-intentioned gentleman, whose easygoing nature contrasts with Darcy's initially discourteous demeanor. He is blissfully uncaring about class differences.

Lydia Bennet - The youngest Bennet sister, she is gossipy, immature, and self-involved. Unlike Elizabeth, Lydia flings herself headlong into romance and ends up running off with Wickham.

Lady Catherine De Bourgh - A rich, bossy noblewoman; Mr. Collins's patron and Darcy's aunt. Lady Catherine epitomizes class snobbery, especially in her attempts to order the middle-class Elizabeth away from her well-bred nephew.

Mary Bennet

The middle Bennet sister, bookish and pedantic.

George Wickham

A handsome, fortune-hunting militia officer. Wickham's good looks and charm attract Elizabeth initially, but Darcy's revelation about Wickham's disreputable past clues her in to his true nature and simultaneously draws her closer to Darcy.

Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberly About the Play Meet the Characters from the Story

Mr. Bennet - The patriarch of the Bennet family, a gentleman of modest income with five unmarried daughters. Mr. Bennet has a sarcastic, cynical sense of humor that he uses to purposefully irritate his wife. Though he loves his daughters (Elizabeth in particular), he often fails as a parent, preferring to withdraw from the never-ending marriage concerns of the women around him rather than offer help.

Mrs. Bennet - Mr. Bennet's wife, a foolish, noisy woman whose only goal in life is to see her daughters married. Because of her low breeding and often unbecoming behavior, Mrs. Bennet often repels the very suitors whom she tries to attract for her daughters.

Mr. Collins - A pompous, generally idiotic clergyman who stands to inherit Mr. Bennet's property. Mr. Collins' own social status is nothing to brag about, but he takes great pains to let everyone and anyone know that Lady Catherine de Bourgh serves as his patroness. He is the worst combination of snobbish and obsequious.

Miss Bingley - Bingley's snobbish sister. Miss Bingley bears inordinate disdain for Elizabeth's middle-class background. Her vain attempts to garner Darcy's attention cause Darcy to admire Elizabeth's self-possessed character even more.

Mr. And Mrs. Gardiner - Mrs. Bennet's brother and his wife. The Gardiners, caring, nurturing, and full of common sense, often prove to be better parents to the Bennet daughters than Mr. Bennet and his wife.

Charlotte Lucas - Elizabeth's dear friend. Pragmatic where Elizabeth is romantic, and also six years older than Elizabeth, Charlotte does not view love as the most vital component of a marriage. She is more interested in having a comfortable home. Thus, when Mr. Collins proposes, she accepts.

Georgiana Darcy - Darcy's sister. She is immensely pretty and just as shy. She has great skill at playing the pianoforte.

Catherine Bennet - The fourth Bennet sister. Like Lydia, she is girlishly enthralled with the soldiers.

Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberly About the Story Historical Context

The society of Austen's Regency England was particularly stratified, and class divisions were rooted in family connections and wealth. In her work, Austen is often critical of the assumptions and prejudices of upper-class England. She distinguishes between internal merit (goodness of person) and external merit (rank and possessions). Though she frequently satirizes snobs, she also pokes fun at the poor breeding and misbehavior of those lower on the social scale. Nevertheless, Austen was in many ways a realist, and the England she depicts is one in which social mobility is limited and class-consciousness is strong.

Socially regimented ideas of appropriate behavior for each gender factored into Austen's work as well. While social advancement for young men lay in the military, church, or law, the chief method of self-improvement for women was the acquisition of wealth. Women could only accomplish this goal through successful marriage, which explains the ubiquity of matrimony as a goal and topic of conversation in Austen's writing. Though young women of Austen's day had more freedom to choose their husbands than in the early eighteenth century, practical considerations continued to limit their options.

Even so, critics often accuse Austen of portraying a limited world. As a clergyman's daughter, Austen would have done parish work and was certainly aware of the poor around her. However, she wrote about her own world, not theirs. The critiques she makes of class structure seem to include only the middle class and upper class; the lower classes, if they appear at all, are generally servants who seem perfectly pleased with their lot. This lack of interest in the lives of the poor may be a failure on Austen's part, but it should be understood as a failure shared by almost all of English society at the time.

In general, Austen occupies a curious position between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Her favorite writer, whom she often quotes in her novels, was Dr. Samuel Johnson, the great model of eighteenth-century classicism and reason. Her plots, which often feature characters forging their respective ways through an established and rigid social hierarchy, bear similarities to such works of Johnson's contemporaries as Pamela, written by Samuel Richardson. Austen's novels also display an ambiguity about emotion and an appreciation for intelligence and natural beauty that aligns them with Romanticism. In their awareness of the conditions of modernity and city life and the consequences for family structure and individual characters, they prefigure much Victorian literature (as does her usage of such elements as frequent formal social gatherings, sketchy characters, and scandal).

Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberly Activities

After watching the play, choose a character that you particularly enjoyed to modernize.

Imagine that this character is living in our modern day and in our society and answer the following questions. You may be COMICAL, but be sure to ACCURATELY represent your character's traits. You will be evaluated on creativity and EVIDENCE of your understanding of the plot and character.

1.	What songs would be on his/her playlist?
2.	What would Arthur order from Amazon?
3.	What phone would this character have? Apple, Samsung, other?
1.	What entertainment apps would they have? What are they watching on Netflix? Who do the watch on youtube? What's on their Spotify playlist?
5.	What social networking apps do they have? Are they on Facebook? Are they on Instagran What do they post, selfies or photography?
) .	What is in their Amazon shopping cart? Do they have prime?
7.	What does their online dating profile look like? What in their bio? What is their pick up line

Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberly Activities

Write a Review

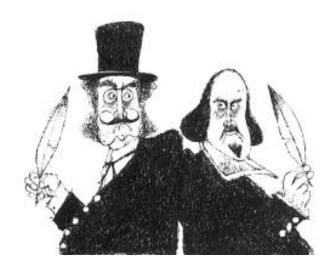
Explain to students that the director's job is to take the words on the script from the printed page to the stage and bring them to life. Explain that theater critics review shows and publish their opinions. For <u>AmericanTheatreCritics.org</u>, critic Sherry Eaker wrote, "My point of view was that it wasn't the theatre critic's place to tell the playwright what he or she should be doing; instead, the critic should focus on what is already there and explain either why it works or why is doesn't work."

After seeing the production, have each student write a review of Orlando Shakes' production. The review should include one paragraph each for:

- Introduction What did you watch, where and when, and maybe, why?
- The script Did you like the writing, the story, the characters? Why or why not?
- The acting Did you believe and care about the characters as portrayed? Why or why not?
- The design Did you like the set, costume and light designs? Why or why not?
- The staging How did the director stage the violence? Was it effective?
- The audience What ways did the audience respond to particular moments?
- Conclusion What will you remember about this performance?

If you wish, send your reviews to us at: anneh@orlandoshakes.org
We'd love to hear your opinions of our show!

Read more: How to Become a Theater Critic I eHow.com



Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberly Discussion and Themes

Discussion Questions:

- **1.** Mary, the protagonist in this story, undergoes a transformation over the course of the play. Have you had an experience that changed the way you think about yourself or your role in the world? Did you share this experience with others or did you experience it alone? Have you noticed someone close to you have a similar experience?
- **2.** "Inheritance" is an important theme in *Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberly*. Think about the multiple meanings of the word "inherit." What are some ways and things you can inherit? What does it mean to "inherit" something? What have you inherited? Are there traits or characteristics that you've inherited from your parents, siblings, friends?
- **3.** Several characters undergo transformations during this play. Which ones changed most noticeably? Which ones stayed the same? Did you identify with any particular character's journey?

Have student discuss one of the following Jane Austen quotes and determine whether or not it is relevant today....

