

## Chapter 1

Read through the following pieces of text and answer each set of questions that follow:

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It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife.

However little known the feelings or views of such a man may be on his first entering a neighbourhood, this truth is so well fixed in the minds of the surrounding families, that he is considered the rightful property of some one or other of their daughters.

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1. From the first line, what do you think this novel will be about?
2. The first line is often said to be ironic; explain why this is the case.
3. Which words or phrases in these first two paragraphs suggest that early nineteenth century society did not consider marriage to be about love but more of a business transaction about wealth and its ability to keep a person comfortable?

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"My dear Mr Bennet," said his lady to him one day, "have you heard that Netherfield Park is let at last?"

Mr Bennet replied that he had not.

"But it is," returned she; "for Mrs Long has just been here, and she told me all about it."

Mr Bennet made no answer.

"Do you not want to know who has taken it?" cried his wife impatiently.

"*You* want to tell me, and I have no objection to hearing it."

This was invitation enough.

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4. What impression do you get of Mr and Mrs Bennet from this opening conversation? Explain your ideas.
5. Who do you think talks more in this marriage? How does Austen make us think this?
6. What do you think the phrase, 'this was invitation enough' signals?