

Jane Austen's England – Creative Assignments

(Over the course of the first semester, you will need to pick two of the following.)

Write a short story based on one of Austen's aphorisms.

Write a series of letters between any two characters in Austen's novels. They may be from different books (e.g. Elinor Dashwood writing to Emma Woodhouse), but their correspondence must be plausible (implausible: a combination like Lady Catherine and Harriet Smith!). You may refer to events from the novels, but I'm mainly interested in your insight into the character of your chosen correspondents.

Choose a work from the *Juvenilia* and write your own story, imitating the style and tone as much as possible.

Pick your favorite minor character from one of the novels. Using any details available in the novel, fill out the back story of your character. Using Austen's style, introduce your character as if he or she is the hero of a story. (e.g. "No one who had ever known Maria Lucas in her childhood would have suspected her of being a heroine...")

Watch two movie versions of *Pride and Prejudice*. Discuss three major differences between the two films. What do you think was each director's main emphasis? Address the characterizations of Elizabeth and Darcy, and pick two of the following (Mary, Mr. Bennett, Wickham, Charlotte, Bingley, Georgiana) to compare.

Choose a scene from one of the novels that you feel captures the essential spirit of the story. Act out your scene with appropriate casting, costuming, blocking, and the like, and film it to share with the class. This may be a group project for students in the same geographical area. (Talk to Mrs. Muller about the logistics.)

Come up with your own idea for a story. (Be sure to okay it with the teacher first!)