



# **Mahatma Gandhi Central University, Bihar**

School of Humanities & Languages

## **Department of English**

Topic – 'JANE AUSTEN'S 'EMMA''

Class- M.A (English)

By

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**HOD, English.**

## (1) ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

- JANE AUSTEN (1775-1817)
- ONE OF THE THREE SISTERS- MRS AUSTEN, JANE AUSTEN AND CASSANDRA.
- KNOWN AS PIONEER OF 'REALISTIC' / 'DOMESTIC' NOVEL IN ENGLISH.
- FIRST ENGLISH NOVELIST TO INCORPORATE 'FEMINIST' THEMES.
- BLENDED NEOCLASSICISM AND ROMANTICISM.
- INFLUENCED BY SAMUEL RICHARDSON AND FRANCIS BURNEY.
- DURING HER LIFETIME, ALL HER NOVELS WERE PUBLISHED NONYMOUSLY ENTITLED WORKABLY AS ' BY A LADY '.



## ( 2) NOVELS IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER

- HENRY AND ELIZA- 1777.
- LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP- 1790
- LESLEY CASTLE- 1793
- THE BEAUTIFULL CASSANDRA-1793
- NORTHANGER ABBEY- 1799
- SANDITION AND THE WATSONS-1805
- SENSE AND SENSIBILITY- 1811
- PRIDE AND PREJUDICE- 1813
- FIRST IMPRESSIONS- 1813
- MENSFIELD PARK – 1814
- EMMA- 1815
- PERSUASION- 1816



## (3) ABOUT THE NOVEL:

- ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN 1815
- PUBLISHED IN THREE VOLUMES
- SET IN Highbury, England.
- PROTAGONIST: EMMA WOODHOUSE,
- A YOUNG PRECOCIOUS WOMAN.
- MAIN CHARACTERS:
  - EMMA WOODHOUSE
  - GEORGE KNIGHTLEY
  - JANE FAIRFAX
  - FRANK CHURCHILL
  - HARRIET SMITH
  - MRS WESTON
  - MR ELTON
  - MR WOODHOUSE
  - MR WESTON.



## (4) WELL-KNOWN QUOTES:

- " I'M GOING TO TAKE A HEROINE WHOM NO ONE BUT MYSELF WILL VERY MUCH LIKE. "
- I MAY HAVE LOST MY HEART, BUT NOT MY SELF-CONTROL
- I ALWAYS DESERVE THE BEST TREATMENT, BECAUSE I NEVER PUT UP WITH ANY OTHER.
- I LOVED YOU LESS, I MIGHT BE ABLE TO TALK ABOUT IT MORE.
- MEN OF SENSE,WHATEVER YOU MAY CHOOSE TO SAY, DON'T WANT SILLY WIVES.
- IF THINGS ARE GOING UNTOWARDLY ONE MONTH, THEY ARE SURE TO MEND THE NEXT.



## ( 5) OPENING/ BEGINNING OF THE NOVEL:

- In the very beginning of the novel, the novelist, through the Narrator, informs us about the unique character and personality of the heroine, Emma:

“EMMA WOODHOUSE, HANDSOME,  
CLEVER, AND RICH WITH A COMFORTABLE HOME  
AND HAPPY  
DISPOSITION, SEEMED TO UNITE  
SOME OF THE BEST BLESSINGS OF  
EXISTENCE; AND HAD LIVED NEARLY  
TWENTY -ONE YEARS IN THE WORLD  
WITH VERY LITTLE TO DISTRESS OR VEX HER. ”

Herein, through the apt and vivid use of 'VERBAL IRONY' : "seemed", the writer suggests the ironic gap between Emma's real character and her actual performance. An incurable victim of romantic extravagance and misplaced confidence about the others' matchmaking as she is, she least bothers about her own settlement. This naturally makes her character and situation ridiculous.

Moreover, the opening lines also focus on the characters and situations of the heroine-- mindsets, ways of action, reaction and interaction of those surrounding her. Emma prides herself in informing her father and her favourite Mr Knightley that she practically arranged the marriage of Miss Taylor ( former governess) and the widower, Mr Weston. The helm of Affairs is that it was she who introduced them. Boastful of matchmaking of others as she is, she goes on to materialize the matrimonial alliances. Now she targets Mr Elton, the village Vicar, whose match she was determined to make with Harriet Smith, a girl of lower status and mean birth.

Hence, the opening of the novel introduces the readers of the setting, theme of the novel. Striking enough, Jane Austen's typical narrative technique of 'Third Person Point of View ' , Ironical Stance, Realism have been aptly described.

## (6) ENDING OF THE NOVEL:

- Jane Austen's novel 'EMMA' ends on the note of happy marriage and the family stability of Emma. There is a confirmation of the marriage of three pairs of suitors likely to take place towards the end of the novel. The first Pair which decided to marry is-- Harriet and Robert Martin; the second pair is that of Jane Fairfax and Frank Churchill and the last but not the least, that of Emma who decided to marry Mr knightley. We are also informed that Mr Knightley proceeds to marry Emma and start life afresh along with Mr Wooouse, ( Emma's father) at their estate.





- Hence, the novel ends on the stark note of realism. Even Emma, the chronic victim of misplaced confidence about matchmaking starts life afresh, like a sensible woman. It is clear that the clouds of romantic misadventure, self-deception, follies, pride and prejudice both within and around the characters are silverlined by the spirit of fulfillment and domestic harmony. Jane Austen once famously wrote about Emma: "I'm going to take a heroine whom no one but myself will much like ". Now, in the end of the novel, Emma emerges as a rauniversal winner of the heart of the readers by her " handsome, clever and rich " character and personality which the novelist would have created to prove. So, 'Emma' stands the test of time and emerges as an outstanding novel of humor and realism, one of the salient features of the 18th century novel.



## ( 6) BRIEF OF MAIN CHARACTERS

- EMMA WOODHOUSE: the protagonist of the novel 'Emma'. A precocious young woman characterised by misplaced confidence in matchmaking and romantic misadventure.
- MR GEORGE KNIGHTLEY: The Woodhouses' trusted friend and adviser and Emma's brother-in-law. The way he publically exposes Emma's shortcomings helps the readers understand and form an objective assessment of her character.
- MR WOODHOUSE: Emma's father and the Patriarch of Hartfield (The Woodhouse Estate). His conservatism and feudal mindset have impeded Emma's natural growth.
- HARRIET SMITH: A seventeen years old woman of obscure parentage, becomes the object of Emma's matchmaking scheme.

- FRANK CHURCHILL: Mr Weston 's son. Due to living with his aunt and uncle ( Mr & Mrs Churchill) at Enscombe, he is called Frank Churchill. At the outset, he appears to be a potential suitor for Emma WOODHOUSE, but then, due to his rashness and casual attitude, Emma disapproves of him.
- JANE FAIRFAX: Miss Bates's niece. As she is refined, charming and reserved, her arrival at Highbury instantly turns her into Emma's rival. But then , her marriage to Frank Churchill dispels the cloud of antagonism between her and Emma.
- MRS WESTON: Kind and gentle as she is , she is Emma's beloved governess and companion. She lives at Randalls with her husband ( Frank Churchill's father).
- MR WESTON: Warm, and optimistic, the widower and the proprietor of Randall's, who marries Miss Taylor in the beginning of the novel.
- MR ELTON: The Village Vicar. Handsome, pleasing & a man of celebration mood.

# IMPORTANT ESSAY TYPE QUESTIONS

- 1. DISCUSS EMMA AS AS A REALISTIC NOVEL.
- 2. ATTEMPT A CHARACTER-SKETCH OF EMMA WOODHOUSE.
- 3. WRITE A CRITICAL NOTE ON THE PLOT CONSTRUCTION OF 'EMMA'.
- 4. ELUCIDATE THE THEMES OF MARRIAGE, FAMILY AND LOVE IN 'EMMA'.
- 5. HOW FAR DO YOU AGREE TO JANE AUSTEN 'S OBSERVATION ABOUT THE CHARACTER OF EMMA: " I'M GOING TO TAKE A HEROINE WHOM NO ONE BUT MYSELF WILL VERY MUCH LIKE ".? JUSTIFY .
- 6. CRITICALLY EVALUATE JANE AUSTEN'S ART OF CHARACTERIZATION IN 'EMMA'.



## SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS:

- 1. OPENING OF THE NOVEL.
- 2. ENDING OF THE NOVEL.
- 3. CHARACTER OF GEORGE KNIGHTLEY
- 4. JANE FAIRFAX.
- 5. FRANK CHURCHILL.
- 6. AN EXAMPLE OF HUMOUR, REALISTIC SCENE IN THE NOVEL--.
- 7. AN EXAMPLE OF IRONY IN THE NOVEL.
- 8. ELEMENTS OF INTRIGUE, FOLLIES SUSPENSE IN THE NOVEL.

THANK YOU!

