



**Book Club**

A QLS PROJECT



Quality Language  
Schools

# Book Week 2025

Celebrating the 250th birth anniversary  
of Jane Austen





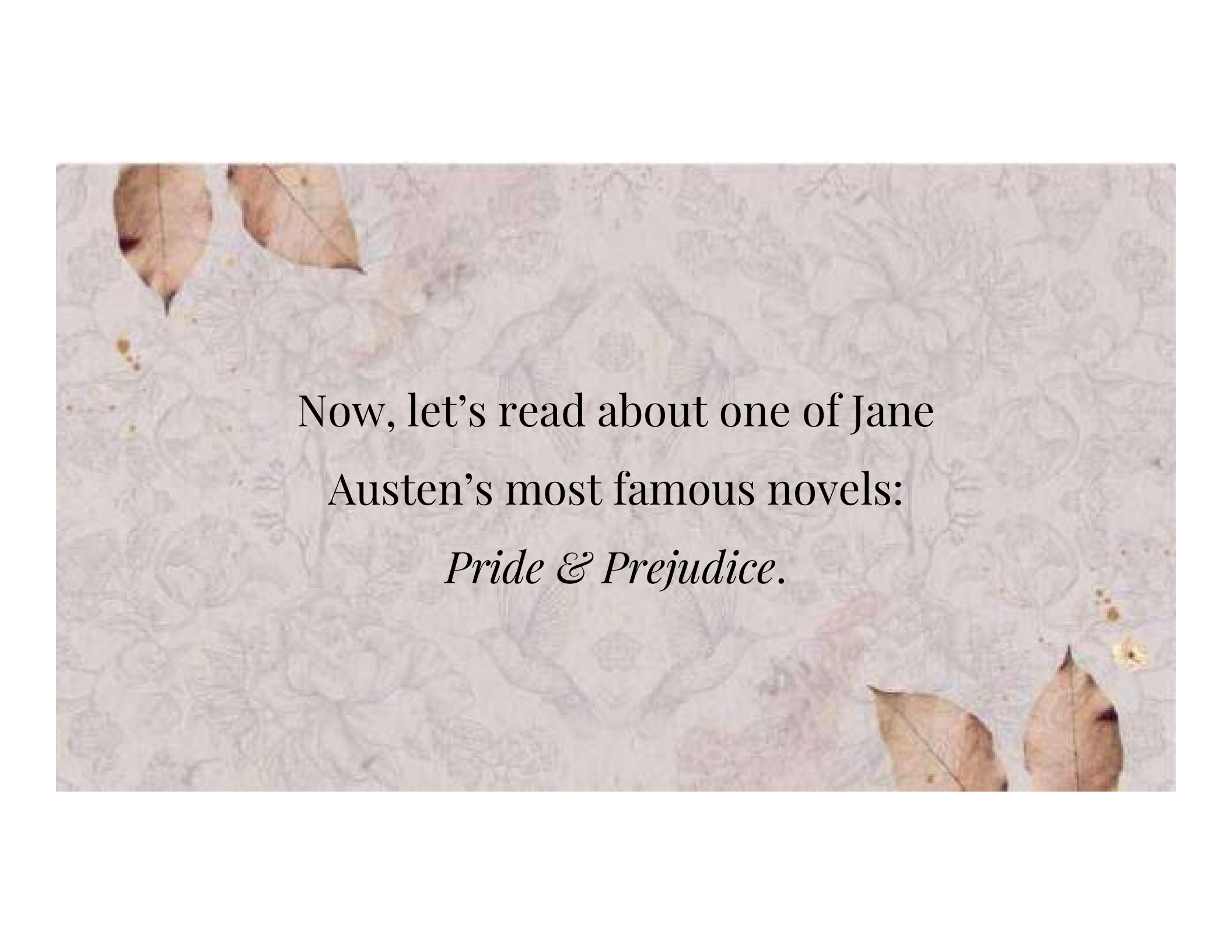
Jane Austen was an English writer whose novels of romance and society are still very popular with readers today. Austen came from a very large family. She had six brothers and one sister. She and her sister attended school for a few years, but had to stop when Austen was around eleven years old because her family could no longer afford the expense. This was only the end of Austen's formal education, however.



She continued to read and study while living at home with her family. Her father encouraged this, and he also encouraged Austen to write – something which was somewhat scandalous for women to do at the time. She continued to write as she grew older and eventually published several books – though she published them anonymously.



Some of the most important themes in Austen's books are related to women, their independence and marriage. She was an important commentator on the social inequalities of her lifetime. She died young, in 1817, and so only published six novels. Still, she continues to be well-loved and one of the most adapted of English authors to screen and stage.



Now, let's read about one of Jane  
Austen's most famous novels:  
*Pride & Prejudice.*





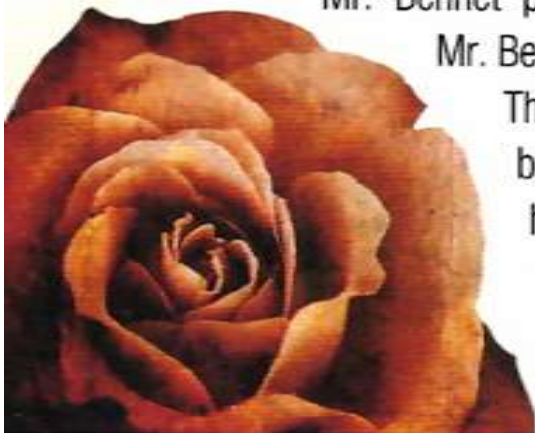
*Pride and Prejudice* is about the Bennet family. Mr. and Mrs. Bennet have five daughters. Jane is the oldest, and she is beautiful, kind, and good. Elizabeth is the next oldest. She, too, is pretty, but not as beautiful as Jane. She's free-spirited, outspoken, and intelligent. She's also the main character. The other three daughters are not as important to the story. They are Mary, the foolish intellectual, and Lydia and Kitty, the silly flirts. Because of the laws and customs in England at the time, none of these daughters will inherit the family home when

Mr. Bennet passes away. In addition, Mr. Bennet is not a wealthy man.

Therefore, his daughters will be left with nothing when he is gone. For this reason, both Mr. and Mrs. Bennet are very concerned with finding

husbands for their daughters. Marriage is the only means by which the Bennet girls can avoid becoming destitute. At the beginning of the book, a new man named Mr. Bingley moves to town. He is rich, so Mrs. Bennet immediately wants to introduce him to her daughters. The ball described in the following passage is the first chance the Bennet women have to meet Mr. Bingley and their impressions of him and his friend Mr. Darcy are given.

On the surface, *Pride and Prejudice* is a romance, where Elizabeth and Mr Darcy slowly move from dislike of one another to falling in love. However, under the surface is Jane Austen's keen and often biting humor, as she lays open the hypocrisy and materialism of her society, where every woman by necessity must find a man – and one with means. On each level – as a romance, a comedy of manners, and a social critique – the novel works exquisitely well, earning it a place alongside the other classics of English literature.





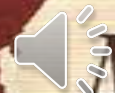
**Now, based on what you read, answer the following questions:**

- ❖ Which of the Bennet daughters are main characters?
- ❖ Why is it important for the Bennet sisters to marry well?
- ❖ How is Mr. Bingley important for Mrs. Bennet?
- ❖ What kind of novel is *Pride and Prejudice*, on the most basic level?
- ❖ What criticism does Jane Austen give of her society in the novel?



**Now, let's discuss a passage from**  
***Pride & Prejudice.***





**Mr.** Bingley was good looking and gentlemanlike; he had a pleasant countenance, and easy, unaffected manners. His brother-in-law, Mr. Hurst, merely looked the gentleman; but his friend Mr. Darcy soon drew the attention of the room by his fine, tall person, handsome features, noble mien; and the report which was in general circulation within five minutes after his entrance, of his having ten thousand a year. The gentlemen pronounced him to be a fine figure of a man, the ladies declared he was much handsomer than Mr. Bingley, and he was looked at with great admiration for about half the evening, till his manners gave a disgust which turned the tide of his popularity; for he was discovered to be proud, to be above his company, and above being pleased; and not all his large estate in Derbyshire could then save him from having a most forbidding, disagreeable countenance, and being unworthy to be compared with his friend.

Mr. Bingley had soon made himself acquainted with all the principal people in the room; he was lively and unreserved, danced every dance, was angry that the ball closed so early, and talked of giving one himself at Netherfield. Such amiable qualities must speak for themselves. What a contrast between him and his friend! Mr. Darcy danced only once with Mrs. Hurst and once with Miss Bingley, declined being introduced to any other lady, and spent the rest of the evening in walking about the room, speaking occasionally to one of his own party. His character was decided. He was the proudest, most disagreeable man in the world, and every body hoped that he would never come there again. Amongst the most violent against him was Mrs. Bennet, whose dislike of his general behaviour was sharpened into particular resentment by his having slighted one of her daughters.

The background of the slide features a light-colored, marbled paper texture. In the top-left and bottom-right corners, there are clusters of dried, brown leaves, possibly from a tree, adding a natural, autumnal feel to the design.

**Think about it.**

- ❖ In your own words, describe the meaning of the passage.
- ❖ What words and phrases are used to describe the positive side of men?



**Read the questions and choose the correct answers:**

- ❖ Which of the following is not attractive about Mr. Darcy?
  - a. His appearance.
  - b. His income.
  - c. His home.
  - d. His attitude.



❖ How does Mr. Darcy compare to Mr. Bingley?

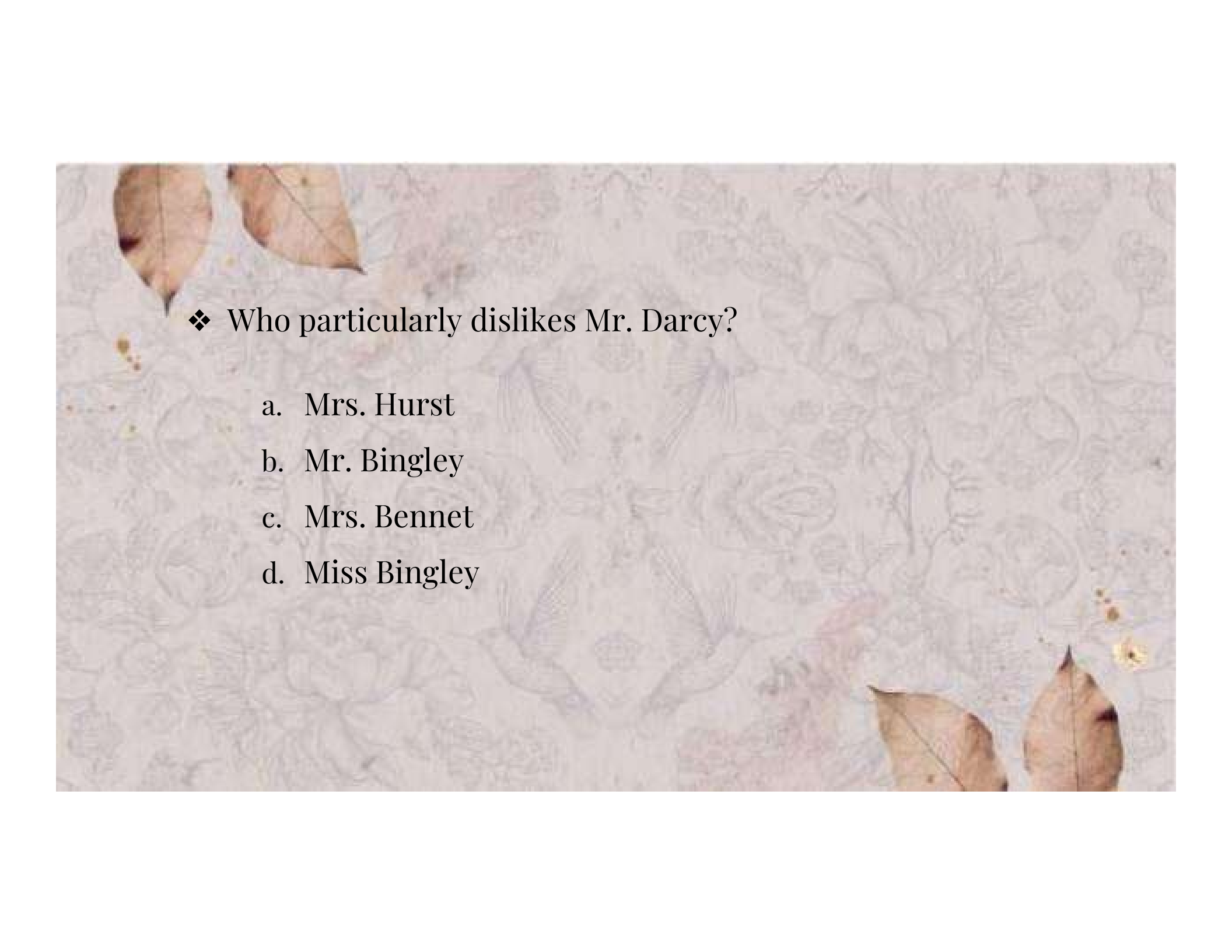
- a. He's better-looking.
- b. He has more money.
- c. He's friendlier.
- d. He's more of a gentleman.



❖ Why do people stop liking Mr. Darcy?

- a. He thinks he's better than them.
- b. He dances with too many women.
- c. He talks too much and too loudly.
- d. He insults people to their faces.





❖ Who particularly dislikes Mr. Darcy?

- a. Mrs. Hurst
- b. Mr. Bingley
- c. Mrs. Bennet
- d. Miss Bingley