
Characteristic Of Mr. Collins in Pride And Prejudice Novel

HOW DOES JANE AUSTEN PRESENT THE CHARACTER OF MR COLLINS?

In the novel *Pride and Prejudice*, Jane Austen has presented Mr. Collins in a complex way with many attributes. As the reader reads through the novel from chapters 13 to 20 Jane Austen reveals various personalities of Mr. Collins and the way he behaves.

Mr. Collins is first presented in chapter 13 in the form of a letter. The reader's first impression is that he is very over formal and too polite to a certain extent of annoyance. He begins the letter with "DEAR SIR" proving how civilized he is, willing to come in peace. For a family member "DEAR SIR" is not usually used and is certainly not capitalized to show importance. We also receive a sense of this formal personality from the way he arrived, "punctual to his time" and how Mr. Bennet calls him the "peace making gentleman" right after he finishes the letter. From these quotes the reader can deduce that Austen gave Mr. Collins a proud personality consisting of being self-centered and overly formal.

Hints from the letter and later on in the novel has grabbed the reader's attention that Mr. Collins is sycophantic towards Lady Catherine de Bough's and is constantly chatting about her. Austen has shown here that Mr. Collins is a naive person and will listen to anyone who helps him. In this case, Lady Catherine de Bough's is his patroness and so Mr. Collins must praise her whenever he can, calling her "Honorable." We know that Lady Catherine de Bough's is quite high class in this novel and a very respected person. By following all of Lady Catherine de Bough's instructions, Austen has shown that Mr. Collins is a person who relies on other people to gain a higher status and feel more confident.

Although Mr. Collins may perceive to be a "peacemaker", Austen has presented him as an egocentric character when proposing to Elizabeth. That fact that he "singled" Elizabeth out when he met the Bennet family is a complete lie to gain an advantage in means of the proposal. He has also lied by saying to Elizabeth that she is "uniformly charming" and has a "violence of affection" for her. We know that he does not really have any feelings for Elizabeth and is merely lying so he can fulfill Lady Catherine de Bough's wishes to get married. All this deceptive behavior has made it clear that Mr. Collins is not really a "peacemaker" but just self-centered and egocentric.

Not only is Mr. Collins egocentric but he is also cold hearted. Again, Austen presents this characteristic when Mr. Collins proposes to Elizabeth. He starts off by listing "reasons to marry." This is not definitely not an acceptable way to ask for marriage for reasons and to follow a posh lady's advice. Usually, people would marry for love or for a good cause. Mr. Collins is taking this too seriously and did not even mention Elizabeth in his proposal which portrays that he has no feelings towards her. On top of this he has insulted her by saying that she lives in a poor family and he would provide money for her. "Another offer of marriage may ever be made of you" is suggesting that Elizabeth may never get another proposal as good as this again and that it should be worth it. The way Mr. Collins has proposed to Elizabeth in this novel infers to the reader that Mr. Collins offends people with his proudness and is not very likeable for his cold-

hearted behavior.

Finally, Mr. Collins gives the impression of someone who thinks himself high in a status and follows the trend. When Elizabeth rejected his proposal, he exclaimed “you are not serious.” In Jane Austen’s time, it was usually trend to reject proposals and eventually marry to be more ladylike and sensitive. In this case, Elizabeth has distinctly told Mr. Collins that she does not wish to marry. Mr. Collins seems too ignorant to notice this and therefore thinks this is just trend that ladies “secretly mean to accept.” Austen is clearly using satire here to show how ridicules marriage and the expectations of women are during the Regency Period.

For a clergyman Mr. Collins is a very complicated character with many attributes. He is overly formal and polite but is still cold hearted and tries to take advantage of what he has. Because he so sycophantic to Lady Catherine de Bough, who is well known and high in class, it suggests that he may have been influenced by her to always be overly formal but also contain these negative attributes. Being a part of Elizabeth’s family, he should not act in this way but this may be tradition or how people used to be in the Regency Period.

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