

Introduction

We seem to accept that certain things can be reproduced for example, furniture. We might see 'Genuine Georgian reproduction' in a furniture shop and we will accept this reproduction. Art galleries sell reproductions of paintings for us to hang on our walls, paintings of which we may never have seen the 'original'. Indeed the original might be disappointing after only ever having seen the reproduction for many years.



It seems inevitable that when a film director makes a film whose source is a novel or a play the critics instantly make a comparison with the original, commenting on what has been left out and what has been changed. What should be asked, however, is why certain things have been left out, why changes have been made and do these alterations to the 'original' text actually interfere with our understanding of the original and the new text – the film.

Task

Try to come up with definitions of the two words 'adaptation' and 'reproduction'. How does each relate to the idea of an 'original'?

When you have done this let's complicate matters a little by putting in three other words: 'based on', 'inspired by' and 'replica'. How do these fit into this pattern?

You might also like to consider what we mean by the word 'original'.



Adapting a text

Bride & Prejudice is based on Jane Austen's novel, *Pride and Prejudice*; however, it is not a straightforward 'adaptation'. We could say that there are three different types of filmic adaptations of novels and plays:

1. transposition – where the novel is directly given on screen
2. commentary – where the original is taken and either purposely or inadvertently altered in some respect
3. analogy – a film which shifts the action of fiction forward in time or otherwise changes the essential context; analogy goes further than shifting a scene or playing with the end of the story and must transplant the whole scenario so that little of the original is identifiable

The first example could be seen as a 'classic' film adaptation of a novel – normally a period piece where the story and words spoken by the characters are taken from the novel itself. Normally we would expect to see period costumes and settings. Examples of this are *Sense and Sensibility* (1996), the BBC production of *Pride and Prejudice* (1995) and *Captain Corelli's Mandolin*. (2000). The one thing that all of these have in common is their romantic storylines.

A film such as Baz Luhrmann's William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* best illustrates the second category – Shakespeare's words are used but the setting is completely different (compare this with Zeffirelli's version of *Romeo and Juliet* with its period costumes and backdrops).

Finally, with the sense of analogy, we have *Bride & Prejudice* and also *Clueless* (both Jane Austen adaptations) where the original novel is taken as a framework and then updated, having references to the characters in the novel (in *Bride & Prejudice* we still have Mr Darcy and Wickham).

Task

Can you think of any other films that would fit into these three categories? Or perhaps television programmes which are adapted from novels and plays?

When you have seen *Bride & Prejudice*, how important do you think it was to have known that it was adapted from a novel by Jane Austen? If the filmmakers had chosen not to call their characters Darcy and Wickham, would it have made any difference to the story we see on the screen?



Task

Why do you think that filmmakers and television directors turn to novels to adapt for cinema and television? How do you think that adaptations from novels might attract audiences? What do you think the problems are for adaptations from novels, from the point of view of audiences and also critics? What is the most common complaint raised about adaptations?



How do we understand a story?

'To take 'the prose style' as any more than just a part of a great book is simply misunderstanding just what a great book is...style is what the artist uses to fascinate the beholder in order to convey to them the feelings, emotions and thoughts. These are what have to be dramatised not the style. The dramatising has to find a style of its own, as it will do if it really grasps the content...it may or may not be as good as the novel; sometimes, in certain ways it might even be better.'

Stanley Kubrick

The filmmaker Stanley Kubrick points out that the key to adaptation is to find a way of dramatising the content of a novel, not simply the prose style. To examine this idea further let's look at the ways in which different texts can dramatise the plot.

Task

So far we have mentioned three ways of presenting a story – through the written word (a novel) through the theatre (a play) and through cinema (a film). In the chart below you are given three main text types. For each one try to write down the different ways in which each tells its story. How does each achieve a 'dramatic' effect which keeps the viewer/reader interested in what is happening? Some ideas are included to start you off.

FILM	THEATRE/PLAY	NOVEL
special effects lighting dialogue	costumes lighting dialogue	adjectives character description dialogue



What aspects of storytelling are common to all three types of text? Which ways of telling a story are specific to individual types of text? For example, camera shots (close-ups, long shots etc.) are specific to cinema. Dialogue is common to all three types of text.

When you have finished completing the chart try to analyse your answers in terms of storytelling methods – the specific and the common.

These then are the tools that the storyteller has available in each medium. Let's look at another two quotations that highlight these differences.

'In terms of other media such as the printed page, film has the power to store and convey a great deal of information. In an instant it presents a scene of landscape with figures that would require several pages of prose to describe. In an instant it repeats, and can go on repeating, this detailed information. The writer, on the other hand, has no means of holding a mass of detail before the reader in so large a block.'

Marshall McLuhan – Understanding Media

'In fact, although the...viewer is unaware of it, when watching the screen they undergo an experience similar to reading narrative prose. Like sentences that automatically exclude whatever they do not refer to, film shots eliminate what they do not show. The reader of the written narrative is just as unaware of the succession of separate sentences as the viewer is of the alternation of shots.'

Jonathan Miller

When you think of the word 'reading' you may not instantly think of films. Probably the first thing that would come to mind is a book or a magazine.

Task

List some ideas that you would associate with the word 'reading'. When we talk about reading a book, we know that we are reading the words on a page. Is there anything else that you can say about what you do or take in when you are reading?

If we say that you also read a film or an image, then what do we mean by this? What details are you looking at?

Let's start with a still image. Look at the images on pages 6 and 7.

- What is happening in the image?
- When and where do you think the events are taking place?
- How do you know this? What are the clues that you are given?



Bride & Prejudice

F I L M
E D U C A T I O N



Bride & Prejudice

F I L M
E D U C A T I O N



Now go to Clip 4. What is happening here?

- Where is it happening?
- What can you say about the characters that you see?
- Have you any idea about what the story might be about?
- How do you know this? What clues led you to your conclusion?

In what ways could your conclusions from the still image and the clip from *Bride & Prejudice* be said to come from your 'reading' of these texts?



What we bring to a text

Whenever we read a book or watch a film, we bring to that book or film the experience of every other book or film that we have seen or read. This is both in general terms and also in quite specific terms. Let's look at the general ideas first.

Task

- Imagine someone has never seen a film before. Describe to them what a film is.
- Now do the same with a novel.

How similar were your two descriptions? How were they different? This is important because we have expectations of what we will experience when we read a novel or see a film. We would imagine that the idea of telling a story was important in both film and novel.

Now let us be more specific. Look at the list of story types (genres) below. In the second column of the chart write down what you would expect from each type of story before you started to read or watch them:

GENRES	EXPECTATIONS
science fiction	
historical/period	
adventure	
comedy	
tragedy	





You knew what to expect in each of these different types of story because you have experienced them before. So if a film or a novel were described in one of these ways then you would expect at least some of these aspects to appear in that story.

What do we bring to Bride & Prejudice?

Let's now consider some of the things that an audience might bring to a screening of Bride & Prejudice. You will probably use some of the answers that you developed above in thinking about this idea.

Because Bride & Prejudice is a mixture of different types of storytelling technique, let us consider what each type, or 'genre', might make us expect:

So, consider the following:

-  romantic film
-  musical
-  Bollywood film
-  Jane Austen novel

If a member of an audience had knowledge of only one of these then what would that knowledge, those expectations be? List the expectations that you have for each of these types of stories.



Judging a book by its cover, a film by its poster and trailer

We have already seen that we have expectations about novels and films. Before a film is released it has to be publicised and we, as a potential audience, need to have an idea about what story a film is going to tell. We can call this the narrative image – the image of the story type that we will see within a film.

When a new film is made, it has to be advertised like any other new product, to let people know it exists and to encourage them to go to the cinema to see it. The way in which a film is promoted can have a huge effect on whether or not it is successful. Films are expensive to make and if the public don't buy tickets at the box office to see the film, a lot of money can be lost.

When the distributors agree to market a new film, they will watch it several months before it is released into the cinema and plan a marketing campaign. This includes deciding what should go into the posters, trailers, websites and other material that will market the film. There are several important points to consider as follows:

- Who will be the most likely to want to see this film?

Anyone may decide they want to see the film but there are some people who are more likely to want to see it than others. These people are called the target audience and the marketing will aim to make the film look attractive to these people.

- What type of film is it?

The marketing will show the audience that have seen this type of film before and if they enjoyed it, they should come to see this one.

- What is different about this film?

Although a film may be similar to one we have already seen, each film has something different about it, something unique. This may be the star or the director, or it could be something about the story or where it is set. It may even involve the style of the film. This is known as the Unique Selling Point of the film (or USP for short).



The Poster & the Artwork

The poster campaign, the primary medium for advertising the film, will generally start in the early stages of a film's production and continue during the weeks building up to the release.

The poster is the basis of the whole publicity campaign and out of this 'Key Art' or central image comes the synopsis, standees, ranges of posters and television adverts.

The aim of the artwork of a film poster is to find a 'narrative image' that sums up the film. The poster will need to show various elements from the film that will include the stars, their vehicles and the fact that the film is a comedy.

The Copy

As well as a visual image, posters carry a certain amount of copy (writing), depending on the stage in the campaign at which they appear. Catchphrases are used to underline the key elements of the film on the poster copy. Quotations from critics and tag lines on the poster also help to reinforce the image and make the poster more effective.

The designer of a film poster has one of the hardest jobs in the whole marketing team - they have to sum up two hours of exciting film in just one image. They have to decide what is the unique selling point of the film and then convey that image so that it will attract people's attention as they pass by.

They must try to give information about the story, the stars and the genre of the film.

Look at the poster for Bride & Prejudice shown overleaf carefully and then answer the questions on page 13:



Bride & Prejudice

F I L M
E D U C A T I O N



Images

i) Look at the poster quickly. What are your eyes drawn to first of all? What are the dominant colours of the poster?

ii) Look at the two central characters in the middle of the poster. What does the way that they are standing suggest to you about their relationship? What ideas do you get from the way that they are dressed? Why do you think that the female character is looking directly at the viewer whilst the male character is not? What ideas do you think you would have if:

a) both characters were looking at the viewer?

b) the male character was looking at the viewer and the female character was looking away?

You could act this out in class. Also, try positioning two people in as many ways as possible – facing each other, facing away from the camera and looking over their shoulders for example. If you have a digital camera, record each of your "set-ups" and then look at them to see the different "meanings" that each create.

Don't forget that the designer of the poster deliberately chose this image. They could have positioned the characters differently.

iii) Look at the ways in which the characters' arms are placed. What do the characters' "stances" suggest to you?

iv) Move on now to the characters at the bottom of the poster. Firstly consider some of the questions asked above about these characters- stance, relationship, etc.

v) There is a group on either side of the central characters. Why do you think that the characters are grouped in this way?

vi) How does each group relate to the background?

vii) What do you think the small coloured objects on the poster are? Why should they be included?

Words

What written information are we given? There is the title of the film, 'Bride and Prejudice'. The audience needs to know this. What other information is there? Why do you think that this has been included?

Overall, what impression of the film does the poster give?



Bride & Prejudice

F I L M
E D U C A T I O N

Finally, consider these questions:

- What do you think the genre of this film is? Give reasons for your answer.
- How do the posters link in with the messages of the trailers?
- What do you think the unique selling point (USP) of this film is?

Activity

- Design your own poster for Bride & Prejudice, based on the information that you are given in both the posters and the trailers.
- Once you have seen the film, write a letter to a design agency, outlining what you think are the key aspects of the story that should be stressed in a poster for Bride & Prejudice.



The Trailer

The trailer, like the poster, must encourage us to want to see the film. A poster has a hard task – it must catch our attention and give us information about a film in one still image. It is much easier for a trailer to give us a real taste of what the film is like because it uses moving image, like the film itself.

Moving images, whatever they are, have a far better chance of catching our attention than something that is still. The trailer holds our attention because the images change really quickly and we must concentrate all the time or we may miss something. Added to this, a trailer uses sound to get its message across. Music, sound effects, speech from the film and the voice-over all join together to create an exciting mixture for our ears. The combination of sound and moving images is a very effective way of attracting us to see a film.

Now watch the trailer for *Bride & Prejudice* and then answer the following questions:

- At what point in the trailer are we told the name of the film? Why is this?
- Why are we told who is starring in the film? How is this information given to us?
- What type of action from the film do we see? What does each event tell us about what might be happening in the film?
- What clues does the music give us as to what type of film the trailer is advertising?
- What can you say about the voice of the person delivering the voice-over? Why do you think this voice was chosen? What effect does it have?
- How does the speed of what we see compare to watching a clip from a film? Why is this? Does the speed alter through the trailer or stay the same?
- What information are we given in the very last frame of the trailer?
- Which is more effective in making you want to see the film, the poster or the trailer? Why is this?



Narratives

Title graphics

The title graphics of a film play an important part in giving us further information about a film. The choice of font, colour (and background colour), size, shape and additional attached graphics are all possible indications as to the genre and target audience for the film.

- Look at the title graphics for *Bride & Prejudice*. What do each of them tell you about the film which they promote? Be as specific as you can in your answer, including all the aspects mentioned above.

Trailer Questions

- View the trailer for *Bride & Prejudice* again. Have a piece of paper and a pen to hand. From the trailer, what genre of film do you think it is and who do you think the audience for the film is?
- How is the title used as a selling point both in terms of the actual title itself and its position within the trailer?
- What elements of the trailer enable you to immediately recognise the genre of the film? Why is it important from the distributor's point of view that the trailer highlights the genre of the film?
- What genre do you think the film fits into? What clues are you given for this?
- How did you decide who the audience for the film might be?
- Stars are a very important factor in marketing a film. How has the trailer been constructed to make maximum use of the star potential?
- The director and/or producer of a film may also play an important role in attracting an audience to see a film. Can you think of other ways in which the director/producer could be used on a trailer to help sell a film?
- You have seen the main trailer for *Bride & Prejudice*. Your task is to create a teaser trailer for this film. Remember the USP of the film must come across in the teaser. Storyboard your ideas, including a soundtrack. If you have access to editing facilities you could take this one step further and produce your teaser on video, using footage from the main trailer.
- Which is the more important feature of a trailer - vision or sound? Look again at any trailer and comment on the sound used.



Aspects of Adaptation

There are five aspects of a novel that both the student and the screenwriter need to tackle in order to:

- a) analyse and understand the book and
- b) create a new representation of it in the form of an examination essay or a screen drama.

These are :

PLOT:	not just the story but the order of events in the text
SETTING:	the place where most of the events in the novel occur and the representation of a society
CHARACTER:	the people who interact in the text and whose behaviour we watch and learn from as readers and viewers
VALUES:	the issues raised by the text
STYLE or METHOD:	how the novel is written

It is when a reader looks closely at each of these five aspects of a novel that they begin to read it as a construction - not just a story.

Firstly, the screenwriter has to approach the film producer with a story - can the story of a novel be recreated within a manageable time span? A long novel cannot be slavishly copied page by page. Also, the producer and director may wish not to carry out a slavish adaptation of the novel. As in the case of *Bride & Prejudice* they may wish to take a completely different approach to the story.

The story has to be re-examined in terms of PLOT: how the text is organised.

All texts are organised into the following structure:

SITUATION	what happens at the beginning of the text - where it happens, who it involves
PROBLEM	a complication in the form of a conflict or problem takes place that creates some form of tension or difficulty. The calm order of the situation is disrupted
CLIMAX	the complications and problems increase or intensify until at some stage in the text they reach a turning point or unbearable limit - in some texts this is where the plot might end - literally as a cliffhanger
RESOLUTION	the problems are solved and something similar to (but not necessarily the same as) the original calm and order of the SITUATION is returned to





Task 1

Working with a partner try to fit the main events of Bride & Prejudice to the Situation, Problem, Climax and Resolution structure.

What were the problems you faced?

List the difficulties you had and then discuss them with another pair.

Task 2

Using the storyboard see if you can devise key images from Pride and Prejudice to fit SITUATION, PROBLEM, CLIMAX and RESOLUTION - one image for each stage of the plot structure. Try to create your own image.

If you can, find a passage from the novel that could form the basis for your image.

Now compare storyboards.

Has anyone chosen exactly the same incidents? How different are your choices?

Now compare your choice of key moments with your outline of Bride & Prejudice. In what ways are your choices from Bride & Prejudice similar to the key moments of Pride and Prejudice?

What does this say about the story structure of the basic plot of Pride and Prejudice?

IT DOES NOT MATTER IF YOU HAVE TAKEN DIFFERENT EPISODES - the process of tackling the texts in this way is the same. You are examining plot structure.



Developing & performing a story

Both *Pride and Prejudice* and - its inspired filmic version - *Bride & Prejudice* both take a basic story and develop it into a structured narrative. The basic story can be explained as follows:

- Boy meets girl (or girl meets boy)
- boy loses girl
- boy gets girl.

One could say that this is the basic story of the romantic genre. It is now important to look at the ways in which an author or scriptwriter will take this basic formula and fill it out with characters, events and themes.

Look below at the short summary of *Pride and Prejudice*. It is obvious what has been added to the basic formula. What has been missed out here? Which aspects of *Pride and Prejudice* are still 'missing' from the narrative?

Short Summary of *Pride and Prejudice*

The arrival of Mr Bingley and his rich friend Mr Darcy at Netherfield Park puts the surrounding provincial society into a flutter. Mrs Bennet is especially keen for her daughters to meet good marriage prospects, while her husband maintains an ironic stance. Her eldest daughter, Jane, falls in love with Bingley. The second daughter, Elizabeth, and Darcy dislike each other from the start. But a complex series of events forces both to overcome personal and class prejudices and unite in matrimony. Despite having been warned off an engagement with Jane by Darcy, Bingley proposes to her and they too are happily united.

Task

Having looked at the short summary of *Pride and Prejudice*, can you now write a short summary of *Bride & Prejudice* in no more than 100 words?

Now let us look at a more detailed summary of *Pride and Prejudice*. Using a highlighter, identify all of the additional information you are given compared to the short summary. How does this additional information help involve a reader? What aspects of the story are filled out?



Long summary of Pride and Prejudice

- Mr and Mrs Bennet of Longbourn near Meryton, have five daughters. Jane is the eldest. She is beautiful and sensible. Elizabeth is clever and witty. The three younger sisters are called Mary, Catherine and Lydia.
- When Mr Bingley, a rich bachelor, comes to stay at the nearby estate of Netherfield Park, Mrs. Bennet is delighted, seeing opportunities to get one of her girls married into wealth. 'What a fine thing for our girls!' she beams.
- Mrs Bennet devises strategies to bring Jane and Bingley together. Despite the mother's lack of subtlety the two of them fall in love.
- Elizabeth (Lizzie), meanwhile takes a passionate dislike to Bingley's wealthy, yet taciturn friend Mr. Darcy.
- The militia comes to Meryton and Kitty and Lydia flirt with the officers.
- Elizabeth is charmed by a newcomer, Mr Wickham. Wickham grew up with Mr Darcy, but detests him. It seems Darcy deprived him of a career in the church out of spite.
- Bingley suddenly departs for London. Jane feels miserable. Mr Collins, who will inherit the Bennet household, due to the laws of male property accession, comes to visit.
- Mr Collins proposes to Elizabeth. She has the guts to refuse this pompous and rather pathetic character.
- In a trip to Kent, Elizabeth meets Mr Darcy again. He haughtily proposes to her, emphasising the vulgarity of the Bennet family, in the midst of his proud declaration of love. Elizabeth angrily refuses him.
- A series of letters are exchanged between Elizabeth and Darcy. Darcy confesses to separating Bingley from Jane. He thinks Jane doesn't love Bingley. He also reveals the true history of Mr Wickham, as a spendthrift and seducer.
- Elizabeth goes on holiday with the Gardiners. Darcy turns up and is very kind to her.
- Bad news arrives. Lydia has run off with Wickham.
- Elizabeth rushes home to assist with the search for the fugitives. A deal is made with Wickham that he must marry Lydia.
- Elizabeth learns from Mrs Gardiner that it was Darcy who found Wickham and provided the money to make him marry Lydia.
- Bingley moves back into Netherfield Park, courts Jane and proposes. Darcy is in attendance. He seems to have gone a bit cold towards Elizabeth.



Bride & Prejudice

F I L M
E D U C A T I O N

- Lady Catherine de Bourgh, Darcy's aunt, pays a visit to Longbourn. She is intent on preventing a marriage between Elizabeth and Darcy.
- Elizabeth is not threatened. She takes an opportunity to thank Darcy for his work behind the scenes in the Lydia and Wickham affair. He proposes to her again and this time is accepted.

Task

You should now try to do a more detailed summary of *Bride & Prejudice* that tries to identify all of the events in the film. Again, compare this with your short summary to see what additional information you have given.

Finally, compare the two long summaries of *Pride and Prejudice* and *Bride & Prejudice*. What aspects of Jane Austen's novel can you see reflected in Gurinder Chadha's film? Are there any specific events that have been used directly?



Characters

One of the key elements of storytelling is the characters in the story. A novelist or filmmaker has to create believable and interesting characters in order to involve the reader/viewer in the story.

The major techniques used by writers and filmmakers to establish a character and to help us understand what type of person they are include:

- Physical description (including dress, looks and voice)
- Personality (friendly, happy etc.)
- Actions of the character
- Interaction with other characters
- Comments of other characters

Characters are essential to the movement of a story. As a story is a construction and everything within it should be relevant to its development, then we can see that the actions, thoughts and words of any character are a vital element of the dynamic of a story.

In the novel, 'character' means one of two things. Firstly it is used to refer to the imaginary people that populate the novel. Talking about character, however, can also refer to a psychological judgement of some kind. Bingley says to Elizabeth, 'I did not know before, that you were a studier of character, it must be an amusing study.' (Ch 9).

The study of a person's character, in other words their personality, ethics and manner of conducting themselves, is a matter discussed frequently in the novel. True judgement of character is exhorted as a valuable skill, especially by Mr Bennet when he is giving advice to his daughters.

Readers are able exercise their own character judgements. For example, the easy-going Bingley is a simpler character to understand. He is polite and affable to everybody. Whereas Darcy is a more intricate character. His actions seem to be controlled by a struggle between his decency and his pride, the latter often resulting in antisocial behaviour.

How far does this hold true for film?

Who would you say are the main characters in Bride & Prejudice? Overleaf is a brief description of one of the characters that you see in the film:



Bride & Prejudice

F I L M
E D U C A T I O N



Mr Bakshi

Mr Bakshi is a man who is always in a quandary when it comes to marrying his daughters. Coming from a not so rich family background, Mr Bakshi simply cannot afford to pay the wedding dowry.



Mrs Bakshi

Mrs Bakshi is the mother of four daughters and her sole aim is to find the perfect wealthy partners for her daughters.



Jaya

Jaya is the eldest daughter of the Bakshi family and of marriageable age.



Lalita

Lalita is next to Jaya. Smart and stubborn, she is determined to seek her own love without the meddling of her mother. Lalita is intelligent and is not afraid to speak her mind.



Maya and Lucky

Maya and Lucky complete the sibling quartet.



Will Darcy

Darcy is an American hotelier who is instantaneously attracted to Lalita. Love at first sight.



Mr Balraj

A British Asian from London and the new neighbour to the Bakshi family. Mrs Bakshi sees this good-looking personality as a prospective partner for Jaya.



Mr Kholi

A self-made man who has returned from America to find himself a wife. In his own words, 'no life without wife'!



Bride & Prejudice

F I L M
E D U C A T I O N

Choose three of these for the work that you are now going to complete.

Firstly think about each character individually. For each of the three characters answer the following questions:

- Describe the physical characteristics of the character.
- Try to describe their personality.
- What do we know about the background of the character?

Your answers will lead you to some general conclusions about each character. The next thing to look at is how you have come to understand this. For your answers to questions 2 and 3 try to think of moments within the film that illustrate the points you have made.



Actions & Motivation

Having looked at the physical and personality aspects of the three characters we should now look at their motivation and also their actions in order to see how each character relates to the other characters.

Task

In the chart below you will be required to choose three key actions for each of the main characters. For each of these actions decide what each of them tells us about the character. Finally, you could think of the ways in which this particular action affects other characters.

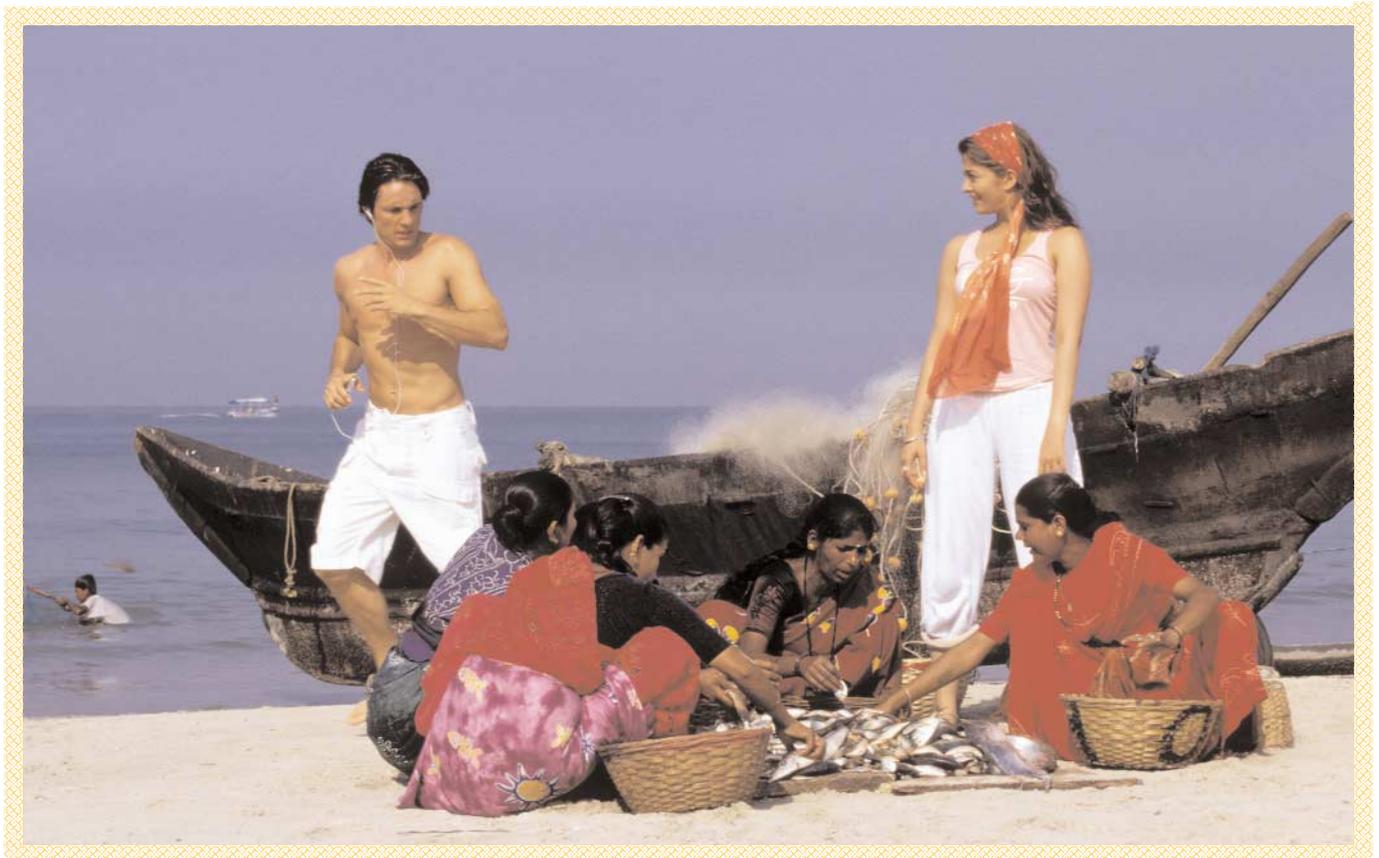


	What the action tells us about the character	Reflection in other characters
Character 1		
1		
2		
3		
Character 2		
1		
2		
3		
Character 3		
1		
2		
3		



Interaction

Look back to your answers to the previous task. How many of the key actions of each character involve one of the other main characters?



Task

You will need now to consider how the characters interact with each other.

- Start with Lalita. How does she interact with Darcy and Wickham? How does she relate with her mother? How does she relate to Mr Kholi?
- See if you can draw a diagram that links characters together.
- When you have drawn your diagram try to think of key moments in the film that relate to each relationship.



Themes

We are now going to explore the ideas of themes within the story of Bride & Prejudice. Earlier in this guide you will have written a short summary of what happened in both the novel Pride and Prejudice and also in the film Bride & Prejudice. When we talk about themes of a story we are not talking about what happened but what the story is about, what the events illustrate.

So, now try to write 100 words that would tell someone what the film is about. One thing you might say is that the film is 'about' marriage. This will lead you on to some of the other themes of the film. If you have studied the novel, you should then repeat the same exercise, trying to say what the novel is about. You will probably find that marriage crops up again!

Once you have the two lists of themes, compare them to see whether Gurinder Chadha has stuck to the themes of the novel in her modern version of the story. Are there any differences? Can you account for these?

Below are some of the themes that appear in the film Bride & Prejudice

Values, Pride, Prejudice, Economic status, Money and self-interest, Marriage and Love, Cultural differences, Class and wealth, The role of women, Narrowness of vision

Task

In the chart below write down four of what you think are the themes of the film. Next to each theme try to write down at least two incidents from the film that illustrate that theme.

THEME	INCIDENTS IN BRIDE & PREJUDICE



Genres

'Genres are formal systems for transforming the world in which we actually live into self-contained and controllable structures of meaning. they shape reality, thus making it less random and disordered.'

Patrick Phillips: An Introduction To Film Studies (Editor: Jill Nelmes)

The Pleasures of Genres

Many stories are formulaic. They follow a set formula or pattern. They start and end in quite a predictable way and yet they still have the power to entertain the audience because they are not entirely predictable.

This mixture of the predictable and the unexpected is a very useful way of starting to understand film genres. Part of the reason film genres survive is because they are able to offer audiences a mix of the pleasantly familiar and the unusual.

We have already mentioned that when we visit a cinema to watch a film we will have expectations of what we are going to see. These expectations will relate to the genre, or type of film, that we are seeing. One of the key genres that relates to *Bride & Prejudice* is the Bollywood film.

Bollywood films are usually musicals. Few movies are made without at least one song-and-dance number. Within these musicals, in a similar way to Hollywood musicals, we would expect to hear songs and see dances, love interest, comedy and dare-devil thrills, all mixed up in a three hour-long extravaganza with intermission. Such movies are called masala movies, after the Indian spice mixture masala. Like masala, these movies are a mixture of many things.

The plots of the average Bollywood film are more often than not melodramatic. They frequently employ formulaic ingredients such as star-crossed lovers and angry parents, corrupt politicians, kidnappers, conniving villains, long-lost relatives and siblings separated by fate, dramatic reversals of fortune, and convenient coincidences. Boy meets girl, boy and girl fall in love, but parents, class, caste and community don't approve. Overbearing mothers getting sentimental over their favourite sons. Domineering daddies who tell their daughters, 'You will not marry that man!' Song-and-dance sequences of little relevance to the plot.

Task

Looking at the conventions of the Bollywood film, are there any conventions that are given above which could also apply to Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*?



Bride & Prejudice

F I L M E D U C A T I O N

Bollywood and Dance

One of the key conventions of Bollywood films is the dance.

The dancing in Bollywood films, especially older ones, is primarily modelled on Indian dance: classical dance styles, dances of historic northern Indian courtesans (nautch girls), or folk dances. In modern films, Indian dance elements often blend with Western dance styles (as seen on MTV or in Broadway musicals), though it is not unusual to see Western pop and pure classical dance numbers side by side in the same film. The hero or heroine will often perform with a troupe of supporting dancers, usually of the same sex. If the hero and heroine dance and sing a pas-de-deux, it is often staged in beautiful natural surroundings or architecturally grand settings.



We could say that this film can be called a crossover film for it's neither completely a Bollywood nor entirely a Hollywood musical. A mix of both the cultures both in terms of the story and filmmaking.

Task

When you have seen *Bride & Prejudice*, can you identify which moments in the film relate to the types of dance listed above? Which dances seem to be specifically 'Indian' and which Western? Are there any dances that you see which mix both styles? Look at study clip 1 and clip 6 to see how these different approaches appear in the film.



Modernising a Story

Because Gurinder Chadha is making an 'analogy' of *Pride and Prejudice* and sets the basic plot in a modern, relocated situation, we need to examine the effects of this on the ways in which the plot is 'performed'.

We'll start by taking one aspect of *Pride and Prejudice* and see how this has been modernised.

Letters in *Pride and Prejudice*

There are twenty-one letters quoted in the text and nearly as many again alluded to during the novel. *Pride and Prejudice* scholars tend to analyse these letters in the context of the following narrative and formal considerations:

- As an introduction to the character of a person who has yet to appear in the text. i.e. Mr Collins' letter to Mr Bennet in Chapter 13.
- An indicator as to the character of the letter writer. Darcy, Jane, Elizabeth and Mr and Mrs Gardiner are serious letter writers. Mr Collins either ingratiates himself or makes a fool of himself in writing. Whereas Lydia is a mercenary letter writer.
- To minimise locations. The news of Lydia and Wickham's elopement and subsequent marriage develops through letters. This effect is called economy of narrative.
- To allow Darcy to win Elizabeth's heart by giving account of himself when she will not suffer his presence.

During the early nineteenth century the upper and middle classes would have maintained a considerable correspondence by letter. Today, we tend to use telephones, text and email. But during the period Austen was writing, it would be normal to sit down and spend a few hours every afternoon and/or evening writing letters to various correspondents.

In *Pride and Prejudice* letter writing provides one distraction in the character's private lives. It is an opportunity, as we have seen above, not just to exchange news and gossip but also to maintain friendships in a period when a trip from Derbyshire to London was a considerable journey of at least a whole day's travel.

Notice how little work of any kind is mentioned in the novel. The main characters, members of the elite class, have an excessive amount of leisure time. This is divided up in the novel into private and public occasions. How is this similar to what we see in *Bride & Prejudice*?





Entertainment and communication has changed over time due to technological invention. At the beginning of this section television was mentioned. Other popular diversions today, include film, email and the internet. Notice how in the film *Bride & Prejudice* (2004) the Bakshi girls cluster expectantly around a computer waiting for emails from Mr Balraj and Johnny Wickham. This is an indication of how correspondence has altered.

Email is potentially a more instantaneous means of communication, capable of reaching anywhere on earth in less than a second. Consider how the possibilities of email and the Internet, in comparison to the nature of letters, have changed individual lives and, on a larger scale, whole societies.

Task

Your task is now to think about the original novel and consider other ways in which it has been modernised in *Bride & Prejudice*. Think about locations, activities and professions.