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i v i t i e s

BEFORE READING

Here are some of the people in the story *Emma*.



1 Mr Knightley



2 Emma Woodhouse



3 Harriet Smith



4 Mr Elton



5 Frank Churchill



6 Robert Martin



7 Jane Fairfax



8 Miss Bates

1 What kind of people are they? What do you think?
Match the sentences with the pictures.

- a ☐ She's poor and not very clever, and wants to marry for love.
- b ☐ She's poor, but clever, and doesn't show what she feels.
- c ☐ She's rich and clever, and tries to help people – not always in the best way.
- d ☐ He's rich and likes talking cleverly to women.
- e ☐ He isn't very nice and wants to marry someone rich.
- f ☐ She's not very clever and will never marry.
- g ☐ He's rich and good, sees a lot, but says little.
- h ☐ He's poor but good.

2 What do you think happens between these people in the book?
Who falls in love with whom?

CHAPTER 1

Emma is interested in Harriet

Emma Woodhouse had everything. She was beautiful, clever and rich, and she lived very comfortably with her father in a fine house called Hartfield in the village of Highbury.

Emma's life as a young child **became** unhappy when her mother died, so Mr Woodhouse found a woman called Miss Taylor to teach Emma and her sister Isabella. Later, when Emma's sister married Mr John Knightley and went to live in London, Miss Taylor soon became more of a friend than a **governess** to Emma.

After Miss Taylor married and moved away, Emma **missed** her friend and her good conversation greatly. Emma and her father knew many people in Highbury, but she had no good friends of her own age. She spent many evenings alone with her father and they were long and often boring.

One evening after supper, an old friend of the family walked into the room. Mr George Knightley was a man of thirty-seven or thirty-eight years who lived near Highbury and often visited Emma and her father. His brother John was married to Emma's sister, Isabella.

'Shall I tell you about Miss Taylor's **wedding**, Mr Knightley?' said Emma, trying to sound happy.

'Poor Emma,' said her father. 'She misses Miss Taylor very much.'

'Of course Emma misses her friend,' said Mr Knightley, 'but I'm sure she is happy that Miss Taylor has married.'

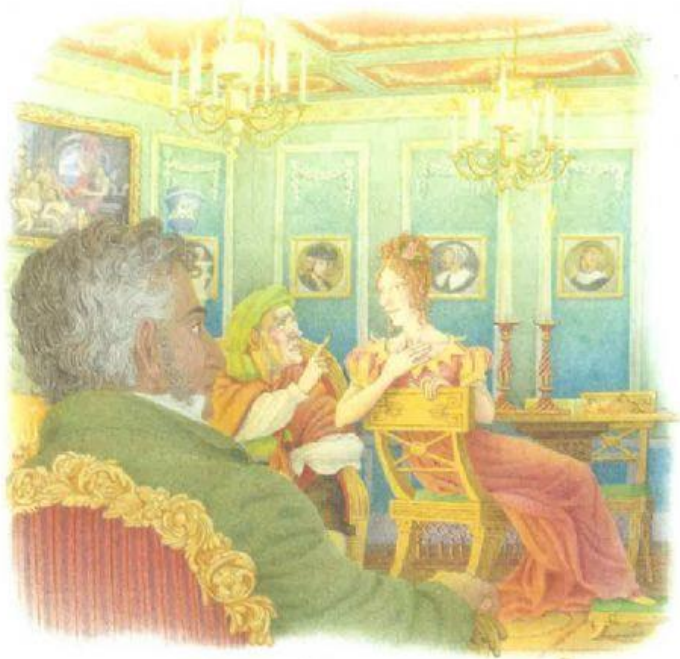
'Yes, I am,' said Emma smiling. 'And don't forget that they

become (past
became) to begin
to be

governess a
woman who lives
with and teaches
children in their
home

miss to want
something that
you once had, but
that you don't
have now

wedding the day
when two people
marry



'Please don't
matchmake,
Emma.'

married because of me. I decided it four years ago when you all said that Mr Weston didn't want to marry again.'

'Oh, dear,' said Mr Woodhouse. 'Please don't **matchmake** any more, Emma. Things always happen as you say they will.'

'But, Papa, I *love* matchmaking,' replied Emma, laughing. 'Mr Weston married Miss Taylor because he loves her and she loves him, not because he met her through you,' said Mr Knightley, shaking his head.

'But, Mr Knightley,' she said. 'I knew how they felt before

matchmake to help two people to meet, hoping that they will fall in love and marry

they knew it themselves. That is the secret of a good matchmaker!'

Emma sometimes asked a group of her father's friends to spend the evening at Hartfield. On one of these evenings Emma felt very excited. A young woman of seventeen was coming to the party. She had no friends or family but she was very beautiful. Her name was Harriet Smith.

Emma was interested in Harriet and they spent the evening talking. Harriet was not very clever, but she was friendly, kind, and had beautiful blue eyes. When Harriet and her father's friends left, Emma made a plan. She wanted to teach Harriet, to be her friend, and to **introduce** her to the important people in Highbury.

Emma started to spend a lot of time with Harriet and she soon knew all about her. Harriet told her about her friends, the Martins. She often stayed with them on their **farm**, and she liked Mr Robert Martin very much.

One day while the young women were out walking, they met Mr Martin. Emma saw at once that Harriet liked him a lot, and she was very unhappy about it. A farmer was not the right husband for beautiful Harriet! Emma decided to be Harriet's matchmaker.

Emma soon thought of the right person for Harriet. It was Mr Elton – a **handsome** young **clergyman** with a comfortable home who needed a wife. Emma started work at once. She spoke to Harriet about Mr Elton and to Mr Elton about Harriet, and planned lots of ways for them to meet.

Mr Elton started to visit Hartfield often, and Emma was sure that her plan was working well.

'I see that you have taught Miss Smith a lot and have helped her to become a much better person,' Mr Elton told Emma one day.

introduce to bring people together for the first time by saying their names and something about them

farm a place in the country where people keep cows, sheep and other animals

handsome good-looking (a man is handsome but a woman is beautiful)

clergyman a man who works for the church

'Oh no,' said Emma smiling. 'Harriet has always been kind and beautiful. I have done very little.'

'You are always right, Emma,' replied Mr Elton warmly. Emma was sure that he spoke with love in his eyes, and at once, she thought of a new plan.

'Would you like me to **paint** your picture Harriet?' Emma asked one day, in front of Mr Elton.

Harriet was unsure, but Mr Elton thought that it was a wonderful plan. Emma began at once. She was a good painter and soon finished a fine picture.

'Do you think that it is a nice picture, Mr Elton?' asked Emma, smiling.

'It is the best picture I have ever seen. It is quite beautiful. You are a very clever painter Emma,' said Mr Elton. 'I shall take it to London for a **frame** at once.'

'He is very handsome and just right for Harriet,' Emma thought to herself, 'but I find him boring.'

While Mr Elton was in London, Harriet arrived at Hartfield one morning with a big surprise.

'Emma, you will never **believe** it,' she said excitedly. 'Mr Martin has asked me to marry him!'

Emma was not happy when she saw that Harriet wanted to say yes to Mr Martin.

'You cannot marry him, Harriet,' she said coldly. 'He is only a farmer. If you marry him, we could not be friends. I could not visit a farmer's wife!'

Poor Harriet! She did what Emma told her and wrote to Mr Martin to say no, but she was very unhappy.

Another person was also unhappy when he heard the news. Mr Knightley knew Mr Martin well and liked him a lot. He was very angry when Emma told him Harriet's answer.

'Did you tell Harriet not to marry him, Emma?' he asked.

'Yes, I did,' replied Emma, smiling sweetly.

'But Mr Martin is a kind, intelligent man. He has a fine



home and farm, and Harriet was lucky that he liked her. Harriet has no family and she couldn't find a better husband! You have been no friend to Harriet, Emma,' he said crossly.

Emma did not like Mr Knightley to be angry with her, but she was sure that she was right.

'You are wrong, Mr Knightley,' she said. 'Harriet can marry someone much better than Mr Martin.'

Mr Knightley got up quickly and walked to the door.

'Good morning to you,' he said coldly, and left.

'It is the best picture I have ever seen.'

paint to put different colours on paper to make a picture

frame the square piece of wood outside a picture

believe to think that something is true

CHAPTER 2

Emma feels uncomfortable

poem a short piece of careful writing; it is often about what you feel

clear easy to understand

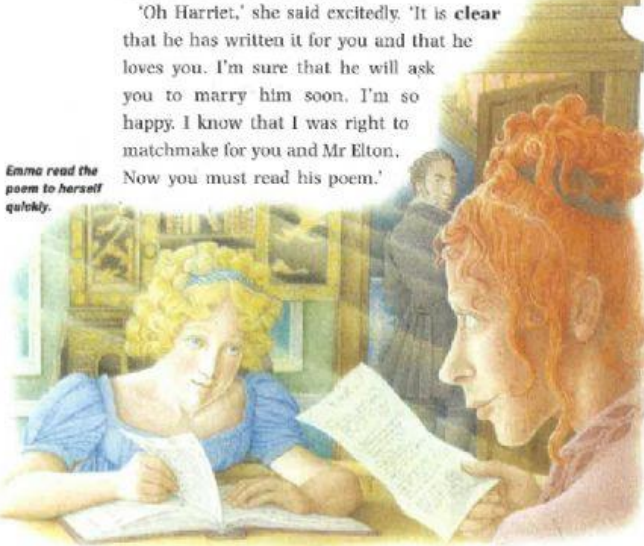
When Mr Elton came back from London with the picture in its frame, he put it in the sitting room at Hartfield and looked at it lovingly. Emma watched him and thought of a new plan.

She and Harriet were making a book of love **poems**, so she asked Mr Elton to write something for it. He happily agreed, and when he finished, he gave his poem to Emma and left the room. It was called *To Miss ____*. Emma read the poem to herself quickly.

'Oh Harriet,' she said excitedly. 'It is **clear** that he has written it for you and that he loves you. I'm sure that he will ask you to marry him soon. I'm so happy. I know that I was right to matchmake for you and Mr Elton.'

Now you must read his poem.'

Emma read the poem to herself quickly.



At first, Harriet could not believe that Mr Elton loved her, but Emma soon **persuaded** her that it was true. Harriet was very happy, and she even stopped thinking about Mr Martin. The next day, she and Emma went for a walk past Mr Elton's house.

'Just think Harriet, one day you will live there as Mrs Elton, a clergyman's wife!' said Emma.

Harriet smiled, and then she looked thoughtful. 'But Emma, what about you? I can't understand why you don't want a husband too,' she said.

'Harriet, I don't *need* a husband!' replied Emma with a **confident** smile.

Emma's sister Isabella and her family came to stay at Hartfield for Christmas. During their visit, Mr and Mrs Weston **invited** them all to their house for dinner. Knowing that Mr Elton was also a **guest**, Emma asked Mrs Weston to invite Harriet too, but in the end Harriet had a cold and could not go.

While they were waiting to leave for the Westons' house, Isabella's husband, Mr John Knightley, turned to Emma. 'I have watched Mr Elton, Emma, and he likes you very, very much,' he said, with a knowing look. 'Do you like him, too?'

Emma laughed. 'We are good friends, that's all. Surely you don't really think that he loves me?' she replied.

At dinner, Mr Elton came and sat next to Emma. He smiled a lot and was very **attentive** to her all evening. Emma remembered John Knightley's words and she felt uncomfortable.

'Mr Elton hasn't spoken about Harriet once this evening,' thought Emma. 'And he is spending all his time with me. If he loves Harriet, that isn't right!'

While she was thinking, Mr Weston spoke to her.

'Emma, we have some news. We have had a letter from my son Frank, and he is coming to visit us,' he said excitedly.

persuade to make somebody change their way of thinking

confident sure of yourself

invite to ask someone to come to your home, or to a party

guest somebody that you invite to your home, or to a party

attentive watching and listening carefully and with interest

carriage a kind of car with horses; rich people travelled in them

'That's wonderful Mr Weston,' said Emma, smiling.

Emma thought that Frank Churchill sounded very interesting and she wanted to meet him. Mr Weston's first wife died when his son Frank was a young child, and the young man now lived with his rich aunt and uncle – Mr and Mrs Churchill. They had no children themselves and Frank was like a son to them. He even changed his name to Churchill to please them.

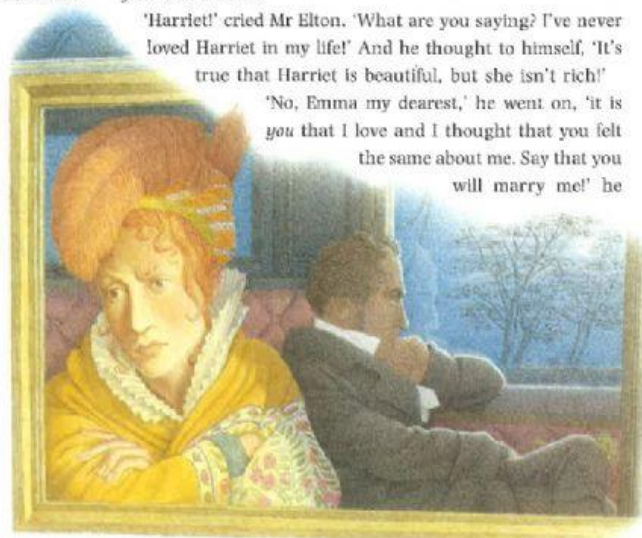
When it was time to go home, Emma said goodbye, and waited for her **carriage**. To her surprise Mr Elton climbed into it with her. Before she could say anything, he took her hand, looked into her eyes, and told her that he loved her! Emma was so surprised that she did not know what to say.

'But . . . but . . . Mr Elton,' she cried. 'You can't love me, you love Harriet!'

'Harriet!' cried Mr Elton. 'What are you saying? I've never loved Harriet in my life! And he thought to himself, 'It's true that Harriet is beautiful, but she isn't rich!'

'No, Emma my dearest,' he went on, 'it is *you* that I love and I thought that you felt the same about me. Say that you will marry me!' he

Neither Emma nor Mr Elton said a word.



10

said, looking deeply into her eyes.

Emma could not believe what was happening. This was not what she planned!

'Mr Elton, please stop this at once!' she cried angrily. 'I will not marry you!'

They both sat there, feeling angry, and neither Emma nor Mr Elton spoke for the rest of the journey.

The next day, Mr Elton left hurriedly for the city of Bath, in the south-west of England. Emma was **relieved** that she did not have to see him for a while.

'I know that Mr Elton doesn't love me! He only wants to marry me for my money,' thought Emma. Then she remembered Harriet! 'Oh dear, and I persuaded Harriet that Mr Elton loved her. Now I will have to tell her!'

Harriet cried a lot when she heard the news, but she did not **blame** Emma, and she did not blame Mr Elton. Because Harriet was so nice about it all, Emma felt worse.

Not long after this, Emma had more bad news. Frank Churchill couldn't come to Highbury until later in the year.

'Oh dear, and I really wanted to meet him. He sounds so interesting,' she said to Mr Knightley who was visiting Hartfield.

'Well I'm sure that he could come if he really wanted to,' replied Mr Knightley coldly. 'I think that he is making an **excuse**.'

Emma was surprised.

'Mr Knightley, why do you say that?' she asked.

'It's clear that his father wants to see him now, not later,' replied Mr Knightley crossly. 'I think that he is a **selfish** young man!'

'Well, I don't,' replied Emma coldly. 'And I'm sure that he will come to Highbury as soon as he can.'

Mr Knightley said nothing after that.

relieved happy that something isn't a problem any more

blame to say that someone did something wrong

excuse something – often untrue – that you say to explain why you can't do something

selfish a person who thinks only of himself or herself

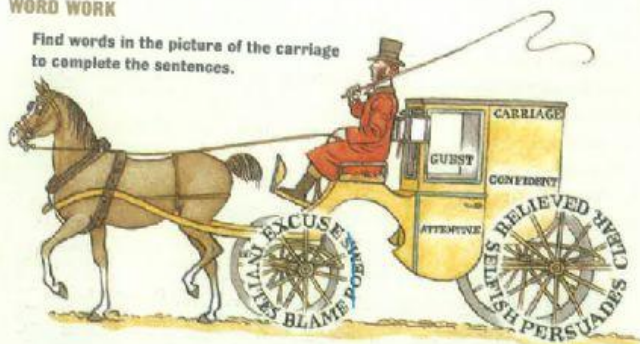
READING CHECK

Put these sentences in the correct order. Number them 1-9.

- ☐ Mr Weston tells Emma that his son, Frank, is coming to Highbury soon.
- ☐ Mr Elton brings Emma's picture of Harriet back from London.
- ☐ Emma is sad that Frank Churchill can't come to Highbury for the moment.
- ☐ Mr Elton writes a love poem and gives it to Emma and Harriet to read.
- ☐ Mr Elton goes away to Bath.
- ☐ Emma and Harriet walk past Mr Elton's house and talk of Harriet living there.
- ☐ Isabelle and Mr John Knightley come to Highbury for Christmas.
- ☐ Mr Elton asks Emma to marry him and she says no.
- ☐ Mr John Knightley tells Emma to be careful of Mr Elton.

WORD WORK

Find words in the picture of the carriage to complete the sentences.



- Byron wrote many poems.
- It's very _____ from her mistake with Mr Elton that Emma isn't always right about things.
- Mr Knightley is often a _____ at Emma's house.
- Harriet is very nice and doesn't _____ Emma when things go wrong.
- You never think of other people. You're very _____.

- Emma often _____ her friends to dinner at Hartfield.
- People often don't say truly why they don't want to do something, they make an _____.
- People in Jane Austen's books often travel by _____.
- After her terrible mistake Emma feels _____ when Mr Elton leaves Highbury for a time.
- Harriet doesn't want to marry Mr Elton, but Emma _____ her that it is a good plan.
- Mr Elton is very _____ to Emma when they have dinner at the Westons' house.
- Emma is a very _____ woman. She is very sure of herself.

GUESS WHAT

What happens in the next chapter?

- | | Yes | Perhaps | No |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a Emma visits some people who live in Highbury. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| b Harriet goes to Bath to find Mr Elton. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| c Mr Elton decides to marry a rich woman from Bristol. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| d Frank Churchill comes to Highbury. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| e Frank falls in love with Harriet. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| f Frank and Emma spend some time together. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| g Mr Knightley likes hearing about Frank. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |



Emma doesn't like Jane

A few days later, while Emma and Harriet were out walking, they decided to visit Mrs and Miss Bates. Mrs Bates was a **widow** who lived in Highbury with her unmarried daughter. Miss Bates was a kind woman, but she was very **talkative**, and Emma thought she was **silly** and boring. She did not often visit her, but she wanted to introduce her to Harriet.

When Miss Bates saw Emma and Harriet, she was very happy because she had some news to tell them.

'Miss Woodhouse, can you believe what has happened? We have had a letter today from my **niece**, Jane Fairfax, who is living in Weymouth – a very nice town by the sea in the south-west of England. She is coming to stay with us and we are very excited. You like Jane, don't you, Miss Woodhouse? She is a beautiful girl and so clever!'

'Yes, of course, Miss Bates. When is she coming?' replied Emma, trying to sound interested.

'Next week! She is coming for three months and there is so much to do before she arrives,' worried Miss Bates.

'Then, after her time with us, Jane will look for a job as a governess,' said Mrs Bates unhappily.

Jane Fairfax was the same age as Emma, but they were not good friends. It was true that Jane was beautiful and clever. Everybody who knew her liked her, but Emma was a little **jealous** of Jane. She liked being the *only* beautiful and clever young woman in Highbury.

Like Harriet, Jane Fairfax did not have any family or money, and without a rich husband she needed to work. Emma did not like Jane, but she felt sorry for her. So when she saw her again, she tried to be friendly.

widow a woman whose husband is dead

talkative talking a lot

silly stupid

niece your sister's or brother's daughter

jealous feeling angry or sad because you want to be like somebody else



Jane was not very talkative.

'I believe you met Frank Churchill while you were in Weymouth, Jane,' said Emma cheerfully.

'Yes, I did,' replied Jane.

'He is coming to visit Mr and Mrs Weston in Highbury soon,' said Emma, trying to smile. 'Did you know?'

'Oh, really,' replied Jane, looking uninterested.

'I think that he sounds a very nice man. Did you like him?' Emma asked.

'People say that he is a very nice man. I do not really know him myself,' replied Jane coldly.

Jane was not very talkative and Emma found the conversation difficult. 'What is the matter with her?' she thought crossly. 'Why is she being so cold and so unfriendly?'

After that difficult afternoon, Emma did not really want to see Jane again very soon, but the next day Miss Bates and Jane came to visit her at Hartfield.

'Emma, have you heard?' said Miss Bates, excitedly. 'Mr Elton is going to marry someone called Miss Hawkins from Bristol. I hear that she is very beautiful and very rich!'

Emma could not believe this news! Could Mr Elton have forgotten his words of love to her so soon?

'But he has only been away for four weeks!' she said.

'Yes, I know! He's a lucky man. And after the wedding he will bring his **bride** back to Highbury. Isn't that good news?' said Miss Bates smiling happily.

Emma did *not* think that it was very good news!

'So, I was right about Mr Elton,' thought Emma to herself. 'He was just looking for a rich wife and that's why he asked me and not Harriet to marry him.'

Mr Elton came back to Highbury for a short visit before the wedding. Poor Harriet did not want to see him, but luckily she and Emma soon heard some news which stopped them thinking about Mr Elton.

'Emma, we have had a letter from Frank,' said Mr Weston. 'He is coming to Highbury tomorrow. I know that you would like to meet him, so I shall bring him to visit you.'

Frank was tall, handsome and friendly, and Emma liked him at once. After tea they agreed to meet the next day, and he left to go and visit Jane Fairfax and Miss Bates.

The next day Emma and Mrs Weston showed Frank around Highbury. They stopped at the Crown **inn**.

'This is a good place for a party, Emma,' said Frank excitedly. 'Why don't we have a **ball** here?'

'Oh I love dancing. That's a wonderful idea!' cried Emma.

'We can invite Harriet and Mr Knightley, and Jane Fairfax, of course. Did you see her yesterday?'

'Yes, I did, and I met her aunt, Miss Bates,' replied Frank, laughing.

'Did you often see Jane in Weymouth?' asked Emma.



They stopped at the Crown Inn.

'No, not often,' replied Frank. 'And you, are you good friends with her?' he asked.

'I have known her since we were children, but we are not good friends. I think that Jane is too unfriendly to make friends easily,' replied Emma, and Frank quickly agreed with her.

The next day, Emma talked about Frank to her friends.

'He is very handsome, isn't he, Mrs Weston?' she said.

'Oh yes,' replied Mrs Weston. 'Very handsome.'

'And so funny too!' said Emma, smiling to herself.

While they talked, Mr Knightley sat reading his newspaper. He was tired of hearing everyone speak so warmly about Frank Churchill.

bride a woman on the day of her wedding or soon after it

inn an old word for a hotel where you can eat, drink, or stay

ball a formal party with dancing