The context of *Pride and Prejudice*: research task

This research task will develop your understanding of the time in which *Pride and Prejudice* was written and enhance your appreciation of the novel.

Use the Internet to find the answers to the following questions. Some questions will need a one sentence answer while others require a longer response. While you read, make sure you make a note of all the sites you used in your research.

**Austen and her characters**

Write a one paragraph biography of Jane Austen, including the dates and titles of her major novels. Find an image of Austen to add to your biography.

Aside from her major works, Austen completed works known as the *Juvenilia*. Write a brief description of her *Juvenilia*. Try to explain any similarities and differences between them and the style of her major works.

Several of Austen’s novels contain weak father figures. Which of Austen’s novels contain these weak fathers and what are their respective follies?

*Pride and Prejudice* is an example of a comedy of manners. What is the definition of a comedy of manners?

**The 19th century**

1. How important was social class? Explain your response.
2. How were young women educated? What were they expected to study?
3. Research *entailment* and explain how property and wealth was passed down through a family.
4. Which jobs were available to women?
5. What was the best way for an early nineteenth century woman to secure her future?
6. How were some attitudes towards marriage different to today?
7. What was a ball? What did it consist of? What role did dance play in early nineteenth century England as a whole?
8. **Enclosure and the changing face of the countryside:**
   a. What were the Enclosure (also spelt Inclosure) Acts?
   b. When were the majority of them passed?
   c. What impact did this have on many country dwellers?
   d. Where did they move to?
9. **The Industrial Revolution:**
   a. What and when was it?
   b. What did the landed gentry think of the *nouveau riche*?
   c. What was life like for the urban poor?
10. What was the British Empire? Provide a summary including information about Britain’s role in the slave trade until its eventual abolition.
11. Research the Napoleonic Wars that took place at the same time that the novel was written.

**Why are some issues referred to more than others?**

**Why do you think some important issues are not mentioned at all?**