Focus on chapters 21-24 of the text then complete the following activities.

Task 1

Think back over your reading of the novel so far. Has Austen given readers any clues that Jane and Bingley’s relationship might not go smoothly? List your ideas below.

**Foreshadowing** - where subtle clues are given throughout a text to warn of a future event.

Task 2

Working in pairs, role-play a conversation between two characters. Either:

- Lizzy and Jane discussing Charlotte’s engagement
- Charlotte and Lizzy discussing Jane’s disappointment

Remember the context of the novel and how this might influence their reactions/feelings.

Task 3

Consider the following quotation regarding Charlotte and her engagement. How does the narrator’s use of language and structure here present her views towards the match?

‘Charlotte herself was tolerably composed. She had gained her point, and had time to consider of it. Her reflections were in general satisfactory. Mr Collins to be sure was neither sensible nor agreeable; his society was irksome, and his attachment to her must be imaginary. But still, he would be her husband. Without thinking highly either of men or of matrimony, marriage had always been her object; it was the only honourable provision for well-educated young women of small fortune, and however uncertain of giving happiness, must be their pleasantest preservative from want. This preservative she had now obtained; and at the age of twenty-seven, without having ever been handsome, she felt all the good luck of it.’
Task 4

Towards the end of Chapter 23, the narrator reflects upon Lizzy’s concerns over Jane and the reasons Mr Bingley might not have returned. Summarise her thoughts in the paragraph ‘Even Elizabeth began to fear.’

Task 5

Read the following extract from Chapter 24, where Lizzy and Jane discuss the fact Bingley will not return (having heard in a letter from Caroline that they are staying in London all winter). Identify five quotations and annotate them – thinking about how the two sisters respond differently to this news.

Remember to be specific about features of language, structure and form, the impact of these on the reader and Austen’s wider ideas/themes being developed.

A day or two passed before Jane had courage to speak of her feelings to Elizabeth; but at last on Mrs Bennet’s leaving them together, after a longer irritation than usual about Netherfield and its master, she could not help saying,

‘Oh that my dear mother had more command over herself! she can have no idea of the pain she gives me by her continual reflections on him. But I will not repine. It cannot last long. He will be forgot, and we shall all be as we were before.’

Elizabeth looked at her sister with incredulous solicitude, but said nothing.

‘You doubt me,’ cried Jane, slightly colouring; ‘indeed you have no reason. He may live in my memory as the most amiable man of my acquaintance, but that is all. I have nothing either to hope or fear, and nothing to reproach him with. Thank God! I have not that pain. A little time therefore.—I shall certainly try to get the better.’

With a stronger voice she soon added, ‘I have this comfort immediately, that it has not been more than an error of fancy on my side, and that it has done no harm to anyone but myself.’

‘My dear Jane!’ exclaimed Elizabeth, ‘you are too good. Your sweetness and disinterestedness are really angelic; I do not know what to say to you. I feel as if I had never done you justice, or loved you as you deserve.’

Miss Bennet eagerly disclaimed all extraordinary merit, and threw back the praise on her sister’s warm affection.

‘Nay,’ said Elizabeth, ‘this is not fair. You wish to think all the world respectable, and are hurt if I speak ill of any body. I only want to think you perfect, and you set yourself against it. Do not be afraid of my running into any excess, of my encroaching on your privilege of universal good will. You need not. There are few people whom I really love, and still fewer of whom I think well. The more I see of the world, the more am I dissatisfied with it; and every day confirms my belief of the inconsistency of all human characters, and of the little dependence that can be placed on the appearance of either merit or sense. I have met with two instances lately; one I will not mention; the other is Charlotte’s marriage. It is unaccountable! in every view it is unaccountable!’

‘My dear Lizzy, do not give way to such feelings as these. They will ruin your happiness. Consider Mr Collins’s respectability, and Charlotte’s prudent, steady character. Remember that she is one of a large family; that as to fortune, it is a most eligible match; and be ready to believe, for everybody’s sake, that she may feel something like regard and esteem for our cousin.’