Bridget Jones vs. Elizabeth Bennet

Bridget Jones is a modern woman attempting to both fight the female stereotype and conform to it at the same time. Bridget’s personality is remarkable and likeable because she is a characterization and representation of many individuals in current society, including us! By understanding Bridget’s actions and motivations, both males and females can come to better understand not only themselves, and those around them, and the roles of the modern woman in today’s culture.

As you know from reading*, Bridget Jones’s Diary* and *Pride and Prejudice* are closely related texts, in characters as well as story line. Both portray the lives and struggles of strong female characters. Central themes in the books include:

* **Love**
* **Social class**
* **Body image**
* **Expectations/Reputation**
* **Self-improvement**
* **Virtues**

These themes are important to consider when think about both novels individually as well as considering their relation to each other. While thinking and considering these two novels, choose **one** of the following prompts and answer it in its **entirety**. There is no length requirement, but your ideas are expected to be developed and expressed **thoroughly**. By writing about these two novels, you will improve your ability to relate separate ideas and synthesize information, pertinent to both future education and real life.

**Prompt #1:** Choose one (or more) of the themes listed above and compare/contrast its role in *Bridget Jones’s Diary* and in *Pride in Prejudice*. If the theme(s) is only present in one of the novels, elaborate as to why it is not in present in the other novel. In relation to this theme(s), explain how Western society has changed as a whole, and how the role of women has (or has not) changed in Western society. You must use at least 2 quotes from each novel to support your claims.

**OR**

**Prompt #2:** Closely examine and explore why you think Helen Fielding chose to use Jane Austen’s novel for a model for her book and storyline. You should consider: Why is Elizabeth Bennett such a timeless character? Why is Mr. Darcy a timeless character, enough so that Fielding would borrow his name for her own novel? Are Bridget and Elizabeth truly comparable? When answering these questions, use at least 2 quotations/passages from each novel to support your claims.

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|  | Excellent (9 points) | Competent (6 points) | Emerging (3 points) |
| Development | The author clearly and fully develops their claims and ideas for their audience | The author clearly develops their claim and idea for the audience, but not to the full extent possible | The author does not develop their claim enough to explain to an audience |
| Textual Evidence | The author uses 2 quotes from each of the novels to effectively prove their claim | The author uses less than 2 quotes from each text effectively; the author chooses less than effective quotes to prove their claim | The author does not use quotes to prove their claim; The author uses ineffective quotes |
| Synthesizing the Texts | The author clearly and effectively relates the 2 novels together - Relating themes and characters | The author relates the novels together, but in an unclear or ineffective fashion – Somewhat relating themes and characters | The author fails to make connections between the novels |
| Grammar/Spelling | The author uses correct grammar and spelling throughout their essay – Correct usage of commas v. colons v. semicolons | The author mostly uses correct grammar and spelling throughout the essay, but makes mistakes – Mostly correct use of commas v. colons v. semicolons | The author uses improper grammar; The authors has poor spelling – Misuse of commas v. colons v. semicolons |