

# Fiona PALMER

## *Matters of the Heart*

1. Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* is Fiona Palmer's favourite novel of all time and in *Matters of the Heart* she has transported the classic love story published in 1813 to 21st-century rural Australia. While love is timeless, how has romance changed?

2. Austen's novel is about marriage. In *Matters of the Heart* marriage is not the be-all and end-all. How has Fiona Palmer recast *Pride and Prejudice*'s themes in light of this? Is it a faithful reimagining in your view?

3. What do you think of *Matters of the Heart*'s Lizzy Bennet and Will Darcy? What do they have in common with the original characters? How has feminism affected their roles?

4. In *Matters of the Heart*, how do pride and prejudice play out for Lizzy and Will?

5. Are the themes of *Pride and Prejudice* such as class, manners, social climbing and making a good match still relevant today? How does *Matters of the Heart* treat these themes?

6. Why does *Pride and Prejudice* still resonate today? Which are your favourite adaptations and why?

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7. In *Pride and Prejudice*, characters write letters to communicate; in *Matters of the Heart* they text. How have technology and social media transformed how we relate to each other? *Pride and Prejudice* was all about manners. What commentary is *Matters of the Heart* making?

8. Compare Charles Bingley's brush-off of Jane in both novels. Are they both as hurtful or is one more stinging than the other? Why?

9. What does an Australian rural setting bring to the classic story?

10. In *Pride and Prejudice*, Mrs Bennet's main preoccupation is finding a husband for each of her five daughters. In *Matters of the Heart* Margaret Bennet is also keen for her daughters to find partners. Is her concern justified? Why or why not?

11. Lottie makes a pragmatic decision to change her situation by moving in with Ken Collins, who can offer her material advantages, and then happily finds that as a couple they are a good fit. What do you think of Lottie's decision?

12. Do you think the portrayal of an Australian class divide based on wealth in *Matters of the Heart* is an accurate one?