

# MARRYING WITH SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

## 1. Read a short dialogue from *Sense and Sensibility*. What does it describe?

LUCY STEELE: ...it frightens me to think I shall never marry.

FANNY DASHWOOD: Nonsense. You will marry far better than either of the Dashwood girls.

LUCY: How can that possibly be?

FANNY: You have ten times their sense and looks.

LUCY: But I have no dowry.

FANNY: There are qualities which will always make up for that, and you have them in abundance. It would not surprise me if you were to marry far and away beyond your expectations.

LUCY: I wish it might be so. There is a young man -

FANNY: Ah ha! I am glad to hear of it. Is he of good breeding and fortune?

LUCY: Oh both - but his family would certainly oppose the match.

FANNY: Tush! They will allow it as soon as they see you, my dear.

LUCY: It is a very great secret. I have told no one in the world for fear of discovery.

FANNY: Looks up, curious to know more.

FANNY: My dear, I am the soul of discretion.

LUCY: If I dared tell . . .

FANNY: I can assure you I am as silent as the grave.

[LUCY leans forward to whisper in FANNY's ear. Then, there is an almost inhumanely loud shriek...]

**What happened next? Did Lucy marry Edward in the end?**

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## 2. Now, read two short dialogues and find out what happened.

MRS JENNINGS: Oh, my dears! What a commotion! Mr Edward Ferrars has been engaged these five years to Lucy Steele! Poor Mr Ferrars! His mother, who by all accounts is very proud, demanded that he break the engagement on pain of disinheritance. But he has refused to break his promise to Lucy. He has stood by her, good man, and is cut off without a penny! She has settled it all irrevocably upon Mr Robert. But I cannot stop, I must go to Lucy. Fanny, your sister-in-law scolded her like any fury - drove her to hysterics.

[She leaves the room, still rabbiting on. There is a silence.]

MARIANNE DASHWOOD: How long have you known?

ELINOR DASHWOOD: Since the evening Mrs Jennings offered to take us to London.

MARIANNE: Why did you not tell me?

ELINOR: Lucy told me in the strictest confidence.

[MARIANNE looks at her in complete incredulity.]

ELINOR: I could not break my word. Clearly, there is no arguing this point.

MARIANNE: But Edward loves you.

[Elinor looks at him, her face streaked with tears of released emotion, of pain and happiness...]

EDWARD FERRARS: Yes, I received a letter from Miss Steele – or Mrs Ferrars I should say – communicating her transfer of affections to my brother Robert. They were much thrown together in London I believe... and... in view of the change in my circumstances I felt it only fair to release Miss Steele from our engagement. At any rate, they were married last week and are now in Plymouth.

[Elinor raises suddenly, Edward turns and they stand looking at each other.]

Elinor DASHWOOD: Then you - are not married.

Edward: No

[Elinor bursts into tears...]

Edward: Elinor! I met Lucy when I was very young. Had I had an active profession, I should never have felt such an idle, foolish inclination. But I convinced myself you felt only friendship and it was my heart alone that I was risking. I have come with no expectations. Only to profess, now that I am at liberty to do so and that my heart is and always will be yours.

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## NOTES FOR TEACHERS

1. Ask your students if they have ever read the book or seen the film *Sense and Sensibility*. How much do they remember? Explain they will read three short dialogues from the film script, not the book itself. You may also add that Lucy, Fanny and Edward are not the main characters and that the plot they are going to read is one of many.
2. Depending on the level of your students, you may need to pre-teach some vocabulary: *dowry, on pain of disinheritance, tush, to rabbit on something, to scold somebody, of good breeding, commotion, etc.*
3. Ask your students to read **dialogue 1** and what it describes.  
**Answer:** It describes a hidden love which comes out (other related answers may also be correct).
4. Ask your students what happened next. Elicit some possible answers and ask them to read **dialogues 2 and 3**. Then, ask them what really happened and if Lucy married Edward.  
**Answers 1:** When Fanny learnt that Lucy was engaged to her brother, she attacked Lucy.  
**Answers 2:** No, Lucy did not marry Edward.
5. Finally, check your students' comprehension using the questions from the comprehension quiz.
6. Wrap the lesson up with a discussion around the theme of marriage. Could this happen today? What would they look for in a future spouse?