

MASTERPIECE™

The Jane Austen Book & Film Club

Miss Austen Regrets

1. To write convincing fiction about a subject such as loss, love or poverty, you must have experienced it yourself. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? What works of literature and their authors would you use to defend your argument?
2. How interested are you in biographical information about the musicians, artists, writers, actors, or athletes whom you admire? How much does an artist's biography matter in understanding and appreciating his or her work?
3. Before you watch *Miss Austen Regrets*, work with your book group to make a list of ten things you think you can guess about Jane Austen's life solely based on her fiction. To what economic and social class do you think she belonged? What was her family like? What happened in her own romantic life? After you have viewed the film—in which dramatic license was taken to explore Jane Austen's romantic life, about which little is known—look your list over again. How does the film address your predictions? What do you think of the “answers” it gives?
4. Why do you think this film is titled *Miss Austen Regrets*? Does Jane regret that she did not marry? What did that choice cost her? Why do you think Jane Austen, as you come to know her in *Miss Austen Regrets*, married off all the heroines in her novels?
5. Who was the real Jane Austen? Do you think she was a staid and quiet woman, a spirited rebel, or something in between? Which of her characters do you think she most resembles? Why?

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