

What Matters in Jane Austen: Twenty Crucial Puzzles Solved



Which important Austen characters never speak? Is there any sex in Austen? What do the characters call one another, and why? What are the right and wrong ways to propose marriage? In *What Matters in Jane Austen?*, John Mullan shows that we can best appreciate Austen's brilliance by looking at the intriguing quirks and intricacies of her fiction. Asking and answering some very specific questions about what goes on in her novels, he reveals the inner workings of their greatness. In 20 short chapters, each of which explores a question prompted by Austen's novels, Mullan illuminates the themes that matter most in her beloved fiction. Listeners will discover when Austen's characters had their meals and what shops they went to; how vicars got good livings; and how wealth was inherited. *What Matters in Jane Austen?* illuminates the rituals and conventions of her fictional world in order to reveal her technical virtuosity and daring as a novelist. It uses telling passages from Austen's letters and details from her own life to explain episodes in her novels: listeners will find out, for example, what novels she read, how much money she had to live on, and what she saw at the theater. Written with flair and based on a lifetime's study, *What Matters in Jane Austen?* will allow listeners to appreciate Jane Austen's work in greater depth than ever before.

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