

## **Pygmalion**

*Eliza, in telling Higgins she would not marry him if he asked, was not coquetting: she was announcing a well-considered decision. When a bachelor interests, and dominates, and teaches, and becomes important to a spinster, as Higgins with Eliza, she always, if she has character enough to be capable of it, considers very seriously indeed whether she will play for becoming that bachelor's wife, especially if he is so little interested in marriage that a determined and devoted woman might capture him if she set herself resolutely to do it. Her decision will depend a good deal on whether she is really free to choose; and that, again, will depend on her age and income. If she is at the end of her youth, and has no security for her livelihood, she will marry him because she must marry anybody who will provide for her. But at Eliza's age a good-looking girl does not feel that pressure: she feels free to pick and choose. She is therefore guided by her instinct in the matter. Eliza's instinct tells her not to marry Higgins. It does not tell her to give him up. It is not in the slightest doubt as to his remainings one of the strongest personal interests in her life. It would be very sorely strained if there was another woman likely to supplant her with him. But as she feels sure of him on that last point, she has no doubt at all as to her course, and would not have any, even if the difference of twenty years in age, which seems so great to youth, did not exist between them.*

Pygmalion.  
Bernard Shaw.

## **QUESTIONS**

1. In which case would a woman marry an old bachelor?
2. Did Eliza feel the pressure to get married? Why?
3. What does Eliza's instinct tell her?
4. Does the difference of age exist between them?
5. Do people still get married? Why? (five of six lines)
6. Conditional sentences. Classify them.
7. Vocabulary:
  - Spinster
  - Bachelor
  - Strain
  - Youth