

This guide was prepared using the Penguin edition, © 1977. Other editions may differ.

SYNOPSIS

The Prologue: On April 17, 29 pilgrims of differing social ranks assemble at the Tabard Inn in Southwark on the south bank of the Thames River to travel on a religious pilgrimage. Their goal is to leave at dawn and cover the sixty miles to Canterbury Cathedral, site of the shrine of St. Thomas à Becket, who was murdered in 1170 and whom the devout claim can heal illness. Among the travelers are these:

- **The Knight**, a simply dressed man, a model of chivalry and well-traveled veteran of the Crusades
- **The Squire**, a vain, hot-blooded 20-year-old who faithfully serves his father, the knight, and who sports loud garments, sings, recites, draws, dances, and writes
- **A Yeoman** who wears green and carries bow and arrows, dirk, and a St. Christopher medal
- **A Prioress**, Madam Eglantyne, a proud aristocrat who sings through her nose, loves her pet dogs, and speaks fancy French
- **A second Nun**, secretary to Madam Eglantyne
- **Three priests** accompanying Madam Eglantyne
- **A monk**, a fat, disinterested churchman who makes a better horseman and keeper of greyhounds than a prelate
- **Hubert the friar**, a fat, well-fed churchman who bribes young women, arranges marriages, and pays little heed to the sick and poor.
- **The Merchant**, who owes money, pretends to be an entrepreneur, and expects sea-police to guard his North Sea interests
- **The Oxford Cleric**, an unemployed teacher who cares more for books of philosophy than for fancy dress
- **The Serjeant at the Law**, a learned judge of the assizes, who makes a show of being busy
- **The Franklin**, a white-bearded host, who likes a lavish table well set and maintains a high standing in the county
- **A Haberdasher, a Dyer, a Carpenter, a Weaver, and a Carpet-maker**, five guildsmen who sport silver daggers and boast of worthy wives, and flaunt their attire at religious gatherings
- **The Cook** specializes in meats and sauces.
- **The Skipper**, a heavy wine drinker who has been skilled seaman, smuggler, and pirate
- **The doctor** uses astrology to determine the cause of ailments
- **Alice, the Wife of Bath**, a talkative woman, travels often and has been married five times
- **The Parson**, a holy, well educated cleric, follows Christ and does his best to serve those in need
- **The Plowman**, the parson's brother, is devoted to his neighbors and helps others with farm chores
- **Robin, the miller**, a heavy, large-mouthed man who robs his customers, tells uncouth jokes, plays the bagpipes, and is known to drink, lie, and carouse
- **A college Manciple**, attached to the Inns of Court, fools everyone by demanding fat commissions from the thirty provisioners he patronizes.
- **Oswald, the Reeve**, an elderly, tight-fisted estate manager who enriches himself at his lord's expense
- **A Summoner**, a red-faced joker who knows Latin court jargon, but understands none of it
- **A Pardoner** from Rome rides close to the summoner, sells indulgences and displays fake religious trinkets to the gullible, sings the offertory and encourages parishioners to fill the collection plate
- **Chaucer**, the speaker, rides at the end of the train.

At evening, the group assembles near the Bell at the Tabard Inn, where the host proposes that each traveler entertain and instruct the gathering by telling two tales on the way to Canterbury and two on the return. After Harry judges the winner of the competition, the other pilgrims would pay for a free supper. The pilgrims eat and drink well, then go to bed. The next morning, Harry awakens them and accompanies them on the journey. After drawing straws to determine the first speaker, the knight begins.

The Knight's Tale, Parts I-IV: Theban cousins, Palamon and Arcita, both unjustly imprisoned in Duke Theseus's dungeon, love Emily, whom they admire in the street below their cell one May. Arcite is exiled. In the end, Duke Theseus awards Emily to Palamon. The moral begs the point: who is more fortunate, the exiled cousin or the one who sees his love daily.

The Miller's Tale: Nicholas, an astrology student, loves Alison, the young wife of his landlord John, an old carpenter. Absalon, a foppish young clerk who also likes Alison, stands under her window to serenade her. The carpenter awakens and rejoices that Alison is not drawn to Absalon's enticements.

In spite of the close watch of her jealous husband, Alison agrees to a fling with Nicholas. He alarms John with a prediction of a flood. John fears that his little wife will drown. To prepare for disaster, Nicholas urges John to nail three tubs to the rafters of the upper story and supply each with food and water. That night, the three secure themselves in the tubs and pray for mercy; after John falls asleep, Nicholas and Alison steal away to bed.

During the evening, Absalon returns to beg Alison for a kiss. She thrusts her bare bottom out the window for Absalon to kiss. The fastidious parish clerk realizes she has tricked him and departs. Because Nicholas laughs at Absalon's shame, he vows revenge. He calls Alison to the window for a second kiss. After Nicholas sticks his buttocks out the window, Absalon brands him with a hot poker. Nicholas cries for water to ease the burn, stirring John, who dislodges the tub

CANTERBURY TALES

from the rafter. The fall breaks his arm and causes his neighbors to laugh at the foolish scheme.

The Reeve's Tale: Simpkin the Swagger, a dishonest miller near Cambridge, is wed to a conceited noblewoman. Because the miller cheats Alan and John, two university students, Alan seduces Molly, the miller's daughter. John bests the miller's wife by moving the baby's crib near him. She becomes disoriented and gets in bed with the wrong man. Alan gets in the wrong bed and brags about his night with Molly. The miller awakens and fights Alan. The noise awakens John and Simpkin's wife, who takes a stick to him by mistake and cracks him on the head. The students ride off.

The Cook's Tale: Perkin Reveler robs his master by dicing, wenching, and carousing on money stolen from the owner's till. Chaucer abandons the story.

The Man of Law's Tale: In order to marry Constance, a Christian, the Sultan of Syria, along with many of his subjects, converts to Christianity. At the wedding feast, the sultan's mother has the newly-baptized converts killed. Constance is put to sea in a rudderless boat. She eventually drifts to Northumberland. Constance marries King Aella.

While Aella is away, his mother forges an order from him that Constance be banished. Constance and her newborn son are put to sea in the rudderless boat and end up in Rome. When Aella returns home and discovers what his mother has done, he kills her. He eventually reunites with Constance during a trip to Rome.

The Skipper's Tale: A merchant invites a lecherous monk, Sir John, to visit St. Denys. Before the merchant leaves for Bruges, he shuts himself in with his account books; his wife complains to John about her miserable life. Before the merchant departs, John borrows a hundred francs to give the wife. Upon dunning the monk for a loan, the merchant learns that John has repaid the merchant's wife by "double entry." The bawdy phrase fools the merchant, but not the wife, who realizes that John has tricked her. To save face, she claims to have spent the money on clothes.

The Prioress's Tale: The prioress, a fastidious, self-absorbed woman, recites a long, pious prologue followed by an anti-Semitic miracle story. A Christian child had learned the Latin *O Alma Redemptoris* without knowing its meaning. Jews grow angry at the pious song, murder the child and toss his remains into a sewer. When the mother comes in search of him, the maimed corpse sings *O Alma* to the Virgin Mary all the way to his grave. The abbot executes the Jews.

The Tale of Sir Topaz: Chaucer chooses a chivalric tale of Sir Topaz seeking the Elf-Queen. The rhyming, jog-trot details bore Bailly, who interrupts and demands something better.

Chaucer's Tale of Melibee: Chaucer complies with Bailly's request for better storytelling with a dialectical homily about Melibee, whose enemies rape his daughter Sophia. The story concludes with forgiveness rather than retribution.

The Monk's Tale: The host instructs the monk to tell a cheerful story, but the monk follows with tragic incidents from the lives of Adam, Samson, Hercules, Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, Queen Zenobia of Palmyra, King Peter of Spain, King Peter of Cyprus, Bernabo Visconti of Lombardy, Count Ugolino of Pisa, Nero, Holofernes, King Antiochus the Illustrious, Alexander, Julius Caesar, and Croesus. The knight halts the morbid tale.

The Nun's Priest's Tale: Chanticleer the rooster falls for

the flattery of Sir Russel Fox by singing a solo. The skulking predator carries him from the barnyard; the hens' loud outcry summons the widow and her two daughters. The fox, taken in by the sly rooster, turns to gloat. Once the fox opens his jaws, Chanticleer leaps free and takes refuge in a tree.

The Physician's Tale: Appius, a lecherous judge, hires a thug named Claudius to apprehend Virginius's 14-year-old daughter by claiming that she was actually Claudius's slave, stolen in childhood. When Virginius tells the girl that Appius has won custody of her, she begs to die. Virginius beheads her. A mob forces Appius into jail, where he commits suicide. Claudius is about to be hanged when Virginius intercedes and demands exile. The host calls on the Pardoner, who asks for a drink and cake at the pub.

The Pardoner's Tale: A carouser from Flanders sets out with two fellow tipplers to slay Death. The trio finds a pile of gold. After the departure of one plotter, the other two conspire to kill him for his share. A second departs and buys poison. The first two kill him and drink the poison.

The Wife of Bath's Tale: A knight from Arthurian times escapes a death sentence by consulting with a wise old woman to learn the thing that women most love. The knight's reprieve from death changes to dread when he faces the price of acquittal—he must marry the old sage. According to the chivalric code, he weds the woman. On their wedding night, he transforms her into a young beauty with a single kiss.

The Friar's Tale: An archdeacon fastidiously rules his parish and calls on the summoner to keep order. The summoner, a common pimp, conceals his identity from a yeoman, who confesses to being an emissary of Satan. The summoner tries to extort money from a widow. She curses him to hell, to which the devil immediately carries him.

The Summoner's Tale: The lecherous Friar John visits Thomas, who is ill and angry at the trickster's annoying piety. Thomas breaks wind on the friar's hand as a gift to the church for the other friars to share.

The Clerk's Tale: The obedient Griselda is the wife of Walter, who tests his long-suffering spouse by taking away their daughter. Chaucer concludes the moral tale with advice to women.

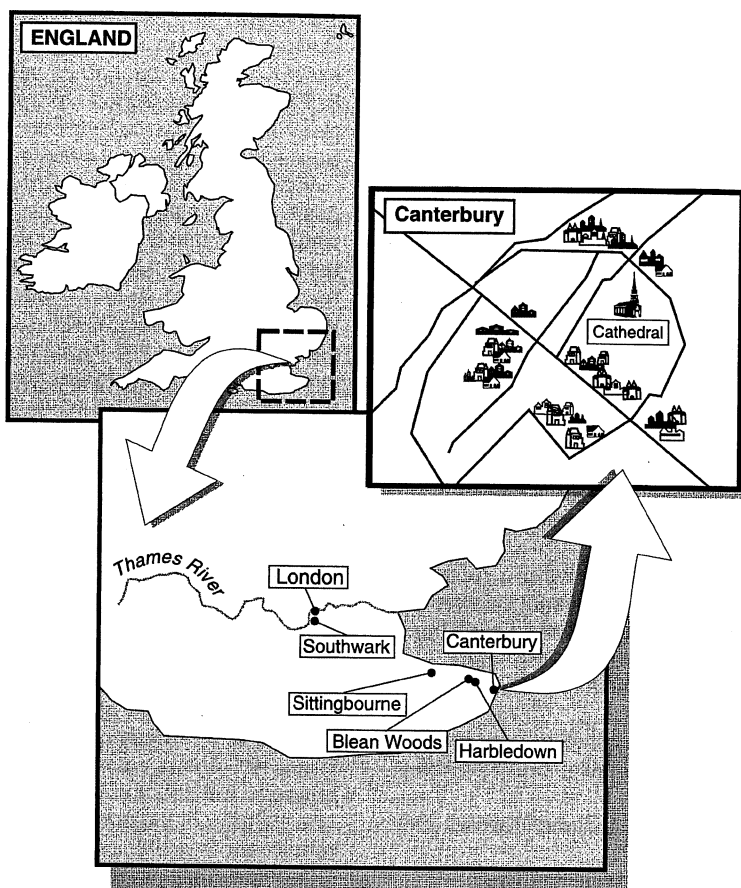
The Merchant's Tale: January of Pavia is the aged and blind husband of May. After the god Pluto restores his eyesight, he sees May with her lover Damian. January accuses May of adultery, but she convinces him that his vision was faulty.

The Squire's Tale: The story of Gawain, a knight of Arthur, introduces the incomplete romance of the lovely Canace and magic gifts: a mirror, ring, sword, and brass horse.

The Franklin's Tale: Arveragus and Dorigen are a happily mated pair whom Aurelius threatens to disjoin by commanding that Arveragus remove the rocks from Brittany's coast. Because Dorigen proves faithful to Arveragus, they are reunited.

The Second Nun's Tale: St. Cecilia, the "Lily of Heaven," encourages Christ's persecuted soldiers. Almachius questions her, but she refuses to renounce Christianity. He has her burned in her home, but she remains unharmed. He sends an executioner to slit her throat. She survives for three days, preaches to her followers, and bequeaths her home to Urban for a church.

CANTERBURY TALES



The Canon's Yeoman's Tale: At Boughton-under-Blean, a canon and his yeoman join the travelers; the host welcomes them. The yeoman builds up his lord with great praise, then humiliates him; the canon silences him. Bailly intercedes so the yeoman can begin. The canon departs in shame. The yeoman tells a two-part story about a canon who deceives a gullible priest by pretending to transform mercury into silver.

The Manciple's Tale: Phoebus has a meddling white crow who divulges that Phoebus has been cuckolded. The crow, irate over losing his feathers, forever wears black.

The Parson's Tale: A boring sermon on the seven deadly sins ends Chaucer's incomplete story cycle.

Chaucer's Retractions: When the author nears death, he appends the final paragraph, recants his waste of talent in lecherous stories and prays for forgiveness.

TIME LINE

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>1154 Henry of Anjou becomes King Henry II of England.
 1155 Henry II names Thomas à Becket his chancellor.
 1162 June Henry II appoints Becket the Archbishop of Canterbury, intending to use him as a tool of the crown.
 1163 May Becket resists royal attempts to limit church power.
 1164 early Henry II forces English church officials to accept the Constitutions of Clarendon, which would make clerics subject to English criminal law.
 late Becket repudiates the Constitutions and flees to</p> | <p>Rome.
 1170 Becket returns to England and harshly criticizes English bishops for their actions while he was in Rome.
 June Becket threatens to place England under the interdict, which would deny people the sacraments and Christian burials.
 Dec. 29 Four knights loyal to Henry II kill Becket.
 Dec. 30 Crowds gather at Becket's crypt.
 1173 Becket is canonized.
 1174 Despite his being guiltless of the murder, the pope orders Henry II scourged at Becket's shrine.
 1215 Rebellious nobles force King John of England to sign the Magna Carta, which limits royal power and guarantees the right to a jury trial.
 1337 The Hundred Years War begins after King Edward III of England claims the throne of France.
 1340 Geoffrey Chaucer is born.
 John of Gaunt, the third son of Edward III, is born in English-occupied Ghent, Flanders.
 1346 Aug. 26 English archers destroy French cavalry at the battle of Crecy. Over 10,000 French knights are killed; English losses are less than 200.
 1348-49 The Black Death (bubonic plague) breaks out in England.
 1357 Chaucer becomes a page to the Countess of Ulster.
 1359 While serving with the army, Chaucer is captured by the French.</p> |
|---|--|

CANTERBURY TALES

- 1360** Edward III contributes to Chaucer's ransom. Chaucer writes *The Legend of Good Women*.
- 1367** Chaucer serves as valet to Edward III and marries Philippa de Roet, sister of John of Gaunt's wife.
- 1369** Chaucer writes *The Book of the Duchess* and *ABC of the Virgin*.
- c1370** Edward III begins to withdraw from public life, leaving administration of the kingdom to John of Gaunt.
- 1372** Chaucer goes on a diplomatic mission to Genoa where he is exposed to the Italian Renaissance. Around this time he writes *The House of Fame* and *The Parliament of Fowls* and translates *Roman de la Rose*.
- 1374** Chaucer is appointed comptroller of leather, wool, and wine.
- 1377** Edward III dies. He is succeeded by his 10-year-old grandson, Richard II. The kingdom is administered by the king's uncle, John of Gaunt.
- 1378** Chaucer goes on a diplomatic mission to Milan.
- c1380** Chaucer translates *De Consolatione Philosophiae* and *Troilus and Criseyde*.
- 1381** Wat Tyler leads the Peasants Revolt, a rebellion caused by high taxation and government economic regulations. The revolt is brutally crushed after Tyler is assassinated during a meeting with Richard II.
- 1385** Chaucer writes *The Prologue to The Canterbury Tales*.
- 1386** John of Gaunt goes to Spain in an unsuccessful attempt to become king of Castile. Chaucer loses his offices. Philippa dies. Around this time, Chaucer writes *The Legend of the Saints of Cupid*.
- c1387** Chaucer begins writing *The Canterbury Tales*.
- 1389** John of Gaunt returns to England. Chaucer appointed Clerk of the King's Works.
- 1399** After John of Gaunt dies, Richard II confiscates his estates. John's son Henry Bolingbroke deposes Richard II and becomes King Henry IV. Richard dies in prison the following year. Chaucer retires from government service. He writes *Treatise on the Astrolabe*, *Envoy to Scogan*, *Envoy to Bukton*, and *To His Empty Purse*.
- 1400** Chaucer composes a retraction in which he regrets writing worldly literature. Oct. 25 Chaucer dies.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Born to a well-to-do London entrepreneur around 1340, Chaucer was reared at Aldgate and, at age 17, was placed in service as page to the Countess of Ulster in 1357. From a long line of civil servants, he worked as a court officer under King Edward III and served in the army. In 1359, during the Hundred Year's War, Chaucer was captured by the French and was eventually ransomed. He rose from page to valet to clerk to treasurer and port authority to justice of the peace, member of parliament, and knight under the patronage of John of Gaunt, the king's third son. Unseated by a shifting court the poet acquired skill in finance, people, and governmental and military intrigue. During this period, he appears to have translated the satiric poet *Roman de la Rose* [*Romance of the Rose*] (1280) and to have composed the first portion of *Legend of Good Women* (1386) and *The Book of the Duchess* (1369), written in honor of the wife of John of

Gaunt. In a public office, Chaucer was exposed to all levels and foibles of medieval England. Posted on seven trips to France, Italy, and Spain, he observed the feverishly joyous stir of humanism that had introduced the Italian Renaissance. In Florence and Genoa, he read in the original Italian the classics of Francesco Petrarca, Dante Alighieri, and Giovanni Boccaccio, the greatest poets of the Italian flowering.

On return to England, Chaucer strengthened his court position after marrying Philippa de Roet, the Queen's lady-in-waiting; he fathered Thomas, Elizabeth, and Lewis and, between lengthy ambassadorial journeys, took pleasure in domestic life. In 1374, he became comptroller of leather, wool, and wine for Richard II, Edward's successor, and occupied an office on the Thames northeast of London Bridge near the Tower. During the next decade, he made enemies who halted his political advance; as a stress-reliever after office hours, he wrote *The House of Fame*, *Troilus and Criseyde*, *Parliament of Fowls*, and the beginning of some of *The Canterbury Tales*, a sophisticated framework narrative composed in the chivalric tradition. Around 1385, he wrote *The Prologue to the Canterbury Tales*, considered England's first literary poem in Middle English, and planned an incomplete cycle of four stories each told by pilgrims on a religious trek to the shrine of Thomas à Becket at Canterbury Cathedral.

After John of Gaunt left for Spain in 1386, Chaucer's civil service employment as a customs official ended, the same year his wife Philippa died, leaving him daughters Agnes and Elizabeth, and a young son Lewis. Critics believe that he turned to writing for solace and relief of boredom. Four years later, Chaucer became treasury clerk at Windsor. At his retirement in 1399, he was appointed Somerset's deputy forester, a largely ceremonial title. During this period, he may have composed *Treatise on the Astrolabe*, *Envoy to Scogan*, *Envoy to Bukton*, and *To His Empty Purse*. The shift in duties probably interrupted the composition of *The Canterbury Tales*, of which he finished only 24 of the proposed 120 stories. With royal permission, Chaucer retired to a rented residence in Westminster, where he sickened rapidly. Shortly before his death on October 25, 1400, he scrawled a brief epilogue, "Farewel my bok and my devocioun!"

CRITIC'S CORNER

Never formalizing his role in literary history, Chaucer considered himself a hobby writer, but his contemporaries—John Gower, Thomas Hoccleve, Eustache Deschamps, and Thomas Usk—honored him as versifier and storyteller surpassing the Italian Boccaccio. Chaucer goes unmentioned in early literary records and receives no special tributes for preferring vernacular "Angle-ish" over French, the cultivated language, or Latin, the scholar's and churchman's choice. For his trust in ordinary folk language, Chaucer earned the title of father of the language, which he proved in the fictional persona of his Canterbury pilgrims. His delineation of character offers a droll, sardonic jab at the wealthy, educated, or privileged as well as the low-level plotter, mountebank, malcontent, and trickster. According to his contemporary, Thomas Gascoigne, the poet regretted his choice of earthly passions over piety as the central theme of his work. In the twentieth century, biographer Marchette Chute considers his ribald humor and knowledge of lively country folk his true monument. She concludes: "He did not do it for approval or for money or for fame. He did it for love."

CANTERBURY TALES

Because Chaucer wrote for an elite readership during an era when scarcely five percent could read, he composed jovial tales that would appeal to people familiar with Anglo-Saxon, French, and Latin. Because he was well versed in all areas of literature, he utilized the fabliau, romance, beast fable, short story, drama, and verse prologue. In his personal book storage were sixty prime volumes, a valuable library in the years before printing made books cheap and easily available. An unusual well traveled man endowed with an understated nobility and worldly knowledge of language, religion, and folklore, he was a worthy choice to sire English literature.

GENERAL OBJECTIVES

1. To set the story cycle in a time and place
2. To comprehend the social milieu of the story
3. To characterize different types of narrative, such as fabliau, beast fable, chivalric romance, and exemplum
4. To analyze variances in point of view
5. To contrast the values of Chaucer's day and modern times
6. To discuss the themes of love and fidelity
7. To analyze the role of the Church in medieval English society
8. To note the importance of Chaucer's work to the development of the English language
9. To experience oral readings of Middle English
10. To characterize the tone of stories told by different characters

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. To trace the route of the pilgrims from Southwark to Canterbury
2. To explain the logic of telling stories to pass the time
3. To contrast the personalities of the tellers with the theme and significance of their stories
4. To discuss the concept of courtly love
5. To locate examples of fraud and deceit among Chaucer's pilgrims
6. To point out colorful details of dress and behavior
7. To account for discrepancies and incompleteness of the text
8. To relate Chaucer's Retraction to the overall work
9. To recount the events that led to the death of Thomas à Becket
10. To summarize attitudes toward health, science, and astrology

LITERARY TERMS AND APPLICATIONS

For a better understanding of Chaucer's style, present the following terms and applications to the play:

contrast the obvious difference or dissonance that appears when disparate objects, persons, statements, themes, or situations are compared. Contrast is Chaucer's chief rhetorical device. It thrives on literary foils, such as holy vs. profane, worldly vs. devout, and gluttonous, gaudy, or greedy vs. modest and humble. To create realism, he amplifies the extremes of society, even employing fantasy in the story of Chanticleer and Pertelote to further his study of married couples.

humor a gentle, affirmative emphasis on human nature, foibles, and idiosyncrasies, for example, greed, curiosity, meddling, and talkativeness. Chaucer stresses humor to

counter the heavier themes of his stories, which range from kidnap, rape, and torture to false imprisonment and murder. Without the bumptious Wife of Bath and the ribaldry of the Miller's Tale, the stories would lean too heavily toward the serious and horrific. By balancing witty with ponderous and funny with tragic, Chaucer makes a statement about the natural intermingling of human events.

motif a pattern or predictable arrangement of elements to express an abstract theme, for instance, the motif of the test of virtue and the gulling of a fool. The use of travel as a unifying force is Chaucer's genius stroke. He sets his pilgrims in motion early in the morning from the Tabard Inn and keeps them riding all day, with only stories and occasional conversation to relieve the monotony of their journey. Because the cycle is unfinished, it is unclear how he would have returned the pilgrims from Canterbury, but it is evident that he intended to employ the journey motif to bring them back home.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SETTING

The milieu of Geoffrey Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales* makes use of jostling, squabbling individuals of differing social stations who happen to share a pilgrimage from Southwark, England, to Canterbury, the Kentish city that served England as religious center as well as location of the shrine of Thomas à Becket. The movement over actual countryside in a day's travel begins at the Tabard Inn, but grows less distinct as story settings replace real scenery in importance, as with the Knight's choice of a story set in Scythia and Athens, both locales common to ancient lore.

The second teller, the Miller, brings the mind's eye back to England by setting his ribald story in Oxford. The Reeve continues the motif of recognizable locations with events occurring at Trumpington near Cambridge, which he embroiders with a mill at a bridge over a brook. The Cook becomes even more familiar by setting his story of Revelling Peterkin in a guild in London, where the Cook lives.

The settings return to classic times and places with the Man of Law's tale, which takes place in Syria and Rome, two settings of interest to Christians, Jews, and Muslims during the Crusades. The Skipper chooses St. Denys, France; the prioress ranges into imaginary settings by speaking of a Jewish ghetto in a undesignated large city in Asia "populated mainly by Christians." Her story brings anti-semitic prejudice closer to home by concluding with a reference to Hugh of Lincoln, a parallel event that occurred on August 27, 1255, in which a child was murdered and his corpse stuffed in a well.

The ease of movement within narrative to suitable place continues with Chaucer's tale of Sir Topaz in Flanders and the monk telling of Earl Ugolino of Pisa, Italy. Strictly fictional is the fable of Chanticleer and Pertelote, which the Nun's Priest sets in "a small cottage, by a little meadow beside a grove and standing in a dale." The indeterminate place is common in Aesopic beast lore, which is intended to suit a wide range of places and times for maximum applicability to human life. Still far from England, the Physician chooses a story from Livy's history of Rome. The Pardoner selects Flanders. The Wife of Bath also adapts to the demands of storytelling by placing her story in the land and time of King Arthur, a favorite to native British listeners.

The Friar once more moves closer to home with the story of an archdeacon set "in my own district." The Summoner stresses immediacy with his tale, set in Holderness in Yorkshire. The Cleric of Oxford relieves the closeness of settings

CANTERBURY TALES

by ranging southward to Mount Vito, Italy. The Merchant does likewise by selecting Lombardy in northern Italy. The Squire moves farther afield to a Russian setting, "Tsarev, in the land of Tartary." The Franklin chooses Armorica in Brittany.

As with the individuals who tell the stories, Chaucer varies places and events to provide ample texture to the telling. The Second Nun reprises the life of St. Cecilia, who "was Roman born and came of noble kind." The Canon's Yeoman tells of alchemy practiced by a priest in London. The Manciple selects a Greek myth which is suited to the terrain of the eastern Mediterranean, but remains nonspecific in the way of mythic lore. Thus, the settings, like characters and themes, suit the style and purpose of each tale.

CROSS-CURRICULAR RESOURCES

For more information about medieval England, Canterbury, women in Chaucer's time, Catholicism, saints, and superstition, consult these sources:

Atlas of Medieval Europe, Routledge

Chaucer and the Fiction of Gender, Princeton University Press

Chaucer's Humor: Critical Essays, Garland

Dictionary of Christianity, Fitzroy Dearborn

A Distant Mirror, Alfred A. Knopf

Encyclopedia of Fable, ABC-Clío

Encyclopedia of the Middle Ages, Facts on File

The Fourteenth Century, Oxford Press

Lives of the Saints, Barnes & Noble

Medicine and Society in Late Medieval England, Alan Sutton Publishers

Medieval England, Garland Press

The Medieval Underworld, Dorset Press

Medieval Women, St. Martin's Press

Revelations: The Medieval World, Henry Holt

Who's Who of the Middle Ages, McFarland Press

Women in the Middle Ages, Markus Wiener Publishers

Also, consult these websites for additional background data on Chaucer, Canterbury, Christianity, the Middle Ages, the Wife of Bath, and medieval marriage:

"The Canterbury Tour," <http://www.hillside.co.uk/tour>.

"Chronology of Christianity," <http://www.cwo.com/~pentrack/catholic/chron.html>.

"Church in the Early Middle Ages," <http://arnold-ruddat.org/history/church/history3.txt>.

"Fourteenth-Century Poets and Poetry," <http://www.swansea.ac.uk/uwp/rb7.htm>.

"Illustrations of the Wife Bath," <http://www.english.upenn.edu/~swerner/Eng201/swife.html>.

"The Question of Free Choice in Marriage," <http://www.siu.edu/CHAUCER/2cdnun.html>, 1998.

"A Timeline of Medieval History," <http://www.cc.ukans.edu/kansas/medieval/timeline.html>.

THEMES AND MOTIFS

A study of the central issues and situations in Geoffrey Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales* should include these aspects:

Themes

- travel
- entertainment
- marriage
- competition

- animosity
- deception
- slander
- stalking
- violence
- reconciliation
- celebration

Motifs

- differences of opinion
- corruption among church officials
- intentional slight against a virtuous woman
- flight from danger
- gender differences in marriage and social relations

MEANING STUDY

Below are words, phrases, or sentences that have a particular meaning in the text. Explain each. Section references and page number are provided so that you can reread the passage from which the item is taken.

1. And especially from every shire's end
Of England, down to Canterbury, they wend
To seek the holy blissful martyr, quick
To give his help to them when they were sick.
(The Prologue, p. 3)

(Coming together at the beginning of April, these travelers undertake a pilgrimage or rededicatory journey to a holy shrine or sacred place. There they plan to honor Thomas à Becket (ca. 1118-1170), English priest and saint who was slain by knights loyal to Henry II. Becket assisted Henry of Anjou in obtaining the throne of England, establishing the Plantagenet line in 1154, and marrying the daughter of Louis VII of France. Henry conferred honors on Becket, including high chancellor and tutor to the crown prince.

Becket incurred Henry's wrath after the king appointed him Archbishop of Canterbury in 1162. Realizing that Becket was truly devoted to God and could not be manipulated for the King's good, Henry put political pressure on his new archbishop, who fled to France in 1164 and remained until a formal reconciliation was completed six years later. On Christmas Day, 1170, Becket publicly excommunicated enemies to the Church. Four days later, four of the King's barons—Reginald Fitzurse, William de Tracy, Hugh de Morville, and Richard le Breton—cornered the priest at his evening prayers and stabbed him to death on the steps of the nave of the cathedral. Within days, pilgrims began journeying to the crypt and reporting miraculous cures from clothes dipped in Becket's blood. The killers spent 14 years doing penance in the Holy Land. Henry performed public penance by being scourged on the site of the murder. Becket was proclaimed a saint in 1173.)

2. It happened in that season that one day
In Southwark, at *The Tabard*, as I lay
Ready to go on pilgrimage and start
For Canterbury, most devout at heart,
At night there came into that hostelry
Some nine and twenty in a company
Of sundry folk happening then to fall
In fellowship, and they were pilgrims all.
(The Prologue, p. 3)
(Located on the south side of the Thames River, the Tabard Inn, like most English pubs, is named for a tangi-

CANTERBURY TALES

ble object—in this case, a short sleeveless jacket which, when worn by a knight over his armor, displays his coat of arms. Because illiteracy was the rule rather than the exception, signboards had to picture the services offered by the place of business in order to communicate to non-readers. Even today, English pubs and theaters sport similar names, such as the Bull and Bear, the Crown, the Dirty Duck, and the Globe.)

3. Whence hung a golden brooch of brightest sheen
On which there first was graven a crowned A,
And lower, *Amor vincit omnia*. (The Prologue, p. 7)
(Eglantyne's brooch, as well as her general demeanor, suggests that her devotion to love is the earthly sort rather than the spiritual love one might expect of a prioress, who is symbolically married to Christ. The quotation, taken from Virgil's *Eclogues*, Book X, Line 69, means "Love conquers all." The rest of the quotation is "nos cedamus amor" or "let us surrender to Love.")

4. He was well versed in Aesculapius too
And what Hippocrates and Rufus knew
And Dioscorides, now dead and gone,
Galen and Rhazes, Hali, Serapion,
Averroes, Avicenna, Constantine,
Scotch Bernard, John of Gaddesden, Gilbertine.
(The Prologue, p. 14)
(In this line, Chaucer summarizes the sequence of medical prodigies up to the Middle Ages, with particular emphasis on Mediterranean practitioners. Beginning with Aesculapius, founder of medicine in ancient Greek legends, and Dioscorides, pharmacologist and writer of a Greek medical text around 50 A. D., the poet covers thirteen notable practitioners. Rufus, an anatomist in Ephesus, lived around 200 A. D.; Hippocrates, the father of medical science, lived at Cos around 460 B. C. Two from the Mediterranean area, Hali and Galen, are an Arab doctor of the tenth century and a Greek specialist and theorist of the "humors" in the second century. Serapion could refer to any of three men—a Greek from Alexandria, a Christian from Damascus, or an Arab of the eleventh century who wrote "A Book of Simple Treatments.")

Rhazes, Avicenna, and Averroes were Muslim medical authorities of the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth centuries. Constantine, a North African monk, spread his learning around Salerno. The last three—Scotch Bernard, John of Gaddesden, and Gilbertine—were British. The first taught at Montpellier, France, around 1300. John of Gaddesden, who was associated with Merton College, Oxford, was a contemporary of Chaucer and personal physician to Edward II. Gilbertine, a textbook author, lived in the thirteenth century and specialized in cures for smallpox.)

5. Our Host gave us great welcome; everyone
Was given a place and supper was begun.
(The Prologue, p. 23)
(The host, later identified as Harry Bailly, is well suited to his role as organizer of banquets and entertainments. He is an essential character in that it is his idea that initiates the telling of the tales. His reason suggests his philosophy of life: "And I don't doubt, before the journey's done you mean to while the time in tales and fun. Indeed, there's little pleasure for your bones riding along and all

as dumb as stones."

According to his arrangement, each of the travelers will tell two stories on the way to Canterbury and two on the return trip. The person who tells the best tales, "That is to say who gives the fullest measure of good morality and general pleasure" is to receive a free supper at the expense of the other travelers. The next day, the host, who leads the way, presides over the "draw for cut." The knight, who wins first place, begins the round of stories.)

6. A man's no cuckold if he has no wife. For all that, I'm not saying you are one; there's many virtuous wives, all said and done, ever a thousand good for one that's bad, as well you know yourself, unless you're mad.
(The Miller's Prologue, p. 87)
(A frequent epithet for the husband of an adulteress, cuckold also refers to the cowbird, which lays its eggs in other birds' nests. The symbol of closed hand with little finger and forefinger raised in a horn-like gesture served the same purpose as a public accusation in shaming a cuckold.)
7. I smell a Lollard in the wind!
(The Man of Law's Epilogue, p. 156)
(In reply to the Parson's retort about the host's swearing "so sinfully," the host jeers the equivalent of "Oh, little John," a common name for the clergy. The Lollards, followers of John Wycliffe, aroused anger and intolerance by their insistence on vows of poverty. On the continent, such opposition to luxury and ease among churchmen was rewarded with persecution and public execution, as was the punishment which John Huss's followers received.)
8. I have a text, it always is the same and always has been, since I learnt the game, old as the hills and fresher than the grass, *Radix malorum est cupiditas*.
(The Pardoner's Prologue, p. 241)
(The Pardoner, a mocker of Church teachings, cynically declares that his theme is unchanging: "The root of evils is greed," a restatement of Paul's aphorism in I Timothy 6:10, "The love of money is the root of all evil." The Pardoner rationalizes "And thus I preach against the very vice I make my living out of—avarice. And yet however guilty of that sin myself with others I have power to win them from it, I can bring them to repent.")
9. CHAUCER'S ENVOY: Griselda and her patience both are dead and buried in some far Italian vale.
(The Clerk's Tale, p. 355)
(In the style of the French ballade, Chaucer adds a bit of pious commentary to the Clerk's tale. He advises wives to speak up for themselves, and refuse to be controlled by their husbands. The merchant retorts, "There's a wide difference I'm bound to say between Griselda's patience and the way my wife behaves; her studied cruelty surpasses everything.")
10. *Qui cum patre*, etc. (Chaucer's Retraction, p. 489)
(Chaucer ends his retraction with an abbreviation of a pious Latin benediction that concludes, "et Spiritu Sancto vivit et regnat Deus per omnia secula. Amen." The words mean "Who lives with the father and the Holy Spirit and rules as God forever. Amen.")

COMPREHENSION STUDY

Answer the following questions in your own words. There is

CANTERBURY TALES

not always a right answer. Your judgment is important and you should be ready to defend your answers by referring to passages in the text.

Questions 1-5 Literal Level

1. Describe the women who travel with the pilgrims.
(The first woman mentioned in the prologue, the prioress, Madam Eglantyne, is outwardly refined. She sings, speaks French, and displays fastidious manners at the table. Jolly and affable, she balances her good spirits with dignity. She is tenderhearted toward animals, even rodents. Eglantyne dresses well and carries a rosary decorated with a brooch bearing a motto—"Love conquers all"—which smacks of worldliness.)

Alice, the wife of Bath, shares some of Eglantyne's qualities. She too is cheery and talkative, but lacks restraint and cultivation. In contrast to the well-shaped nose and blue eyes of the prioress, Alice, a wide-hipped, gap-toothed woman, dresses in gaudy red hose, giant hat, spurs, and new shoes. She boasts of her skill in weaving, religious pilgrimages, and collection of former husbands. Alice, a coarse, rollicking lover of passion, does not merely hint at worldliness. Indeed, her portion of the text is the most blatant expression of lustiness.)

2. How are the parish priest and his brother, the plowman, similar?
(In stark contrast to the monk and crasser members of the clergy, the priest seems truly dedicated to Christian teachings. He lives simply and pities the poor in his parish. His task, made difficult by the distances he must cover, does not deter him from setting a godly example. Even though the parish priest is himself blameless, he does not disdain sinners. Indeed, he applies church teachings fairly. His preference for Christ's teachings overrides any concern for showy ceremony.)

The priest's brother, a humble, simply-dressed plowman, demonstrates a similar humility and deeply ingrained belief in Christ's example. Like his brother, the plowman gets along well with others and is known for lending a hand with manual labors and without expecting a fee. He pays his tithe both in goods and deeds.)

3. Relate the description of the franklin to the story he tells.
(The franklin, one of the most outgoing members of the entourage and a "model among landed gentry," strikes the imagination with his daisy-white beard and rosy disposition. Like people who enjoy food and hospitality, he is himself a good host. His enjoyment of people is evident in the community, where he serves as "Justice at the Sessions" and often a "Member for the Shire." His acumen extends to economics, as shown by his posts as Sheriff, who "checked audit, every entry."

In his remarks to the squire, the franklin demonstrates why people like him: he is gracious and complimentary to the boy and wishes him luck and health. He even contrasts his own son with the discreet squire. Under the raillery of the host, the franklin maintains his equanimity and humbly desires that his story please the listeners.

Like the franklin, the hero of his story, Arveragus, is courteous toward his wife, Dorigen. In the description of their courtship, the franklin appends a gracious aphorism:

For there's one thing, my lords, it's safe to say;

*Lovers must each be ready to obey
The other, if they would long keep company.
Love will not be constrained by mastery;
When mastery comes the god of love anon
Stretches his wings and farewell! he is gone.*

The home to which Arveragus takes his bride rings true of the franklin's taste—joyous and comfortable.

After the couple's long separation, they delight in each other's company. Arveragus dances, jousts, and makes merry. At the crux of the story, he behaves as one might assume the franklin would if he found his wife in a dilemma—he spares her the pain of a remonstrance and urges her to keep her promise. Because Arveragus conducts himself like a gentleman, Aurelius complements him:

*Her husband, in his nobleness,
Would have preferred to die in his distress
Rather than that his wife should break her word.*

In pity for the couple's dilemma, he concludes, "I let her go away."

The franklin, a paragon of gentility, illustrates how good manners, like waves in a stream, extend to others. As Arveragus's courtesy touches Aurelius, Aurelius relents and releases Dorigen from her promise; Aurelius's explanation then moves the philosopher to forgive the debt of a thousand pounds of gold. The franklin, rounding out his tale with a thought-provoking question, asks his audience to decide "Which seemed the finest gentleman to you?" Only a generous man would see the story in these terms.)

4. What is the setting of *The Canterbury Tales*?
(The story begins in Southwark, which in Chaucer's time was a suburb of London south of the Thames River. The road south, which crosses the river via London Bridge, was a major thoroughfare and the Tabard Inn a worthy stopping place for 29 pilgrims. The pilgrimage begins April 17, when sweet showers end the March drought.)

On April 18, the group rides at dawn to "St. Thomas' watering-place" before beginning their storytelling. When daylight was more than a fourth gone, as the Host deduces from the length of shadows, he urges them to make haste in their narrations. Continuing in an easterly direction, the Monk tells his tale as the group nears Rochester, about halfway to Canterbury. Later, the Summoner states, "My tale is done; we've almost come to town," which scholars assume is Sittingbourne.

At Boughton-under-Blean [five miles from Ospring, which was a regular stopping place on the road to Canterbury], a canon and his yeoman join the group. At "a little town, the one that people call Bob-up-and-down" [Harbledown], the host teases the riders, some of whom have had too much to drink. Before the parson begins his turn, the host reminds him that "the sun is sinking.")

5. How does the story cycle end?
(Chaucer obviously leaves his work in disarray, with stories half-finished, unpolished, out of order, and otherwise unedited. Scholars assume that he died before he could complete his masterpiece. In the fashion of Boccaccio, St. Augustine, Sir Edmund Spenser, Sir John Herrick, John Dryden, Henrik Ibsen, John Ruskin, and Leo Tolstoy, Geoffrey Chaucer repents of his frivolous verses. On his deathbed, according to Gascoigne's Dictionarium

CANTERBURY TALES

theologicum, Chaucer recanted of his subject matter to cleanse his soul of worldliness.

As Marchette Chute describes his last-minute recantation, "No reader is going to begrudge Chaucer his peace of mind, and every grateful admirer of . . . the Wife of Bath may well pray that [her] creator found the soul's peace he was searching for. He gave happiness to so many people that he was certainly entitled to some measure of it for himself."

In a contrasting view, John Gardner suggests that "the Retraction is an artistic device for closing the Canterbury Tales." Yet, because Chaucer names a major portion of his works in the recantation, this conclusion is suspect. In a dramatization of Chaucer's final moments, John Gardner pictures the bleary-eyed old man muttering to himself: "Yes, yes, he should have written poetry to ease men through this, should have written holy saints' lives, fine, moving songs about the gentleness of Jesus, the foolishness of thinking all one's life about the world." As he placates officious fools that hover at his bedside, he eases himself agreeably from this world to the next.)

Questions 6-8 Interpretive Level

6. Contrast the franklin's story and the canon's yeoman's story in terms of supernatural elements.

(The franklin laces his story with supernatural elements to illustrate how deeply Aurelius is smitten by Dorigen. In his prayer to Apollo, Aurelius pleads, "Lord Phoebus, in thy mercy cast an eye on sad Aurelius, wretched and forlorn." He specifies his need of a miracle—a flood five fathoms [i.e. 30 feet] which "will overflow the highest rock in Armorican Brittany." Not only must there be a flood, but he adds, "Let this last two years.")

After Aurelius locates a magician, the magician proves his powers with visions of hunting, jousting, and even Aurelius dancing with Dorigen. At the right moment, the magician "clapped his hands, and banished the figures, and farewell! our revels vanished" Just as he promised, the magician makes it seem "The rocks had all been spirited away from Brittany or sunk under the ground."

In contrast to this magical façade, the canon's yeoman narrates a tale of deception based on people's willingness to believe in supernatural solutions to their problems, such as the changing of lesser elements into gold. The extensive machinations of grinding powders, mixing, and sublimating results in frustrations: "Lost was our trouble, lost our labour too, and all the money, in the name of Hell, that we'd laid out on it was lost as well." He concludes, "If you would publish your infatuation come on and try your hand at transmutation; if one of you has money in his fist step up and make yourself an alchemist."

The priest, the dupe of the canon, sets himself up for deception by means of his greed and gullibility. He pleads, "For love of God who died for all of us, And if I may deserve so much of you, what will that powder cost me? Tell me, do!" The canon concludes Part Two of his tale with the philosopher's explanation of why transmutation is impossible: "Philosophers are under strict control never to tell that secret to a soul or write it in a book; it is

unpriced, being a secret very dear to Christ."

These contrasting treatments of the supernatural suggest the extremes to which Chaucer goes to relate characteristic stories for each pilgrim. Whereas the gentle franklin weaves a spell of magic into his tale to emphasize the depth of Aurelius's love for Dorigen, the yeoman, fed on a daily diet of the canon's trickery, sees the world through cynical eyes and warns his hearers to adopt a similar view.)

7. Discuss the differences between the original opening lines of the prologue and the translated version. (Chaucer, employing heroic verse or rhymed couplets of iambic pentameter, salts his work with words from both Anglo-Saxon, from which English grammar evolved, and French, the language of the upper classes after 1066. At the end of his biography of Chaucer, Nevill Coghill notes, "The present version of this master-work is intended for those who feel difficulty in reading the original, yet would like to enjoy as much of that 'plenty' as the translator has been able to convey in a more modern idiom. In imitation of the first eighteen lines of Chaucer's Middle English version, Coghill's version simulates the original five-beat rhythm and rhyming couplets in order to suit his translation to modern tastes without robbing the reader of its music.

Reading Chaucerian Middle English takes some study and ingenuity. To make the cadences fit the pattern, the reader must violate a rule of modern English and pronounce final e's, as in soote and roote. The a sounds must all be ah. The e sounds must be pronounced like the ay in pay. Also, to make sense of the syntax, the reader must invert verb-subject combinations, as Coghill does in his translation. Thus, "Than longen folk" becomes "then people long." Other inversions make reading the original difficult, such as "The hooly blisful martir for to seke," which places the object ahead of the infinitive. Coghill's version, "to seek the holy blissful martyr," reflects current syntax.

Middle English spelling is at times puzzling. Some words, such as nyght/night, Aprille/April, and sweete/sweet, reflect little change. Inflected forms, such as holpen and yronne for the participles of help and run, require more attention. Least recognizable are the words that no longer exist, such as kowthe.)

8. Discuss the dominant themes in the tales. (Even though the stories, on first reading, appear completely different in style, tone, and purpose, several can be related by theme. For example, the wife of Bath's prologue and tale dwell on the necessity for women's independence in marriage. In contrast, the story of patient, obedient Griselda reveals the opposite extreme. Likewise, several stories deal with the nature of deception, such as the battle of wits between Chanticleer and the fox, the priest and canon, and Nicholas, Alison, and the cuckolded carpenter.

Piety, a third dominant theme, undergirds some of the least effective stories, such as the all-too-predictable life of St. Cecilia, the martyred child slain by the Jews, and the parson's lengthy homily on the seven deadly sins. Yet, Chaucer's range of story types, character delineation, and general mastery of storytelling inhibits

CANTERBURY TALES

any of these themes from overshadowing the best quality of the stories—their readability.)

Questions 9 and 10 Critical Level

9. What sources does Chaucer credit in the tales?

(Even though Chaucer does not credit every source which influenced his work and supplied him with plots, he does make clear the fact that some of his stories come from earlier authors. The knight, for example, begins, "Stories of old have made it known to us." The lawyer's tale, by nature of its setting, suggests that it, too, came from earlier sources.

The Prioress, recounting a stock miracle, obviously retells an established story, as does the second nun, who recites the life of St. Cecilia. So does the wife of Bath, who names biblical references from St. Paul and tells a tale of Arthurian times. The monk, drawing on biblical and historical figures, recites unoriginal material. The Manciple states this his tale came from "old books." Other characters give more specific details of their sources. The canon's yeoman, unlike spokesmen who begin with "once upon a time," narrates a first person account of life with the canon, who is mortified by his servant's revelations. The franklin credits "the noble Bretons" who "delighted in adventures and made lays in rhyme, according to their early tongue." The physician, obviously a learned man, begins his story of Virginius with mention of Livy, ancient Rome's great historian and storyteller.

Critics further enlighten modern readers with facts about medieval tastes in literature. The knight, for example, narrates a standard chivalric romance; the canon's yeoman appeals to interest in alchemy, also a popular medieval subject. The miller, who tells a bawdier story, also draws on medieval tastes. The man of law complains that Chaucer himself, in the style of Ovid's *Heroides* and *Metamorphoses*, has already garnered the best stories. The wife of Bath's tale, one of Chaucer's most original, still owes credit to Jean de Meun's version of *Roman de la Rose* as well as the work of St. Jerome. The cleric's story derives from the work of Petrarch and Boccaccio.

As befits the squire, his half-told story reflects Oriental influence, as does the pardoner's narrative. The Skipper's tale imitates French literature, as does the Nun's Priest's Tale, which originated with the Reynard the Fox beast fables. One of the least original, Chaucer's own stories of Sir Topaz and Sir Melibee, represent hackneyed fiction at its worst. Almost as a joke on himself as a character, Chaucer chooses to bore the pilgrims with these wandering, predictable stories.)

10. Explain why Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales* have been called a "slice of medieval life."

(By assembling a motley assortment of people to join in a common endeavor, Chaucer is able to play off one human foible against another, one layer of society against its opposing level. The summoner, for example, represents the worst of church corruption. In contrast, the simple parish priest models Christ's example. The pardoner, perhaps the crassest of the religious profession, sinks to the depths of greed by displaying phony relics and collecting more in one day than the priest can earn in months.

Another striking contrast is behavior. Whereas Eglantyne picks daintily at her food and wipes grease from her mouth to preserve a clean cup, Roger, the cook, can barely sit a saddle because of his wine-bibbing. Likewise, the monk waddles a bit because he overindulges in good food. His foil, the franklin, is a good host and appreciator of food, but not a glutton.

The stratification of classes reveals much of Chaucer's satiric intent. Whereas the lowly plowman would work for nothing to help a neighbor, the physician enriches himself during an outbreak of plague and hordes gold as a satisfaction to his greedy spirit. Another delineating factor—education—separates the Oxford cleric from the lawyer, who takes every opportunity to show off his learning. The cleric, a ragged, thin man, enjoyed books, not for self-aggrandizement, but as a means of teaching others.

On the whole, Chaucer captures the span of human population in any generation, in any land. He includes professional people and laborers, both sexes, married and celibate, religious and skeptic, rich and poor, generous and stingy, and genteel and coarse. If he had completed the proposed work, in which thirty people tell four stories each, the resulting glimpse of medieval society may have resulted in the major source of information about the Middle Ages. As it stands, the stories, fragments, and prologues that Chaucer completed form a sufficient glimpse of life in fourteenth-century England to make any reader feel quite at home.)

Questions 11 and 12 Creative Level

11. Compose a story for one of the characters who does not tell one, such as the haberdasher, plowman, chaplain, host, or canon. Begin with a prologue which gives a hint of the speaker's characters, interests, and tastes. Select a common motif, such as fidelity and obedience in marriage, piety, greed, or deception.
12. Write an awards ceremony and give the prize for the best story. Include a five-minute speech on the good qualities of the storyteller and the narrative itself. Create a special menu of medieval foods to serve as the free supper, which the host promises as a prize to the winner.

ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

Language Arts

1. Compose a glossary of terms from the text such as tabard, bile, yeoman, Cheapside, and relic. Divide them into religious, social, geographic, historical, and mythological categories.
2. Choose a series of lines from the text to illustrate the poet's skill with wit. Post the phrases on the bulletin board and lead a discussion of their humor and implication.
3. Make a chart of out-of-date terms, such as cleric, gap-teeth, billet-doux, canon, baldrick, poltroon, choleric, purge, and boon, which have changed or fallen out of common use since the English Renaissance. For definitions, refer to the *Oxford English Dictionary*.

Math and Economics

1. Compute the distances the pilgrims cover as they set out from Southwark on their way to Canterbury. Estimate their rate of travel on horseback. Locate a train and bus

CANTERBURY TALES

schedules to determine current travel time.

2. Use historical data to determine the value of sums of money mentioned in the tales, including shilling, one hundred francs, and groat.

Social Studies

1. Compose a list of Chaucer's works and their settings, including Jerusalem, London, Armorica, Lombardy, Pavia, Flanders, Gottland, Norfolk, Rome, Boulogne, Cologne, Charing Cross, Berwick, Rochester, Blean Woods, and Brittany. Note whether the places are real or imaginary, as with Tartary, King Arthur's kingdom, and hell. Locate real settings on a map along with story titles. Place a star on Chaucer's birthplace.
2. Propose humane punishment for unlawful flight, kidnap of a minor, rape, adultery, seduction, fraud, theft, murder, torture, poisoning, arson, coercion, assault, hate crime, and false imprisonment. Compare your choices with the types of penalties exacted in medieval times.
3. Research the political, economic, and religious implications of chivalry. Explain the role of women in an idealistic world view that requires the worship of ladies from afar and lauds daring deeds as a means of earning favors. Apply your definition of the female role to all levels, from drudge and servant to wife, lady, nun, prioress, and queen.

Psychology

1. Discuss the psychological effect on the pilgrims of the Wife of Bath's view of marriage. Explain why Chaucer elongates the debate about the wife's place in the family power structure. Comment on the medieval woman's need for trickery, wheedling, flattery, and lies to get what she wants.
2. Account for hostilities that arise between pilgrims. Apply details of their point of view and social position to arguments that arise during the pilgrimage to Canterbury.

Religion

1. Using the nun, pardoner, summoner, parson, and friar as models, explain Chaucer's views on corruption in the church.
2. Account for prejudice against Jews in the prioress's story. Make a time line of historical details of the Inquisition, Crusades, pogroms, and displacement of Jews, particularly in medieval Spain and Palestine.

Cinema

1. List dramatic scenes from the text that would require intense use of lighting, costume, makeup, music, props, and stunts in a film version, particularly the convergence of pilgrims at the Tabard Inn, meeting the host, arriving at Blean Woods, quarreling, welcoming a newcomer to the entourage, and listening intently to a story. Comment on the logistics of hearing a story while traveling in a mounted convoy.
2. Summarize human relations in movies and television miniseries that contrast people from divergent social stations and points of view, for example, war films such as *Gone with the Wind*, *The Sand Pebbles*, *The Longest Day*, *Sayonara*, *The Great Escape*, *The Young Lions*, *Dr. Zhivago*, *Little Big Man*, *A Bridge Too Far*, or *All Quiet on the Western Front* or travel stories such as *Airport*, *Murder on the Orient Express*, *The Way West*,

Cimarron, *Out of Africa*, *The English Patient*, *Titanic*, or *The Poseidon Adventure*.

Science and Health

1. List, define, and illustrate on flash cards references to nature, especially the downpour in the Miller's story and Constance's sea experiences in the Man of Law's story. Account for poetic emphasis on a pear tree, sunrise, nightfall, and a fox emerging from a dense forest.
2. Compose an essay on the medieval custom of interpreting dreams and astrological signs. Contrast Chanticleer and Lady Pertelote's explanation of dreams. Determine who was nearer the truth concerning the outcome of Chanticleer's dream.
3. Suggest explanations for January's blindness and sudden recovery of sight in the Merchant's story.

Drama and Speech

1. Pantomime these mythological, literary, biblical, religious, and historical allusions from the text: Achilles, Jacob and Rebecca, Judith and Holofernes, Death, St. Cecilia, King Arthur, Hugh of Lincoln, Helen of Troy, Venus, Moses, St. Denys, Hippolyta, Nabel and Abigail, Esther and Ahasuerus, Mordecai, Theseus, Solomon, and the Apostles.
2. Compose a speech for the host to deliver to the winner of the storytelling contest. Take a poll of readers to determine which story deserves the prize. Offer a separate prize for the storyteller with the best imagination. What type of free dinner would suit any member of the group?

Art and Music

1. Use desktop publishing or other artistic forms to create a handbill for the trek to Canterbury that would catch the eye of prospective pilgrims. Choose an illustration that intrigues the illiterate reader to join the ride to the shrine of Thomas à Becket. Emphasize action and contrast in your drawing, for example by depicting the cathedral, a rest stop, a shared lunch, or departure from the Tabard Inn.
2. Select music to accompany a horseback ride, for example, bagpipes, hand drum, or flute. Vary styles and rhythms to accommodate departure, religious stories, rest periods, horror tales, saints' lives, lunch time, chivalric romance, or love stories.

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES

1. Sketch a modern tourist map of the area from London to Canterbury. Mark sites of interest, such as the new Globe Theater, Westminster Abbey, Buckingham Palace, the Tower of London, the Tower Bridge, the Thames River, Canterbury Cathedral, the Albert and Victoria Museum, and the British Museum. Summarize the history of each location in a short paragraph.
2. Write a report on the plague, which struck Europe several times during Chaucer's lifetime and may have been the cause of his death. Discuss its causes, spread, symptoms, and numbers of people affected. Explain how epidemics curtailed normal activities, such as pilgrimages and informal gatherings at inns.
3. Select several passages from the Prologue and some of the tales to read in the original Middle English and compare to Lumiansky's translation. Make an oral report on

CANTERBURY TALES

the work of the translator and emphasize aspects of time and place that create hardships for the modern reader, such as unfamiliar foods or reference to diagnoses of the humors or astrological predictions.

4. Choose one pilgrim to describe in modern terms, such as the knight, the reeve, the pardoner, or the franklin. What jobs would these people hold today? How would their social status have changed? What modern inventions alter their lives?
5. Locate other examples of literature in Middle English, such as Benjamin Britten's *A Ceremony of Carols*, Sir Edmund Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*, "Sir Gawayne and the Green Knight," "Piers Plowman," Wycliffe's translation of the Bible, or "The Pearl." List metaphors, alliteration, and other literary devices from each, such as "the knees of my hert sall I bow" from the *Ceremony of Carols*.
6. Name the seven sacraments of the Catholic Church and explain the significance of each. Then name and explain the seven deadly sins. Comment on the medieval influence of numerology, which expresses the significance of certain numbers. Discuss why this knowledge is essential to an interpretation of *The Canterbury Tales*.
7. Compare Chaucer's beast fable to others, such as Aesop's Fables, Uncle Remus's tales, *Reynard the Fox*, Rudyard Kipling's *Just-So Stories*, and the writings of La Fontaine, Marie de France, Beatrix Potter, Gayle Ross, Ken Corsbie, Diane Wolkstein, J. J. Reneaux, and Joseph Bruchac. Explain how beast fables illustrate human foibles.
8. Write an in-depth theme about the characteristics of Middle English. Explain the importance of inflections and the blend of elements from French, Latin, and Anglo-Saxon. Comment on changes in English vocabulary since Chaucer's time, particularly the names of foods, animals, common objects, church ritual, and articles of clothing.
9. Make a timeline of literary and artistic happenings in England, France, and Italy during Chaucer's lifetime. Include the creative works of Petrarch, Guillaume de Machaut, Boccaccio, Lorenzo Ghiberti, Alain Chartier, Jean d'Arras, Fra Angelico, Luca della Robbia, Jean Froissart, and Bartolommeo plus the appearance of the Robin Hood stories and "Piers Plowman" and the invention of the clavichord.
10. Create a map that shows the setting of Chaucer's stories, such as Syria (The Man of Law's Tale); Athens (The Knight's Tale); Mount Viso, Italy (The Cleric's Tale: One); Oxford (The Miller's Tale); and Thebes (The Manciple's Tale).

ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT

1. List in chronological order the events that precede the telling of the last tale and Chaucer's retraction.
2. Make separate lists of tales that express strong attitudes toward treachery, marriage, loss, grief, love, vengeance, chastity, deception, prejudice, mercy, and guilt. Indicate what you think is Chaucer's personal philosophy on each subject.
3. Compose a brief definition of storytelling as it applies to *The Canterbury Tales*.
4. List details from the stories that link them to the Middle Ages, particularly healing, worship, chivalry, and the Crusades.

CHAUCER'S OTHER WORKS

- The Legend of Good Women*, ca. 1360
The Book of the Duchess, ca. 1369
ABC of the Virgin, ca. 1369
The House of Fame, ca. 1372
The Parliament of Fowls, 1372
Roman de la Rose, trans., 1372
De Consolatione Philosophiae, trans. ca. 1380
Troilus and Criseyde, trans. ca. 1380
The Legend of the Saints of Cupid, ca. 1386
Treatise on the Astrolabe, ca. 1399
Envoy to Scogan, ca. 1399
Envoy to Bukton, ca. 1399
To His Empty Purse, ca. 1399

RELATED READING

- Isabel Allende, *The House of the Spirits*
Harriette Arnow, *The Doll Maker*
Giovanni Boccaccio, *The Decameron*
Bertolt Brecht, *The Three-Penny Opera*
Norman E. Cantor, *The Medieval Reader*
Charles Frazier, *Cold Mountain*
Thomas Hardy, *The Mayor of Casterbridge*
Moss Hart and George S. Kaufman, *You Can't Take It with You*
Edgar Lee Masters, *Spoon River Anthology*
Margaret Mitchell, *Gone with the Wind*
Boris Pasternak, *Dr. Zhivago*
William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, and *Troilus and Cressida*
John Steinbeck, *The Wayward Bus*, *East of Eden*, and *The Grapes of Wrath*
Mary Stewart, *The Crystal Cave*
William Makepeace Thackeray, *Vanity Fair*
Thornton Wilder, *The Bridge of San Luis Rey*

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Astell, Ann W. *Chaucer and the Universe of Learning*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell Univ. Press, 1996.
Benson, Larry D., ed. *The Riverside Chaucer*. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1987.
Brewer, Derek S. *A New Introduction to Chaucer*. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1998.
Brown, Peter. *Chaucer at Work: The Making of the Canterbury Tales*. White Plains, N.Y.: Longman, 1994.
"Chaucer's Contemporary Reputation," http://icg.fas.harvard.edu/~chaucer/special/varia/life_of_Ch/ch-reput.html.
Chute, Marchette. *Geoffrey Chaucer of England*. New York: Dutton, 1946.
Cooper, Helen. *The Oxford Guide to Chaucer, The Canterbury Tales*. Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1991.
Crane, Susan. *Gender and Romance in Chaucer's Canterbury Tales*. Princeton, N. J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1994.
Dinshaw, Carolyn. *Chaucer's Sexual Politics*. Madison: University of Wisc. Press, 1990.

CANTERBURY TALES

- DIScovering Authors on CD*. Detroit: Gale, 1995.
- Drabble, Margaret, ed. *The Oxford Companion to English Literature*. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1985.
- Eagle, Dorothy, and Hilary Carnell, eds. *The Oxford Illustrated Literary Guide*. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1992.
- Tales," <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/CT-prolog-para.html>.
- Pearsall, Derek. *A Life of Geoffrey Chaucer*. Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, 1995.
- Rigby, S. H. *Chaucer in Context: Society, Allegory and Gender*. New York: Manchester Univ. Press, 1997.
- Robinson, F. N., ed. *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1957.
- Scott, A. F. *Who's Who in Chaucer*. New York: Hawthorn, 1974.
- "Essays and Articles on Chaucer," <http://www.luminarium.org/medlit/chauceressay.htm>.1994.
- Gardner, John. *The Life and Times of Chaucer*. New York: Knopf, 1977.
- "Geoffrey Chaucer," <http://www.luminarium.org/medlit/chaucer.htm>.
- Gittes, Katherine S. *Framing the Canterbury Tales*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 1991.
- Hallissy, Margaret. *A Companion to Chaucer's Canterbury Tales*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 1995.
- Lambdin, Laura C., and Robert T. Lambdin, eds. *Chaucer's Pilgrims: A Historic Guide to the Pilgrims of Canterbury Tales*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 1996.
- "Medieval Sourcebook: Geoffrey Chaucer, The Canterbury

TEACHER'S NOTES

CANTERBURY TALES

VOCABULARY WORKSHEET

Match the following quotations from the Prologue with words which complete their meaning. Place the letter of your response in the blank.

1. And well she sang a service, with a fine _____ through her nose, as was most seemly.
2. The Rule of good St. Benet or St. Maur
As old and strict he tended to ignore;
He let go by the things of yesterday
And took the modern world's more _____ way.
3. And she had _____ been to Jerusalem,
Seen many strange rivers and passed over them.
4. Loving God best with all his heart and mind
And then his neighbour as himself, _____
At no misfortune, slacked for no content,
For steadily about his work he went.
5. He was a fat and _____ priest
His prominent eyeballs never seemed to settle.
6. He preferred beyond a doubt
Giving to poor _____ round about
Both from church offerings and his property;
He could in little find sufficiency.
7. He'd sewed a holy _____ on his cap;
His wallet lay before him on his lap,
Brimful of pardons come from Rome, all hot.
8. There was a *Summoner* with us at that Inn,
His face on fire, like a cherubin,
For he had _____.
9. She wore a coral _____ on her arm,
A set of beads, the gaudies tricked in green,
Whence hung a golden brooch of brightest sheen.
10. He knew the taverns well in every town
And every innkeeper and barmaid too
Better than _____, beggars, and that crew.
11. There was a *Knight*, a most distinguished man,
Who from the day on which he first began
To ride abroad had followed _____.
12. He could make songs and poems and recite,
Knew how to _____ and dance, to draw and write.
13. A saucy _____ was on his arm to ward
It from the bow-string, and a shield and sword
Hung at one side.
14. He did not rate that text at a plucked hen
Which says that hunters are not holy men
And that a monk _____ is a mere
Fish out of water, flapping on the pier.
15. He preferred having twenty books in red
And black, of Aristotle's philosophy,
Than costly clothes, fiddle or _____.

- A. thrice
- B. carbuncles
- C. spacious
- D. psaltery
- E. trinket
- F. personable
- G. intoning
- H. repined
- I. brace
- J. lepers
- K. parishioners
- L. joust
- M. uncloistered
- N. relics
- O. chivalry

CANTERBURY TALES

COMPREHENSION TEST A

Part I: Identification (20 points)

Identify the speaker of each quote.

- _____ 1. Seeing the fun was getting rather rough
And said, "No more, we've all had quite enough.
Now, Master Pardoner, perk up, look cheerly!
And you, Sir Host, whom I esteem so dearly,
I beg of you to kiss the Pardoner.
- _____ 2. Now I beg all those that listen to this little treatise, or read as if there be anything in it that
pleases them, they thank Our Lord Jesu Christ for it, from whom proceeds all understand-
ing and goodness.
- _____ 3. I never had a thought of backing out;
Promise is debt, and as I am your debtor
I'd like to keep my word, I can't say better.
- _____ 4. Five husbands have I had at the church door;
Yes, it's a fact that I have had so many,
All worthy in their way, as good as any.
- _____ 5. Truly, gentlemen,
You're very welcome and I can't think when
—Upon my word I'm telling you no lie—
I've seen a gathering here that looked so spry.
- _____ 6. Do you grudge the celebration
Of these my honours with your lamentation?
Who can have injured you or who offended?
And tell me if the matter may be mended
And why it is that you are clothed in black?
- _____ 7. I dreamt that roaming up and down a while
Within our yard I saw a kind of beast,
A sort of hound that tried or seemed at least
To try and seize me . . . would have killed me dead!
- _____ 8. You and this pan are mine by right.
You yet shall be in Hell with me tonight,
Where you'll know more about our mystery
Than any Doctor of Divinity.
- _____ 9. Yet I would rather render up my life
Than to be faithless or endure a shame
Upon my body, or to lose my name.
My death will quit me of a foolish vow.
- _____ 10. I shall be waking up the company.
It won't be much about philosophy
Or *phislyas* or curious terms in law.
There is but little Latin in my maw!

CANTERBURY TALES

Part II: True/False (20 points)

Mark the following statements either **T** for true or **F** if any part is false. Rewrite any false statements to make them true.

- _____ 1. The yeoman concludes that God does not want philosophers to tell other men how to change metals to gold.

- _____ 2. The pilgrims set out for Canterbury during a March drought.

- _____ 3. Chaucer's tale is the most refined of the group.

- _____ 4. Roger begins a story of a discharged apprentice, but the story is unfinished.

- _____ 5. Even while she is married, the Wife of Bath continues to see and be seen by bachelors.

- _____ 6. The Host calls on the Pardoner for a jolly story after the grievous tale of the physician.

- _____ 7. The Host stops the Parson from telling a tale because it is nearly sunset and the pilgrims have arrived at a village for the night.

- _____ 8. The pilgrims reach Canterbury before everyone has a chance to tell a story.

- _____ 9. Many of the stories reveal how deeply Chaucer revered the Church and its practices during his lifetime.

- _____ 10. The pilgrims seek the "holy blissful martyr," who helps sick people.

CANTERBURY TALES

Part III: Matching (30 points)

Complete each of the following descriptions with a name from the list that follows. Place the letter of your answer in the blank provided at left.

- | | |
|--|-----------------|
| _____ 1. is a true hunter who owns greyhounds and hunts rabbits. | A. Gawain |
| _____ 2. plays the bagpipes as the pilgrims leave the town. | B. the Monk |
| _____ 3. tells tales about Sir Topaz and Melibee. | C. the reeve |
| _____ 4. is imprisoned for seven years. | D. Palamon |
| _____ 5. relates an unflattering tale about a miller. | E. Cecilia |
| _____ 6. cuts off his daughter's head. | F. the Summoner |
| _____ 7. lodges with a carpenter and falls in love with the carpenter's wife. | G. Chaucer |
| _____ 8. reveals prejudice against Jews in her story of a child-murderer. | H. Prioress |
| _____ 9. survives three days after having her neck cut. | I. Ugolino |
| _____ 10. tells a tale about Phoebus and the crow. | J. Nicholas |
| _____ 11. gives a sermon on the seven deadly sins. | K. the Miller |
| _____ 12. has a red complexion, pimples, and boils. | L. the Manciple |
| _____ 13. offers four gifts to the king of India and Arabia. | M. the canon |
| _____ 14. is imprisoned in a tower outside Pisa, where his young son starves to death. | N. Virginius |
| _____ 15. rides with his yeoman to overtake and join the pilgrims. | O. the Parson |

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Discuss the significance of two of the following passages.

1. So take the grain and let the chaff be still.
2. It isn't very easy nowadays
To find Griseldas round the town, you know.
And if you try imposing these assays,
What gold they have is mixed with such allays
Of brass, that though the coin looks right perhaps,
When you begin to bend the thing, it snaps.
3. It is a sin and foolishness . . .
To slander any man or bring a scandal
On wives in general.
4. For our Book says "all that is written is written for your doctrine" and that is my intention.

CANTERBURY TALES

COMPREHENSION TEST B

Part I: Fill-in (30 points)

Supply a word or phrase from the list below to complete each of the following statements.

ale	chaff	fox	Jenkin	Oswald	Solomon
Arcite	Chaucer	Franklin	Jew	Roger	Southwark
astrolabe	Cleric	Griselda	martyr	Palamon	Summoner
Boethius	devil	Hubert	mirror	pub	virtuals
Canace	diocese	Hugh of Lincoln	Monk	secret stone	widow

1. He served the finest _____ you could think,
The wine was strong and we were glad to drink.
2. And especially, from every shire's end
Of England, down to Canterbury they wend
To seek the holy blissful _____, quick
To give his help when they were sick.
3. Thus, as he pleased, the man could bring duress
On any young fellow in the _____.
4. Where is the distress
If good _____, the flower of chivalry,
Is gone in honour and in duty, free
Of the foul prison of this life
5. To this the drunken Miller then replied,
"My dear old brother _____, such is life.
A man's no cuckold if he has no wife
6. Now tell on, _____, for the word's with you.
You've stolen gravy out of many a stew,
Many's the Jack of Dover you have sold
that has been twice warmed up and twice left cold.
7. O _____, likewise murdered so
By cursed Jews, as is notorious
(for it was but a little time ago).
8. This blessed _____ and her daughters two
Heard all these hens in clamour and halloo
And, rushing to the door at all this shrieking,
They saw the fox toward the covert streaking.
9. So take the grain and let the _____ be still.
10. Take wise King _____ of long ago;
We hear he had a thousand wives or so.
11. He had an _____ to match his art
And calculating counters laid apart
On handy shelves that stood above his bed.
12. And as for you and for your frying-pan
The hairiest, blackest _____ out of Hell
Carry you off and take the pan as well!
13. An *Oxford* _____, still a student though,
One who had taken logic long ago,
Was there.
14. _____ and her patience both are dead
and buried in some far Italian vale.
15. This mirror and this ring are sent by me,
as you behold, to Lady _____
Your excellent and lovely daughter here.

CANTERBURY TALES

Part II: Identification (20 points)

Name the characters described below. Refer to the list below for suggested answers.

Arcita	Damian	Hugh of Lincoln	Manciple	Phoebus	Squire
Arverigus	Don John	innkeeper	Man of Law	Reeve	St. Cecilia
Chanticleer	Gawain	Justinus	Palamon	Roger	Ugolino's son
Chaucer	Griselda	Knight	Pardoner	Scornful Simkin	Wife of Bath

- _____ 1. prevents the Monk from telling any more tragedies.
- _____ 2. is Janicula's daughter and the submissive, obedient wife of the Marquis.
- _____ 3. has been married five times and looks forward to another marriage.
- _____ 4. proposes that he serve as guide to the pilgrims.
- _____ 5. is the Knight's son.
- _____ 6. is a thieving, heavily-armed miller.
- _____ 7. dies of starvation in a tower outside Pisa.
- _____ 8. brings great gifts to the King of Arabia and India.
- _____ 9. is boiled in a hot bath, but stays cool and pain free.
- _____ 10. sings joyfully among the hens, who frolic in the sand.

Part III: Short Answer (20 points)

Supply a word or phrase in answer to each of the following questions. Place your response in the blank provided at left.

- _____ 1. What is Madam Eglantyne's church title?
- _____ 2. Who would rather become a Christian rather than lose Constance?
- _____ 3. Who, along with a canon, rides up on an aged horse at Boughton-under-Blean?
- _____ 4. Whose disciple begs to know the name of the secret stone?
- _____ 5. What kind of wind instrument accompanies the pilgrims on their ride?
- _____ 6. What will the teller of the best stories receive as a prize?
- _____ 7. Whose husband refers to her as "a virtuous wife, Dame Alice"?
- _____ 8. Who becomes enraged at the Friar's Tale?
- _____ 9. Who always rides last in the procession?
- _____ 10. How do the pilgrims determine who will tell the first tale?

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

1. Apply the medieval concept of chivalry to the Knight's Tale.
2. Explain how Chaucer depicts himself as a member of the group.
3. What reasons does Chaucer give for his retraction?
4. Analyze the question of obedience in marriage from a medieval point of view.
5. Give examples of wise counsel from the tales.

ANSWER KEY

VOCABULARY TEST

- | | | |
|------|-------|-------|
| 1. G | 6. K | 11. O |
| 2. C | 7. N | 12. L |
| 3. A | 8. B | 13. I |
| 4. H | 9. E | 14. M |
| 5. F | 10. J | 15. D |

COMPREHENSION TEST A

Part I: Identification (20 points)

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. C | 6. G |
| 2. F | 7. E |
| 3. H | 8. B |
| 4. A | 9. I |
| 5. J | 10. D |

Part II: True/False (20 points)

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. T | 6. T |
| 2. F | 7. F |
| 3. F | 8. F |
| 4. T | 9. F |
| 5. T | 10. T |

Part III: Matching (30 points)

- | | | |
|------|-------|-------|
| 1. B | 6. N | 11. O |
| 2. K | 7. J | 12. F |
| 3. G | 8. H | 13. A |
| 4. D | 9. E | 14. I |
| 5. C | 10. L | 15. M |

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Answers will vary.

COMPREHENSION TEST B

Part I: Fill-in (30 points)

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------|
| 1. victuals | 9. chaff |
| 2. martyr | 10. Solomon |
| 3. diocese | 11. astrolabe |
| 4. Arcite | 12. devil |
| 5. Oswald | 13. Cleric |
| 6. Roger | 14. Griselda |
| 7. Hugh of Lincoln | 15. Canace |
| 8. widow | |

Part II: Identification (20 points)

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. knight | 6. Scornful Simkin |
| 2. Griselda | 7. Ugolino's son |
| 3. Wife of Bath | 8. Gawain |
| 4. Innkeeper at the Tabard | 9. St. Cecilia |
| 5. Squire | 10. Chanticleer |

Part III: Short Answer (20 points)

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Prioress | 6. a free supper |
| 2. Sultan | 7. Wife of Bath |
| 3. the Canon's yeoman | 8. Summoner |
| 4. Plato | 9. Reeve |
| 5. bagpipe | 10. by drawing straws |

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Answers will vary.

PERMA-BOUND®

THE STRONGEST BOOKS YOU CAN BUY

PERMA-BOUND BOOKS • 617 East Vandalia Road • Jacksonville, Illinois 62650

Toll Free 1-800-637-6581 • Fax 1-800-551-1169

E-mail: books@perma-bound.com

PERMA-BOUND CANADA • Box 517, Station A • Willowdale, Ontario M2N 5T1

Toll Free 1-800-461-1999 • Fax 1-888-250-3811

E-mail: perma-bound.ca@sympatico.ca

VISIT OUR WEB SITE: <http://www.perma-bound.com>