

The Canterbury Tales Creative Assignments

1. Select two (or more) of Chaucer's pilgrims and write an imaginary dialogue between them. Make certain that they remain in character and converse on some topic, not allowing them to babble randomly. Be careful about punctuation.
2. Using the rhyming couplet form, write a sketch of a medieval personality to be added to the roster of Chaucer's pilgrims. Do your best to imitate Chaucer's techniques for developing full characterizations.
3. Pretend you are one of the Chaucer's pilgrims magically transported to today. Write a description of the wonders and horrors of twentieth-century America as they would look from your selected pilgrim's point of view.
4. Pretend you have been magically transported to Chaucer's time and place. Write a description of the wonders and horrors of fourteenth-century England as they would appear from your personal point of view.
5. Imagine you are one of Chaucer's pilgrims. Design personalized stationery for the pilgrim you select, and write a letter home, describing the pilgrimage and some of your fellow travelers. Maintain the persona of the pilgrim you select, coloring your impressions by his or her personality.
6. Draw a portrait or a caricature of a pilgrim as described by Chaucer in the "Prologue." Be sure to select a pilgrim for which Chaucer gives visual details.
7. Imagine that you work for a medieval travel agency that has a package pilgrimage to Canterbury. Write and illustrate a travel brochure designed to lure travellers to your tour. Examine modern brochures for ideas.
8. Design a postcard one of the pilgrims might send while vacationing. Be sure that your postcard has an illustration, a caption, a postage stamp, a postmark, an addressee, and an appropriately personal message.
9. Make a souvenir that one of the pilgrims might buy to bring back from his pilgrimage. Bring your souvenir to class for "Show and Tell."
10. Come to class costumed as one of the pilgrims. Be prepared to tell us all about yourself and to entertain questions from the floor.
11. Imagine you are planning a modern pilgrimage this summer, rather than merely planning a vacation. Keeping in mind the serious reasons pilgrimages were made during the Middle Ages, write a short paragraph explaining where you would like to go on pilgrimage and why.
12. Write a dramatic monologue, assuming the persona of one of Chaucer's pilgrims. Be certain that you set your character in a dramatic situation which will reveal his character.
13. Create a Canterbury Graveyard. Design tombstones and write "telling" epitaphs for each major pilgrim. Make a bulleting board display of your artwork.