



# The Canterbury Tales

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## Before reading

1 Guess. Match the story-tellers with what their tales are going to be about.

Narrators	About
The Knight	Love
The Clerk	Old Age
The Wife of Bath	Death
The Pardoner	Wrong doing
The Franklin	Women
The Friar	Religion
The Nun's Priest	Adventure
	Animals
	Knights
	Tests

## While reading

### Prologue

2 Re-read the prologue. Why does the owner of the inn want the pilgrims to tell stories?

- a Because he gets bored very easily.
  - b Because he is interested in listening to the different stories the different pilgrims will tell him.
  - c Because he will make a lot of money.
- What do other students think?

### The Knight's Tale

3 In Chaucer's times, people had a very different idea of love. Match and find the rules of love.

- a When a man falls in love, he goes .....
  - b A man may fall in love .....
  - c A man in love may prefer .....
  - d A man without his lady may fall .....
  - e A man in love is .....
  - f A man in love may become .....
  - g A man in love may fight .....
- 1) without knowing the person he loves.
  - 2) being in prison close to his lady than to being free away from her.
  - 3) ill and die.
  - 4) not afraid of death.
  - 5) a lady's servant to be near her.
  - 6) his best friend for a lady.
  - 7) pale and cries out.

4 Arcite and Palamon have to look for men to fight for them. Complete the text.

Do you want to become an important k.....? Help Arcite and Palamon win the l..... of their lives. Each needs to find a h..... men that will be ready to f..... for them. The w..... will marry L... E.....

5 Duke Theseus invites you to watch the fight. Put the invitation in order.

*and beautiful ladies too! Sit next  
and knights  
Come to Athens  
fight! There will be lords  
Hippolyta and Emily and  
to Duke Theseus, Queen  
to see the great  
watch it all!*

### The Clerk's Tale

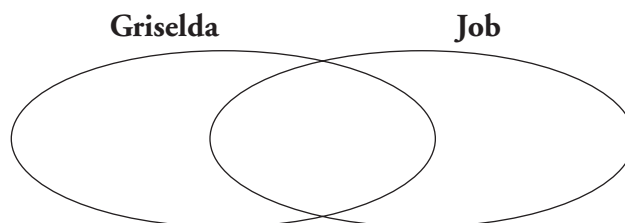
6 These are Walter's rules for a good wife. Put the words in each line in order.

#### A GOOD WIFE MUST

- a what do her husband always tells to her do.
- b give her her away when children her asks to husband.
- c go husband if back her wants marry a to new home wife.
- d for new husband's work her wife.

7 Read the text below. In what way are these two stories similar?

*In the Bible, God puts Job to the test. First Job loses his money, then his animals, next his workmen and in the end his children. But Job is patient and continues loving God though he has lost everything.*





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- 8 Write the story 'Griselda is not patient.' What does she do (a) when her husband kills her two children, (b) when he tells her that he is going to remarry and (c) when he asks Griselda to be his new wife's servant?

## The Wife of Bath's Tale

- 9 Complete the answers that the knight was given (by different people).
- Women like ... more than anything.
  - They want to be ...
  - Fine ... . That's what they want.
  - They are happy when they are ... good food.
  - They like having a new ... in the family.
  - They like seeing their ... come home at night.
  - They want to be the ... of their house.
  - They want their husbands to do ... they say.
- 10 Put these sentences in order to write the conversation at the end of the story.
- Knight: Do better? You can't become a young woman and you can't make yourself beautiful.
  - Knight: My lady, my love, and my dear wife. You're right. I'll always do what you tell me.
  - Woman: I'm not beautiful but that's only on the outside. Faces become old but hearts are always young. A person with a good heart is better than someone who does bad things.
  - Knight: Yes, my love. Of course you can.
  - Knight: You're very wise and good. You've taught me a lot about men and women, and about good and bad.
  - Woman: Is it better to have a beautiful wife who makes you unhappy? Or an old and ugly wife who is kind to you?
  - Woman: Remember the answer to the question. Can I be the head of your home?
  - Woman: What have I done wrong? Tell me and I'll try to do better. I'll make you happy.

## The Pardoner's Tale

- 11 Look up the word *epitaph* in your dictionary. Complete the epitaph for the three thieves.
- Here rest three thieves. They said they were not a..... of D..... . They l..... for him in every field, wood or t..... . They wanted to k..... him but finally he f..... them!*

## The Franklin's Tale

- 12 You are Arveragus. You are fighting in England. Write a postcard to Dorigen.

*Dear Dorigen,*

*All is well ...*

- 13 You are Aurelius. Write a letter to Dorigen saying that you love her.
- 14 Write why.
- Aurelius made all the black rocks disappear because ...
  - Dorigen had to go with Aurelius because ...
  - Dorigen's eyes were red with tears because ...
  - Aurelius let Dorigen return with Arveragus because ...
  - The magician didn't take Aurelius's money because ...

## The Friar's Tale

- 15 Who said this? To whom?
- 'I've got a farm which I look after for a lord.'
  - 'I like having a lot of money, but my lord doesn't pay me much.'
  - 'You look like a man.'
  - 'The devil can take you, you lazy animals.'
  - 'You can't believe everything you hear.'
  - 'I hope the blackest devil in hell carries you away.'
  - 'Do you really mean what you are saying, madam?'
  - 'You can learn about devils there and about how we do our work.'

## The Nun's Priest's Tale

- 16 Complete the following sentences with the words below.
- lady devil lord castle garden cock hen
- Chauncleer, the (a) ....., is like a (b) ..... who loves his wife, Pertelote. Pertelote, the (c) ....., is like a (d) ..... . Chauncleer and Pertelote live in a poor woman's (e) ..... which is their (f) ..... . The fox is like the (g) ..... .
- 17 Imagine you are Pertelote. Tell a tale to Chauncleer to show that dreams mean nothing.
- 18 You are the fox and you are in prison now. Write your side of the story.

## Extra activities

- 19 Check your answers in activity 1. Were you right?



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## The Knight's Tale

### 1 Who said this? To whom?

- a 'Creon has begun a war against you.'
- b 'Your face has gone white! Why did you cry out?'
- c 'Go back to Athens.'
- d 'We'll always be your friends.'
- e 'You'll never forget your dear friend but you can still be happy.'

## The Clerk's Tale

### 2 Who said each of these things?

- a 'I want you all to talk to her like a princess'.
- b 'I'll stand with the other girls and watch Sir Walter with his beautiful lady'.
- c 'Now you've got a child and it's even worse for them'.
- d 'I'm not good enough for you'.
- e 'Now I know that you'll always be true to me'.

## The Wife of Bath's Tale

### 3 Complete the words

- a The knight broke the l...w that all the knights l.....ed by.
- b The knight has a year and a h...l... to find the a...sw...r.
- c In the trees he saw twenty-four b.....ut...f...l young l.....i...s that were laughing, d.....c...ng and s.....g.....g in the grass.
- d All the w...m..... want to be the ...ea... of the house.
- e At the end of the w...dd.....g day, the knight s.....l... carried away his n..... wife.
- f In front of him stood the most beautiful girl in the w.....l... . His wife was a f.....r...!

## The Pardoner's Tale

### 4 Match a-h and 1-8 to get sentences from the story.

- a Let's hold up our hands and promise to .....
  - b I live like this because .....
  - c Oh, Mother Earth, I want to lie down in you and .....
  - d I hope God will help you to .....
  - e This money will bring us happiness for the rest of our lives but .....
  - f When he comes back, .....
  - g I'll hide their bodies first and .....
  - h He's bringing us our supper but .....
- 1) become better men.
  - 2) Death hasn't taken me.

- 3) be brothers.
- 4) he'll never have another meal again.
- 5) sleep forever.
- 6) then I'll hide the money.
- 7) we must hide it.
- 8) we'll play a game with him.

## The Franklin's Tale

### 5 Complete the sentences.

- a Arveragus was a man of ..... and wanted to ..... in England.
- b Dorigen couldn't ..... or ..... when Arveragus was away.
- c Dorigen felt very ..... when she saw the ..... rocks in the sea.
- d The magician showed Aurelius and his ..... strange things – forests full of animals, rivers, and ..... with him.

## The Friar's Tale

### 6 These sentences from the first part of the story are wrong. Correct them.

- a The summoner was also a bailiff.
- b The man on the brown horse had a farm which he looked after.
- c They met a man who wanted the devil to take his horses.
- d The summoner went to the house of a bad woman.
- e The woman gave him twelve pennies.

## The Nun's Priest's Tale

### 7 What happened first? Put the story in order.

- a Chanticleer and Pertelote flew down from the roof into the garden.
- b Chanticleer flew up into a high tree.
- c The hens and Pertelote tried to stop the fox but they couldn't.
- d Chanticleer sang for the fox.
- e Chanticleer saw the fox.
- f Chanticleer talked to the fox and told him to speak to the people.
- g Chanticleer told his wife about a man who died in a farmhouse.
- h Chanticleer told Pertelote about his bad dream.
- i The fox asked Chanticleer to come down but Chanticleer said no.
- j The fox caught Chanticleer and ran with him towards the wood.
- k The fox told Chanticleer that he was the cock's friend.



# The Canterbury Tales

## Book key

- 1 a rich b France c Latin d business e poems  
f 1400
- 2 a Open answers  
b bailiff, duke, lord, pilgrim, saint, servant  
c inn, temple, tower
- 3 a pilgrims b inn c story d knight e thank
- 4–5 Open answers
- 6 a 6 b 3 c 8 d 9 e 4 f 2 g 10 h 7  
i 1 j 5
- 7 a They are friends when they fight for their country.  
They are enemies when they want to marry Emily.  
b Palamon goes to the Temple of Venus. Arcite goes  
to the Temple of Mars. Arcite wins the fight, but  
falls from his horse and dies after it. Palamon loses  
the fight but wins Emily.
- 8–9 Open answers
- 10 a X b ✓ c ✓ d X e ✓ f ✓ g X h ✓
- 11 Open answers
- 12 The wife of Bath is a happy, rich woman with a red  
face. She rides a very fat horse. She has married five  
times and loves to talk.
- 13 Open answers
- 14 a queen b different c ugly old woman  
d right e has to f young and beautiful
- 15 Women want a young, loving, rich husband. They  
must also do what they are told. + Open answers
- 16–17 Open answers
- 18 a kill b money/gold c youngest  
d kill/murder e poison f death
- 19 One is killed with a knife and two are poisoned.
- 20–21 Open answers
- 22 a Dorigen b Arveragus c Aurelius  
d the magician e Arveragus f Aurelius
- 23 a Dorigen makes this promise to Arveragus. She  
breaks this promise when she promises to love  
Aurelius.  
b Dorigen makes this promise to Aurelius. She is  
going to keep her promise after listening to her  
husband. But Aurelius feels sorry for her, so she  
doesn't have to keep it.  
c Aurelius makes this promise to the magician. He  
tries to keep it but he hasn't got the money. He  
says that he will pay the magician over two or three  
years.

## 24–26 Open answers

- 27 a man > woman b black > red  
c quickly > slowly d devil > summoner  
e money > cooking pot f woman > summoner
- 28 a The owner of the horses says these words to his  
horses when they are tired and slow. The devil  
knows that the man doesn't mean these words. A  
few minutes later the man calls the horses good. It  
is important in the story that someone really means  
the bad words.  
b The summoner says these words to the old woman.  
He wants twelve pennies from the woman, but she  
hasn't got them. So he says that he will take her  
cooking pot. The summoner is a very bad man. The  
woman hopes that the devil will take the summoner  
away. She really means it.  
c The devil says these words to the summoner. The  
old woman meant what she said. So tonight the  
summoner will be in hell with the devil.
- 29 Possible answer: This shows that people sometimes  
don't mean their hard words. Then the devil doesn't  
take them.
- 30 Open answers
- 31 a frightened b brave c true d quiet  
e beautiful f stupid
- 32 a He mustn't believe everything that people say to  
him.  
b He must keep his mouth shut when he has his  
dinner in it.
- 33–42 Open answers

## Discussion activities key

### 1 Open answers

2

The Nobility	The Clergy	The Common People
The Knight	The Pardoner	The Summoner
	The Priest	The Franklin
	The Nun	
	The Friar	

### 3–9 Open answers

- 10 The clerk must be poor because he likes spending his  
life reading and studying. He may happy because he  
enjoys what he does.

### 11–23 Open answers



## The Canterbury Tales

- 24 The word Death starts with a big letter because it is a personification. Death kills thousands of people when there is a plague or a war.
- 25 Open answers
- 26 The pardoner chooses to tell this story because it talks against the love of money and he wants the pilgrims to either give him money or buy some pardons from him.
- 27–29 Open answers
- 30 Because she thought he wouldn't be able to do it.
- 31 Open answers
- 32 Twice. First, Dorigen suffers when Arveragus goes to war and then, Aurelius suffers for Dorigen.  
Open answers.
- 33–38 Open answers
- 39 Chaunticleer's bad side is that he believes everything people say to him. Pertelote's bad side is that she believes dreams mean nothing. The fox's bad side is the same as Chaunticleer's.
- 40–42 Open answers

### Activity worksheets key

- 1–2 Open answers
- 3 a 7 b 1 c 2 d 3 e 4 f 5 g 6
- 4 knight, love, hundred, fight, winner, Lady, Emily
- 5 Come to Athens / to see the great / fight! There will be lords and / knights and beautiful ladies too! Sit next / to Duke Theseus, Queen / Hippolyta and Emily and / watch it all!
- 6 a always do what her husband tells her to do.  
b give her children away when her husband asks her to.  
c go back home if her husband wants to marry a new wife.  
d work for her husband's new wife.
- 7 Griselda loses her husband and serves her husband's new wife. Job loses his animals and his workmen. Both lose their children and everything they love. Both are patient.
- 8 Open answers
- 9 a money b happy c clothes d cooking  
e baby f husbands g head h what/as
- 10 h, a, c, e, f, b, g, d
- 11 afraid, Death, looked, town, kill, found
- 12–13 Open answers

- 14 Suggested answers:
- a Dorigen said she would love him / he was in love with Dorigen.  
b she promised this to Aurelius / her husband told her to keep her promise.  
c she loved her husband, Arveragus.  
d he didn't want to come between a man and a woman.  
e Aurelius did the right thing.
- 15 a The summoner to the devil.  
b The devil to the summoner.  
c The summoner to the devil.  
d The man to his horses.  
e The devil to the summoner.  
f The woman to the summoner.  
g The devil to the woman.  
h The devil to the summoner.
- 16 a cock b lord c hen d lady e garden  
f castle g devil
- 17–19 Open answers

### Progress test key

- 1 a A soldier to Duke Theseus  
b Arcite to Palamon  
c God Mercury to Arcite  
d Arcite and Palamon to Duke Theseus  
e Duke Theseus to Palamon
- 2 a Walter b Griselda c Walter d Griselda  
e Walter
- 3 a law, lived  
b half, answer  
c beautiful, ladies, dancing, singing  
d women, head  
e wedding, sadly, new  
f world, fairy
- 4 a 3 b 2 c 5 d 1 e 7 f 8 g 6 h 4
- 5 a war, fight b sleep, eat c frightened, black  
d brother, Dorigen
- 6 a He said he was a bailiff but he was lying.  
b He said that at first but he was really a devil.  
c He said but he didn't mean it.  
d He said she was bad but it probably wasn't true.  
e The summoner asked for twelve pennies but she didn't have that much.
- 7 a 3 b 10 c 8 d 6 e 4 f 9 g 2 h 1  
i 11 j 7 k 5