

Quiz on the “Prologue” (Knight, Squire, Nun, and Monk)

1. How does Chaucer the pilgrim describe the Knight’s personality?
2. What activity is the Knight best known for?
3. How is the Knight dressed?
4. List three physical details for the Squire.
5. Who among the other pilgrims is the Squire related to?
6. On what activity of the Nun’s does Chaucer the pilgrim focus the most attention? (Hint: “not a trace of grease was to be seen” on the Nun)
7. What makes the Nun weep?
8. What piece of jewelry does the Nun wear?
9. What is the Monk’s favorite pastime?
10. Monks were supposed to take a vow of poverty. In your opinion, has this Monk taken this vow seriously? Why or why not?

Quiz on the “Prologue” (Wife of Bath, Parson, Miller, and Pardoner)

1. How many husbands has the Wife of Bath had?
2. List three physical characteristics of the Wife of Bath.
3. What kinds of places has the Wife traveled to often?
4. According to Chaucer the pilgrim, what kind of life does the Parson live?
5. What color hair does the Miller have?
6. What kinds of stories does the Miller tell?
7. What kind of musical instrument does the Miller play?
8. What kind of hair does the Pardoner have?
9. What kind of job does the Pardoner have?
10. What does the Pardoner attempt to sell to “poor up-country parson[s]”?

The Knight's Tale

Part I

1. According to the Knight, what kind of ruler is Theseus?
2. What problem do the ladies in black have, and what do they ask of Theseus?
3. Who are Palamon and Arcite, and why are they selected to be prisoners?
4. How does the Knight idealize Emily?
5. When Arcite is released from prison, why does he feel that Palamon is better off than he is? Consequently, why is Palamon even more grief-stricken when Arcite is released?

Part II

1. How does Arcite plan to return to Athens?
2. What does the narrator (the Knight) say about his attempts to describe Palamon's seven years of imprisonment? How could Chaucer, who wrote all of this, use this as satire?
3. What role does Fortune or Destiny play in the events of this section?
4. Initially, Theseus intends to put both Palamon and Arcite to death. What stops him, and how does this scene allow him to express his chivalric qualities of honor and of love?

Part III

1. Briefly describe how Venus, Mars, and Diana are each depicted within their own temples.
2. To whom do Palamon, Arcita, and Emily pray, and what is the significance of their choices?
3. What do Palamon, Arcita, and Emily each receive upon praying at their chosen deity's temple?
4. The gods are in disagreement with how to rectify the situation "below" (on earth) concerning the two knights and Emily. Who says that he will resolve the situation, and how?

Part IV

1. The Knight finally gets to describe a massive battle, much like a medieval tournament. Choose three specific details from the battle in the stadium that you found especially vivid.
2. How does Arcita win? How does Palamon win?
3. Briefly describe the reactions the people have when Arcita dies. Could Chaucer be using satire here, and if so, how?
4. What does Theseus argue that we should make a "virtue" of, and what do you think he means?

The Pardoner's Tale

1. In the Prologue to his own tale, the Pardoner declares that the subject of all his sermons is *Radix malorum est cupiditas*, which is Latin for "The root of all evil is greed." How does the Pardoner reveal that he himself is greedy?
2. The opening of the Pardoner's tale is a list of vices that mankind is prone to, including gluttony (more specifically, drunkenness). List at least three things or people the Pardoner uses as examples of drunkenness, and briefly describe what he says about each.
3. On page 250, the tale actually begins with three "rioters" or drunkards who see a coffin pass by in the street and ask a boy whose coffin it is. To their astonishment and anger, they learn that the coffin contains a dead friend of theirs who was slain. Who does the boy say has killed their friend? What do the rioters vow to do about it?
4. The rioters, in their drunken search for the killer of their friend, stumble across a very old man. How do they treat him? What does he point them toward? What do the rioters discover as a result of the old man's directions?
5. The end of this tale is heavily ironic, both in terms of the fate of the rioters and what the Pardoner attempts to do after he has finished. Describe in at least three ways what is ironic about the end of this tale and the Pardoner's actions when he is finished.

The Nun's Priest's Tale

1. What are the living conditions of the widow who owns Chanticleer?
2. The Nun's Priest spends a lot of time describing Chanticleer and his hen Pertelote as attractive and human-like. What features of Chanticleer and Pertelote does the Nun's Priest point out as especially attractive?
3. What is Pertelote's advice to Chanticleer when he tells her his dream?
4. Pertelote draws upon "folk wisdom" as her authority when she gives Chanticleer advice. What kind of authority does Chanticleer use to refute Pertelote's advice?
5. Chanticleer, the fox, and the Nun's Priest all offer their own version of "the moral of the story." What are the three morals of this story, according to these three?

The Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale

1. In the opening lines of her Prologue, what authority does the Wife of Bath claim in order to be able to tell her story?
2. What Biblical example does the Wife of Bath point to as evidence that there is no reason why she should bother anyone having had five husbands?
3. What does the Wife of Bath say about maidenhood?
4. How did the Wife of Bath treat her earlier husbands, and why?
5. The Wife of Bath describes her fifth and most recent husband. How was their marriage different than her previous four?
6. In the Wife of Bath's tale, what crime does the knight commit?
7. What question is the knight to answer in order to keep from being executed?
8. Who gives him the answer, and for what price?
9. What choice does the knight have to make, and which choice does he choose?
10. In your opinion, has the knight learned his lesson? Defend your answer.