Satire Essay on *The Canterbury Tales*

Geoffrey Chaucer in *The Canterbury Tales* makes great use of the technique of *satire,* which ridicules human folly or vice for the purpose of either bringing about reform or warning others from falling into the same folly or vice. Satire is serious business—the author is not ridiculing things simply to sound funny—but the tone of satirical works can range from humorous to ironic to solemn to contemptuous.

Choose any one of the individual tales from *The Canterbury Tales* that we have read and, in a well-organized essay of about 1,000 words (4-5 pages), examine how your chosen tale operates as satire. Use the following questions to assist you in organizing your paper:

- What human folly or vice is being satirized?
- How is that folly or vice ridiculed?
- What tone or tones does the author employ in his satire?
- What purpose does the satire serve?

Be aware that Chaucer may be satirizing more than one folly or vice. Consider your notes from class discussions to create a thesis and organize your paper. Be sure to use quotes from *The Canterbury Tales* in the correct MLA format as supportive evidence.

Grade Sheet for Satire Essay on *The Canterbury Tales*

	Strong	Acceptable	Weak
Well-written introduction focuses on the assigned topic of satire in this tale			
Strong thesis statement answers the central question or point of satire in the tale			
Paper examines the human follies/vices that are ridiculed in the tale, the manner of that ridicule, and the author's goal			
Paper is organized logically into separate paragraphs whose meanings are clear and which are clearly linked together			
Paper uses several clear examples from the tale in order to support its main points			
Sentence-level grammar (run-ons, comma splices, mangled sentences) is clear and free of errors			
Mechanics (spelling, punctuation, word choice, etc.) are clear and free of errors			
Quotes from the tale are correctly identified and cited properly throughout the paper			
Conclusion effectively concludes the paper's argument rather than merely repeating earlier points or simply stopping			