The Canterbury Tales by Geoffrey Chaucer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Social Status</th>
<th>Dress</th>
<th>Physical Characteristics</th>
<th>Personality Traits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Knight</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Squire</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Yeoman</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Prioress</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Monk</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character</td>
<td>Social Status</td>
<td>Dress</td>
<td>Physical Characteristics</td>
<td>Personality Traits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Friar</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Merchant</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Oxford Cleric</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Man of Law</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Franklin</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Tradesmen</strong></td>
<td>(Haberdasher, Carpenter, Weaver, Dyer, Tapestry)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Cook

Social Status:

Dress:

Physical Characteristics:

Personality Traits:

The Shipman

Social Status:

Dress:

Physical Characteristics:

Personality Traits:

The Physician

Social Status:

Dress:

Physical Characteristics:

Personality Traits:

The Wife of Bath

Social Status:

Dress:

Physical Characteristics:

Personality Traits:

The Parson

Social Status:

Dress:

Physical Characteristics:

Personality Traits:

The Plowman

Social Status:

Dress:

Physical Characteristics:

Personality Traits:
The Miller

Social Status:

Dress:

Physical Characteristics:

Personality Traits:

The Maniple

Social Status:

Dress:

Physical Characteristics:

Personality Traits:

The Reeve

Social Status:

Dress:

Physical Characteristics:

Personality Traits:

The Summoner

Social Status:

Dress:

Physical Characteristics:

Personality Traits:

The Pardoner

Social Status:

Dress:

Physical Characteristics:

Personality Traits:

The Host (Harry Bailey)

Social Status:

Dress:

Physical Characteristics:

Personality Traits:
Direct and Indirect Characterization

Write a character description of yourself in the style of the Prologue of The Canterbury Tales.

Your description must include:

- **Direct Characterization**
  - direct statements about a character
  - He “followed chivalry, / Truth, honor…”

- **Indirect Characterization**
  - uses actions, thoughts, and dialogue to reveal a character’s personality
  - “He was not gaily dressed.”

- Description of physical appearance AND personality
- Minimum of 10 lines written in rhyming couplets (AA, BB, CC, etc.)

- **DUE October 26th (Day 2)**

Keep it anonymous – do not put your name on it. Be specific in your description so that we can guess who you are!
**Study Questions**

Answer all questions in complete sentences on a separate sheet of paper – typed responses will receive extra credit!

### The Knight’s Tale

1. Why is it appropriate that the Knight should tell the first story?
2. Which features of a romance are evident in this tale?
3. How do Arcite and Palamon come to be imprisoned?
4. Why is Arcite not recognized when he is employed in Emily’s household?
5. How is it decided who will marry Emily?
6. What characteristics of chivalry are evident in the story?
7. What is the theme of The Knight’s Tale?

### The Miller’s Tale

1. What are the main sources of humor in this story?
2. What does Chaucer seem to be saying about marriage?
3. What basic human need motivates each of the characters?
4. Why is it appropriate for the Miller to tell this particular story?
5. What is the theme of the story?
6. What rivalry is set up before this tale is told?

### The Reeve’s Tale

1. How is Simkin paid back by the clerics for his cheating?
2. What features of human nature are exaggerated in this tale?
3. What elements of the fabliau are present in The Reeve’s Tale?
4. How does the Reeve pay the Miller back with this story?
5. What was the reaction of the other pilgrims to the tale told by the Miller?
6. Why was The Miller’s Tale so offensive to the Reeve?
7. What qualities does the Reeve say characterize old men?

### The Wife of Bath’s Tale

1. At what age was the Wife of Bath first married?
2. Name two arguments that the Wife uses in her defense of the married state.
3. What is the Wife’s "philosophy" of marriage?
4. How has the Wife changed as she has aged?
5. In what way were her fourth and fifth husbands different from the first three?
6. For what crime is the young knight being punished?
7. Why is it fitting that this tale should be told by the Wife of Bath?
8. How does the ending of the story reconcile with the Wife’s philosophy?
Let’s Go on a Pilgrimage

In this project, you will take on the Chaucerian model of creativity by putting together a group of four characters and directing them on a pilgrimage. The goal of the project is to allow you to reveal your understanding of Chaucer’s literary style.

You will choose your own group of four and will agree upon both the destination of your pilgrimage and the character who will be traveling. The character will be from the modern world but must have the same personal characteristics and social rank as one of Chaucer’s pilgrims. You may not use a “real” person modern equivalent (so you can’t use Justin Bieber as the Miller).

1) Individual responsibilities:
   a. Character analysis of a Chaucerian character – this will include:
      • At least three quotes from *The Canterbury Tales* (both the General Prologue and the tale of your character)
      • An inference for each quote. What do we learn about the character from the quote?
      • A description of the modern equivalent (both physical & character)
      • A justification showing in what ways your modern pilgrim is, in fact, the equivalent of Chaucer’s original (character & social status)
        o For example, if you choose the Friar from *The Canterbury Tales*, you may wish to use CD’s which indicate that he preyed upon the helpless women in his region. The modern equivalent you may choose for him could include an unethical doctor, therapist, lawyer, professor, or office manager.

2) Group responsibilities:
   a. Your group will then choose one pilgrim for the group part of the project.
   b. You will draw/paint/create a portrait of this pilgrim. The portrait must be poster-size and should show the essential character of the pilgrim in some way.
      • Include a paragraph (minimum) pointing out the ways in which your portrait reveals character (*indirect characterization*). You should have at least three symbolic hints as to the pilgrim’s character. For example, if duplicity is one of the characteristics of your pilgrim, you could show inconsistencies in the dress of the pilgrim. If pride is one of his/her characteristics, then his/her pride should be portrayed in his/her face or posture or clothing. The paragraph must be attached to the back of the portrait.
   c. You will write one stanza (minimum 12 lines) of verse, introducing us to your pilgrim. Your verse must make it clear your pilgrim’s character, the pilgrimage’s destination and the reason for the pilgrimage. In true Chaucerian fashion, you will communicate your pilgrim’s character through direct characterization, indirect characterization and verbal irony. In addition, you will follow the poetic conventions that Chaucer used. Your rhyme scheme will be AA BB CC etc., and each line will contain 10 syllables (more or less).
   d. Finally, you will briefly present your character and your pilgrimage to the class while we make a pilgrimage around the campus. In a 5-7 minute presentation, you will:
      • Introduce your modern pilgrim and clearly explain why he/she is similar to the original.
      • Exhibit your portrait and explain how you have represented him or her
      • Orally interpret your Chaucerian stanza for the class
Grading Guidelines for Character Pilgrimage

Character Analysis (each student does an individual analysis)

- Insightfulness of your character analysis (appropriateness of CD’s, relevance of CM’s)
- Thoroughness of character description
- Appropriateness of modern equivalent (similar personality & social status)
- 3 CD’s & 3 CM’s
- Quality of writing (use all appropriate conventions for academic writing, including MLA format)

Group Presentation (portrait, paragraph, stanza, presentation)

- Well organized
  - Does it have an intro, middle, conclusion?
  - Are there smooth transitions between speakers and segments?
  - Is it timely?
- Do the speakers maintain eye-contact and speak with enthusiasm?
- Do you clearly describe the ways in which the portrait shows the character of the pilgrim?
- Do you make a clear connection between the original pilgrim and the modern equivalent?
- Does your verse hint at the pilgrim’s character and state clearly the reason for and destination of the pilgrimage?
- Did everyone in the group speak?

Character Analysis Due: NOVEMBER 8

The Pilgrimage Begins: NOVEMBER 8