

Canterbury Tales



Geoffrey Chaucer

“The Prologue”

The Canterbury Tales: The Language



- ☞ Chaucer was born in London in the early 1340s
- ☞ Written in Middle English in the late 1300s
- ☞ Chaucer wrote in the vernacular, the English that was spoken in and around London in his day.



Life in the Middle Ages: Historical & Cultural Background



1. Health: **Black Death**
2. History & Politics: Hundred Years War
3. Religion: **Sale of Indulgences** and **Church Relics**

Life in the Middle Ages: Morality & Societal Standards



1. Code of Conduct: **Chivalry**
2. Approach to Romance: Courtly Love
3. Men of Honor: **Knights**

The Canterbury Tales: “The Prologue”



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- ∞ Pilgrimage to Canterbury Cathedral
 - ∞ Tabard Inn
 - ∞ Contest for a free meal

“The Prologue” Characters



- ☞ Knight
- ☞ Squire
- ☞ Yeoman
- ☞ Prioress
- ☞ Monk
- ☞ Friar
- ☞ Merchant
- ☞ Oxford Cleric (clerk)
- ☞ Serjeant at Law
- ☞ Franklin
- ☞ 5 Tradesmen
 - ☞ Haberdasher
 - ☞ Dyer
 - ☞ Carpenter
 - ☞ Weaver
 - ☞ Carpet-maker
- ☞ Cook
- ☞ Skipper
- ☞ Doctor
- ☞ Woman of Bath
- ☞ Parson
- ☞ Plowman
- ☞ Miller
- ☞ Manciple
- ☞ Reeve
- ☞ Summoner
- ☞ Pardoner

Stories in *Canterbury Tales*



❧ The Knight's Tale

❧ The Miller's Tale

❧ The Reeve's Tale

❧ The Cook's Tale

❧ The Man of Law's Tale

❧ The Wife of Bath's Tale

❧ The Friar's Tale

❧ The Summoner's Tale

❧ The Clerk's Tale

❧ The Merchant's Tale

❧ The Squire's Tale

❧ The Physician's Tale

❧ The Pardoner's Tale

❧ The Shipman's Tale

❧ The Prioress's Tale

❧ The Monk's Tale

❧ The Nun's Priest's Tale

❧ The Second Nun's Tale

❧ The Yeoman's Tale

❧ The Manciple's Tale

❧ The Parson's Tale

The Canterbury Tales: “The Prologue”



- ∞ Highlight all of the characters listed in italics in “The Prologue” (see the next slide for reference)

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