

Canterbury Tales

Educational Objective: The students will demonstrate their ability to be comfortable enough to perform in front of their classmates.

Materials Needed: CD of T.V. Theme Songs (you can do it from YouTube, table and bell, a copy of the Canterbury Tales Introduction for each student.

Hook: Play “The Yes Game.” Have the players sit in chairs in a circle. Go around the circle and have everyone say their names. The point of the game is to always have someone moving to take someone else’s spot. Before someone can leave their own chair they must have permission from another player to take their spot. Players ask permission to take someone’s spot by saying that player’s name. For example – Joe wants to take Karen’s spot so Joe says, “Karen.” Karen must reply “Yes.” Joe leaves his chair and starts for Karen’s so Karen says to Ali, “Ali” and Ali says “Yes” and Karen vacates her chair for Joe and heads for Ali and Ali calls someone else, and so on.

Step 1: Continue with the “Stupid Name Game.” Remind them that the test is almost here.

Step 2: Play “T.V. Theme Songs.” Divide the class into two teams. Each team sends one player to the table. Play a T.V. Theme Song. The first player to ring the bell gets to answer. If he is right his team gets a point. If he is wrong the other player gets a shot. If he is wrong it goes to the other team where anyone can answer. Take the first answer given. If wrong it goes to the other team. Candy prize for the winning team players.

Step 3: Introduce the Canterbury Tales. Give everyone a copy of the introduction (Below). Read it to them, remember the “e” at the end of the words are not silent. Read it again, but translate it as you go. Have them read it with you. Now inform them that they will be required to memorize it and recite it in front of the class for their grade. Have them read it with you one more time. Set the date that it is due.

● **About *The Canterbury Tales*:**

Geoffrey Chaucer wrote *The Canterbury Tales*, a collection of stories in a frame story, between 1387 and 1400. It is the story of a group of thirty people who travel as pilgrims to Canterbury (England). The pilgrims, who come from all layers of society, tell stories to each other to kill time while they travel to Canterbury. He never finished his enormous project and even the completed tales were not finally revised. Scholars are uncertain about the order of the tales. As the printing press had yet to be invented when Chaucer wrote his works, *The Canterbury Tales* has been passed down in several handwritten manuscripts.

● **About *General Prologue*:**

The General Prologue is the key to *The Canterbury tales* that narrates about the gathering of a group of people in an inn that intend to go on a pilgrimage to Canterbury (England) the next morning. In the General Prologue, the narrator of *The Canterbury Tales*, who is one of the intended pilgrims, provides more or less accurate depictions of the members of the group and describes why and how *The Canterbury Tales* is told. If we trust the General Prologue, Chaucer determined that each pilgrim should tell two tales on the way to Canterbury and two tales on the way back. The host of the inn offers to be and is appointed as judge of the tales as they are told and is supposed to determine the best hence winning tale. As mentioned before, *The Canterbury Tales* was never finished.

Whan that Aprill, with his shoures soote
The droghte of March hath perced to the roote
And bathed every veyne in swich licour,
Of which vertu engendred is the flour;
Whan Zephirus eek with his sweete breeth
Inspired hath in every holt and heeth
The tendre croppes, and the yonge sonne
Hath in the Ram his halfe cours yronne,
And smale foweles maken melodye,
That slepen al the nyght with open eye-
So priketh hem Nature in hir corages
Thanne longen folk to goon on pilgrimages

When in April the sweet showers fall
That pierce March's drought to the root and all
And bathed every vein in liquor that has power
To generate therein and sire the flower;
When Zephyr also has with his sweet breath,
Filled again, in every holt and heath,
The tender shoots and leaves, and the young sun
His half-course in the sign of the Ram has run,
And many little birds make melody
That sleep through all the night with open eye
So Nature pricks them on to ramp and rage
Then folk do long to go on pilgrimage

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