1. CHAUCHER

A) When was Chaucer born, and when did he die?

B) What were his links to royalty?

C) What roles did he fulfill in life?

D)What was happening in Europe during his lifetime?

A) Geoffrey Chaucer was born in 1343 and he died on 25 October 1400.

B) Chaucer link to royalty was his wife, because she was a damsel of King Edoardo III’s queen. In addition in 1370 he travelled to France on the king’s service.

C) During his lifetime Chaucer was the owner of cobbler shops, inherited from his uncle, when he married his cousin. In addition, Geoffrey Chaucer was an important writer, today considered the father of English literature. Indeed, he wrote the poem “Canterbury Tales” and was the first one to use English for literary purposes. Eventually, he was also a yeoman of King Edoardo III’s cohort.

D) During his lifetime broke out the first part of the Hundred Years’ War, that belonged from 1337 to 1360. It was a war between England and France, which started for the interest of England to regain some lands that it had held in France for a long time, lost in previous wars. The most important episodes of the Hundred Years’ War were the English victory in the battle of Crecy and in the battle of Poitiers in 1346. Eventually there was the Treaty of Bretigny which provided peace between England and France until 1369.

During the years 1348-1349 the Black Death wiped out one third of the population of England and this epidemy killed off most of the working population, England's new class of people that was a force that had been growing in power and which included artisans, guildsmen, landowners, lesser nobility, merchants, and freemen.

In 1367 another important episode happened, indeed in this date the king addressed Parliament for the first time in England. Finally, in 1378 took place the Great Schism, also called *the western schism.*

2. THE CANTERBURY TALES

A) What is a frame story (or frame narrative)?

A frame story, also known as frame narrative,  is a [literary technique](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Literary_technique) that serves as a companion piece to a [story within a story](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Story_within_a_story), where an introductory or main narrative sets the stage either for a more emphasized second narrative or for a set of shorter stories. The frame story leads readers from a first story into one or more other stories within it. The frame story may also be used to inform readers about aspects of the secondary narrative that may otherwise be hard to understand.

B) How does this technique of storytelling apply to The Canterbury Tales?

The Canterbury tales consists of a prologue where are presented all the different characters moving to Canterbury to pray inside the Cathedral where Tomas Becket is buried. Along the way each character tells a story: all the short stories together create the technique of the frame narrative.

1. THE PROLOGUE

A) What season is this? What are the clues Chaucer gives us?

B) Look at the differences between modern English and Middle English.

1. The reader understands that the poem takes place during Spring thanks to the mention of the months of March and April and the connotation of the setting, realized throgh the presence of flowers, fruits and birds.

B)

• Shoures, that means “Showers”

• Soote, that means “Sweet”

• Sonne, that means “Sun”

• Tendre, that means “Tender”

• Blisful, that means “Blessed”

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