

# The Canterbury Tales

Content Area: **English Language Arts**  
Course(s): **Language Arts Literacy IV**  
Time Period: **2 weeks**  
Length: **2 Weeks**  
Status: **Published**

## Unit Overview

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Read and Analyze *The Canterbury Tales*. Students will read and discuss Geoffrey Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*. Students will explore the political, social, and satirical points made by the poem and students will investigate the historical significance of Middle English and societal conditions during Chaucer's lifetime.

## Transfer

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Students will be able to independently use their learning to...

- Examine the society of Geoffrey Chaucer's lifetime and his critique of it.
- Connect societal satire from one time period to our modern society.
- Understand how stereotypes and archetypes inform our understanding of people and/or characters.
- Define and apply the term satire to political and social components of our modern society.
- Identify and examine characteristics of medieval literature.

## Meaning

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## Understandings

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Students will understand that...

- How to analyze the various character types represented in *The Canterbury Tales* (personality, appearance, societal placement).
- How to evaluate and classify characters by stereotype/archetype.
- Identify specific characteristics of medieval literature.
- The importance of making character inferences based on character's actions, thoughts, and words.
- To effectively support a claim you must support inferences with textual evidence.

## **Essential Questions**

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Students will keep considering...

- Can we learn about a culture's social, religious, economic, and/or political beliefs through its literature?
- How do stereotypes and archetypes inform our understanding of humanity?
- How are Chaucer's pilgrims relevant to our society today?
- How are chivalry and feudalism represented in Chaucer's tale?
- How do we see chivalry and feudalism today?
- What do women most desire?

## **Application of Knowledge and Skill**

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### **Students will know...**

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Students will know...

- Characteristics of medieval literature.
- Background and experiences of Geoffrey Chaucer and how his life impacted his work.
- How to identify literary elements in *The Canterbury Tales*.
- The social and political context of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*.

### **Students will be skilled at...**

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Students will be skilled at...

- Reading a text silently and aloud for comprehension and fluency.
- Identifying literary devices in a work of literature.
- Examining the literary device of satire and how it applies to *The Canterbury Tales*.
- Integrating the text with an exploration of current social, economic, and political issues.

## **Academic Vocabulary**

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Key terms to know...

- chivalry
- satire
- feudalism
- Middle English
- symbolism
- allegory
- imagery
- stereotype
- archetype

## Learning Goal

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Students will understand...

- Analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone in *The Canterbury Tales*, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly engaging. Analyze the role of figures of speech (for example, hyperbole, paradox) in *The Canterbury Tales*.

## Objective 1-- Levels 2 and 4

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SWBAT:

- Evaluate the importance of word choice in understanding themes in *The Canterbury Tales*.
- Define and distinguish words in context from Middle English and their modern counterparts.
- Evaluate themes, characters, motifs, by examining the language Chaucer uses in *The Canterbury Tales*.

LA.W.11-12.1	Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
LA.RI.11-12.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines faction in Federalist No. 10).
LA.RL.11-12.1	Cite strong and thorough textual evidence and make relevant connections to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.
LA.RL.11-12.2	Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.
LA.RL.11-12.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on

meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (e.g., Shakespeare as well as other authors.)

LA.RL.11-12.5

Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.

## Learning Goal 2

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Students will understand...

- Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what *The Canterbury Tales* says explicitly as well as to support inferences drawn for the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

## Objective 3-- Levels 3 and 4

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SWBAT:

- Evaluate Chaucer's use of characterization and social commentary
- Specify the roles and tropes that the characters from *The Canterbury Tales* represent in society.
- Recognize and critique character types and social conditions in *The Canterbury Tales* and connect them to modern society.

LA.L.11-12.1

Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

LA.W.11-12.1

Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

LA.RL.11-12.1

Cite strong and thorough textual evidence and make relevant connections to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

LA.RL.11-12.2

Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.

LA.RL.11-12.3

Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).

LA.RL.11-12.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (e.g., Shakespeare as well as other authors.)

## Summative Assessment

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- End of Unit Response
- Extended Written Response
- Formal Written Assignments
- Group Presentation
- Performance Assessment
- Portfolios
- Research Project

## Career Ready Practice and Awareness Standards

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CRP.K-12.CRP1.1	Career-ready individuals understand the obligations and responsibilities of being a member of a community, and they demonstrate this understanding every day through their interactions with others. They are conscientious of the impacts of their decisions on others and the environment around them. They think about the near-term and long-term consequences of their actions and seek to act in ways that contribute to the betterment of their teams, families, community and workplace. They are reliable and consistent in going beyond the minimum expectation and in participating in activities that serve the greater good.
CRP.K-12.CRP5.1	Career-ready individuals understand the interrelated nature of their actions and regularly make decisions that positively impact and/or mitigate negative impact on other people, organization, and the environment. They are aware of and utilize new technologies, understandings, procedures, materials, and regulations affecting the nature of their work as it relates to the impact on the social condition, the environment and the profitability of the organization.
CRP.K-12.CRP9.1	Career-ready individuals consistently act in ways that align personal and community-held ideals and principles while employing strategies to positively influence others in the workplace. They have a clear understanding of integrity and act on this understanding in every decision. They use a variety of means to positively impact the directions and actions of a team or organization, and they apply insights into human behavior to change others' action, attitudes and/or beliefs. They recognize the near-term and long-term effects that management's actions and attitudes can have on productivity, morals and organizational culture.
CAEP.9.2.12.C.1	Review career goals and determine steps necessary for attainment.
CAEP.9.2.12.C.4	Analyze how economic conditions and societal changes influence employment trends and future education.
CAEP.9.2.12.C.7	Examine the professional, legal, and ethical responsibilities for both employers and employees in the global workplace.

## Technology

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TECH.8.1.12.A.2	Produce and edit a multi-page digital document for a commercial or professional audience and present it to peers and/or professionals in that related area for review.
TECH.8.1.12.B.2	Apply previous content knowledge by creating and piloting a digital learning game or tutorial.
TECH.8.1.12.B.CS1	Apply existing knowledge to generate new ideas, products, or processes.
TECH.8.1.12.B.CS2	Create original works as a means of personal or group expression.
TECH.8.1.12.C.CS2	Communicate information and ideas to multiple audiences using a variety of media and

formats.

TECH.8.1.12.F.CS1

Identify and define authentic problems and significant questions for investigation.

TECH.8.1.12.F.CS2

Plan and manage activities to develop a solution or complete a project.

## **Formative Assessment and Performance Opportunities**

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- Class discussion
- Exit slips
- Learning/Response Logs
- Observations
- Peer/Self Assessments
- Practice Presentations
- Questions
- Quizzes
- Reading Check Quizzes
- Think Pair Share
- Visual Presentations

## **Accommodations/Modifications**

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- Audio Story Version
- Film Version of Text
- Modify length of written work
- peer support/peer review
- reading aids/notes summaries
- study guides
- Visual/graphic organizers

## **Interdisciplinary Connections**

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- Knighthood and Chivalry
- Medieval English Society
- The Black Death
- The Life of Geoffrey Chaucer
- The Medieval Church

SOC.9-12.1.1.2

Analyze how change occurs through time due to shifting values and beliefs as well as technological advancements and changes in the political and economic landscape.

SOC.9-12.1.3.3

Gather relevant information from multiple sources representing a wide range of views (including historians and experts) while using the date, context, and corroborative value of the sources to guide the selection.

SOC.9-12.1.4.1

Take a position on a current public policy issue and support it with historical evidence, reasoning, and constitutional analysis in a written and/or oral format.

SOC.9-12.1.4.2

Demonstrate effective presentation skills by presenting information in a clear, concise, and well-organized manner taking into consider appropriate use of language for task and audience.

## **Unit Resources**

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- audio reading
- copies of individual tales
- Modern translation
- study guides
- textbook

## **Recommended Texts**

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- Chaucer: The Canterbury Tales Prologue
- Chaucer: The Pardoner's Tale
- Chaucer: The Wife of Bath's Tale