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English Literature

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BRITISH LITERATURE



UGC NET PAPER – 2

LITERATURE

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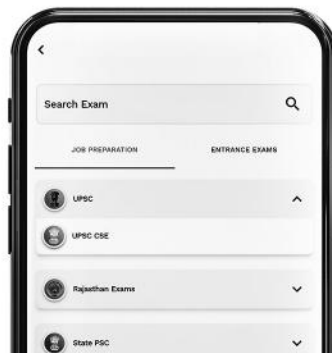
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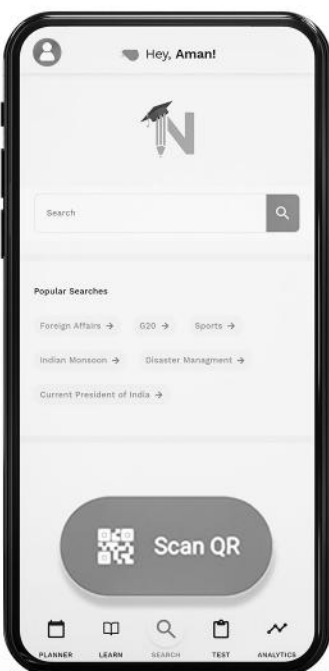
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Anglo-Saxon

Norman conquest

Black Death - Plague in the Age of Chaucer (1348)

- Anglo-Saxon were the people those who were living in old Britain which is also called the Great Britain. These were the tribals from different tribes they were Rovers, Vikings, Judes, Normans, Anglos and Saxons.
- They would have regular fight in between regular scuffle and their history is not important.
 - Anglo-Saxon (450-1340)
 - Accurate study (450-1066)
- In 1066 Normans attacked England and they conquered England. Introduced a new generation and new race (Norman race) and after 1066 - 1340 this timing is called Anglo-Normans.
- In Anglo-Saxon they used to speak the old English which is heavily inspired by Latin language but after 1066 when the Normans attacked, they introduced French language and after 1066-1340 French language influence has been seen. In the literature of the Normans are the Anglo-Saxons the literature was completely Medieval. They were having the blind faith, believing in the God, demons, devils, fairy tales.
- Here we have certain epics but we don't have the authentication of the writers: The most important famous work is "Beowulf". It is the classical epic of Anglo-Saxons and Beowulf is a warrior who is a mercenary Hired by the kings to solve their problems. One day a king hires him to solve his problem because a king and his people were regularly getting troubled by a demon called Grendel. Beowulf comes he fights with Grendel and he kills him.
- So, Anglo-saxon through literature gives an idealistic approach in every sector of life. Then Another work we have is 'Pearl'.
"Pearl" is a long poem collection (30-40 thousand lines in octo-syllabic couplet) Another long poem 'Wedseth'.
- There is one book which is registered and authenticated which is written by Geoffrey of Monmouth it is History the Britons or Historia Riquum Britania (1147)
- In Anglo- Saxon the whole literature was written in octosyllabic and in the iambic pentameter style but iambic pentameter not the conventional iambic pentameter of Shakespeare but it was the old style which was called deca-

syllabic couplets. In short these were old style and there were no language called English. There were lots of tribal languages by these people. When Normans came and attacked England and the Age started Anglo- Normans It is the famous date, 1066 Battle of Hastings or Norman Conquest after this they kept on influencing the Anglo-Saxon literature in a Norman way, the whole literature becomes Anglo-Normans and Saxons.

- When Chaucer comes, he had a base of Latin and French language already which was prevailing in the society and he started developing his own literature own culture on the basis of very new invented- language called "English".
 - In Anglo-Saxon age
 - Anglo-Saxon (450-1066)
 - Anglo-Normans (1066-1340)
 - Important Book "Beowulf"
 - Language has heavily inspired or influenced our English language
 - Latin (Anglos and Saxons)
 - French (Anglo-Normans)

"Beowulf"

- Beowulf is an Old English epic poem consisting of 3,182 alliterative lines. It may be the oldest surviving long poem in old English and is commonly cited as one of the most important works of Old English literature.
- A date of composition is a matter of contention among scholars; the only certain dating pertains to the manuscript which was produced between 975 and 1025. The author was an anonymous Anglo-Saxon poet, referred to by scholars as the "Beowulf poet".
- Language: West Saxon dialect of Old English
- First Printed edition: Thorkelin (1815)
- Genre: Epic heroic poetry
- Subject: The battles of Beowulf the Geatish hero, in youth and old age
- Personages : Beowulf, Hygelac, Hrothgar Wealhpeow, Hrothulf, Eschere, Unferth, Grendel, Grendel's mother, Wiglaf, Hilde burh.
- The protagonist Beowulf, a hero of the geats, comes to the aid of Hrothgar, King of the Danes, whose great hall, Heorot, is plagued by the monster Grendel. Beowulf kills grendel with his bare hands and Grendel's mother with a giant's sword that he found in her lair.

- Later in his life, Beowulf becomes king of the Geats, and finds his realm terrorized by a dragon. Some of whose treasure had been stolen from his hoard in a burial mound. He attacks the dragon with the help of his thegns or servants, but they do not succeed. Beowulf decides to follow the dragon to its lair at Earnanes, but only his young Swedish relative Wiglaf, whose name means "remnant of valour", dares to join him. Beowulf finally slays the dragon, but is mortally wounded in the struggle. He is cremated and a burial mound by the sea is erected in his honor.
- Beowulf is considered an epic poem in that the main character is a hero who travels great distances to prove his strength at impossible odds against supernatural demons and beasts. The poem also begins in medias res or simply in the middle of things" which is a characteristic of the epics of antiquity. Although the poem begins with Beowulf's arrival, Grendel's attacks have been an ongoing event. An elaborate history of characters and their lineages is spoken of, as well as their interactions with each other, debts owed and repaid, and deeds valor. The warriors form a kind of brotherhood linked by loyalty to their lord. What is unique about "Beowulf" is that the poem actually begins and ends with a funeral. At the beginning of the poem, the king, hero, shield Shiefson dies (26-45) and there is a huge funeral for him. At the end of the poem when Beowulf dies, there is also a massive funeral for Beowulf (3140-3170)

First Battle: Grendel

- Beowulf begins with the story of Hrothgar, who constructed the great hall of Heorot for himself and his warriors. In it, he, his wife Wealthrow, and his warriors spend their time singing celebrating Grendel, a troll-like monster said to be descended from the biblical Cain, is pained by the sounds of joy. Grendel attacks the hall and kills and devours many of Hrothgar's warriors while they sleep. Hrothgar and his people, helpless against Grendel, abandon Heorot. Beowulf, a young warrior from Geat land, hears of Hrothgar's troubles and with his king's permission leaves his homeland to assist Hrothgar.
 - Beowulf and his men spend the night in Heorot. Beowulf refuses to use any weapon because he holds himself to be the equal of Grendel. When Grendel enters the hall, Beowulf, who has been feigning sleep, leaps up to clench Grendel's hand. Grendel and Beowulf battle each other violently.
-

- Beowulf's retainers draw their swords and rush to his aid, but their blades can't pierce Grendel's skin. Finally, Beowulf tears Grendel's arm from his body at the shoulder and Grendel runs to his home in the marshes where he dies. Beowulf displays "the whole of Grendel's shoulder and arm, his awesome grasp" for all to see at Heorot. This display would fuel Grendel's mother's anger in revenge.

Second Battle: Grendel's mother

- The next night after celebrating Grendel's defeat, Hrothgar and his men sleep in Heorot. Grendel's mother, angry that her son has been killed, sets out to get revenge. "Beowulf was elsewhere. Earlier, after the award of treasure, the Geat had been -given another lodging" his assistance would be absent in this battle. Grendel's mother violently kills Aschere, who is Hrothgar's most loyal fighter and escapes Hrothgar, Beowulf and their men track Grendel's mother to her lair under a lake. Unferth a warrior who had doubted him and wishes to make amends, presents Beowulf with his sword Hrunting. After stipulating a number of conditions to Hrothgar in case of his death (including the taking in of his kinsmen and the inheritance by Unferth of Beowulf's estate) Beowulf jumps into the lake, at the bottom of which he finds a cavern containing Grendel's body and the remains of men that the two have killed. Grendel's mother and Beowulf engage in fierce combat.
- At first, Grendel's mother appears to prevail. Beowulf finding that Hrunting can't harm his foe, puts it aside in -fury. Beowulf is again saved from his opponent's attack by his armour. Beowulf takes another sword from Grendel's mother and slices her head off with it. Travelling further into Grendel's mother's lair, Beowulf discovers Grendel's corpse and swears his head. The blade of Beowulf's sword touches Grendel's toxic blood, and instantly dissolves so that only the hilt remains. Beowulf swims back up to the rim of the pond where his men wait in growing despair. Carrying the hilt of the sword and Grendel's head, he presents them to Hrothgar upon his return to Heorot. Hrothgar gives Beowulf many gifts, including the sword Nægling, his family's heirloom. The events prompt a long reflection by the king, sometimes referred to as "Hrothgar's sermon," in which he urges Beowulf to be wary of pride and to reward his thegns.

Third Battle: The Dragon

- Beowulf returns home and eventually becomes king of his own people. One day, fifty years after Beowulf's battle with Grendel's mother, a slave steals a golden

cup from the lair of a dragon at Earnances. When the dragon sees that the cup has been stolen, it leaves its cave in a rage, burning everything in sight. Beowulf and his warriors come to fight the dragon, but Beowulf tells his men that he will fight the dragon, but finds himself outmatched. His men, upon seeing this and fearing for their lives, retreat into the woods. One of his men, Wiglaf, however, in great distress at Beowulf's plight, comes to his aid.

- The two slay the dragon, but Beowulf is mortally wounded. After Beowulf dies, Wiglaf remains by his side, grief-stricken. When the rest of the men finally return, Wiglaf admonishes them, blaming their cowardice for Beowulf's death.
- Afterward, Beowulf is ritually burned on a great pyre in Geatland while his people wail and mourn him, fearing that without him, the Geats are defenceless against attacks from surrounding tribes. Afterwards, a barrow, visible from the sea, is built in his memory.

Chaucer

Age of Chaucer (1340-1400)

Birth date (1343-1400)

- Chaucer was the only prominent writer in his age. This is the reason we call it the Age of Chaucer, because Chaucer is the first story writer, grandfather of the English novel, first modern writer, the first reformer, and the first writer of the Renaissance. Wycliff is the first reformer in religious things, while the first reformer in the Renaissance is Chaucer.
- Anglo-Saxons and Anglo-Normans had already influenced English culture. A sudden plague of 1348, also called Black Death, appeared and it killed around 33% of the population of England. Because of this Great Plague in 1348, England lost 33% of its lives, which were mostly from the rural class, the labour class. All of a sudden, the labour class totally collapsed, and the demand for remaining labourers got raised. The demand was hiked, and for the first time, the laborer's prices were hiked, and they got a lot of money, and this is how they became part of the main stream of society. After this, they realized that there were a lot of vices in society and in religion. Religion has been used as a tool to make a lot of money by lots of fake clergies.
- Chaucer's Age is also called the Age of Transition. Transition is when you go to another without leaving the first one. In Chaucer's Age, which is also called the first transitional age, Chaucer is called the first transitional poet.

- There are five transitions which are.
 - **First Transition:** Before Chaucer the writers of Anglo- Saxons and Anglo-Norman's, they are fond of using deca-syllabic couplets which was quite similar to Prose style In Chaucers Age the writers started preferring verse form (poetry form) So, the first transition is Prose to Poetry.
 - **Second Transition:** In Anglo Saxons the writers were fond of describing everything in detailed analysis In Chaucer's timing writers started focusing on the narration. So, another transition is descriptive literature to narrative literature. Descriptive literature that simple means for example - When you give a lot of narration about something which is not important So the Anglo-Saxons were the fond of using description. For eg- If they introduced a Hero. they would take 300-400 lines talking about the introduction of Hero. His shield his horse, sword, bravery, eyes, arms etc. in short, the hero's entry would take 300-400 lines. This was the descriptive method.
 - **Third Transition:** In Chaucer's Age lot of writers started following the narrative style instead of giving unnecessary descriptions they start dealing with the stories and with the contents. Every third, fourth. fifth line they would help the story to go on. They had a plat. So, the third transition is Idealistic literature to Realistic literature. In Anglo Saxons people were not aware not concern about the vices of society All they were concern about idealism so most of the time the time they would writing the stories of great Princess, the warriors and fairies. They were talking about the Idealism in every sector, ideal father, ideal mother, king, queen, ideal warriors. But in Chaucer's age the writers took a very realistic approach and they started pointing out the vices of society for example- Chaucer's Canterbury Tales have lots of characters from the different sectors of society and Chaucer has pointed out their vices. There are other writers William Langland John Gower, wycliff have pointed out the vices of society.
 - **Fourth transition:** Local to Standard dialect Anglo-Saxons and Anglo-Normans were divided in lots of tribes. They had their local dialects. They would write in their local dialects. But for the first time in Age of Chaucer they started using a Standard language which had a big area, Standard languages were English, French and Latin There is a big change which is called. the fifth transition!

- **The Fifth transition is:** The transition from French and Latin language to English. In Chaucer's Age most of the writers of England started writing in English, earlier they were writing in French and Latin.
 - The first transition is Prose to Poetry.
 - The second transition is descriptive literature to narrative literature
 - The third transition is Idealistic literature to realistic literature.
 - The fourth transition is Local to Standard dialect.
 - fifth transition is from French and Latin language to English.
 - Local dialect was not that famous in the age of Chaucer.
- Dante's divine Comedy Allegory is written in a dialect Tuscan. Tuscan is a border language of Italian dalmatian border. Dante's greatest divine comedy Allegory written in a dialect.
- Other reasons that helped Chaucer's Age to be the first modern age. This was the time when England and France were the most powerful nation have regular fights, regular wars. And here a famous battle comes a war, which is called Hundred years wars. (1337-1453). It was the regular war between England and France when most of the time England was defeated by French army. But there are three famous battles, where England managed to defeat France the first battle is Battle of Crecy (1346) next one is Battle of Poeters (1356) Battle of Agincourt (1415).
- When England defeated France a spirit of nationality prevails in the society, they realized they can live as free nation, there are no need to follow French culture tradition, language and literature So this was the reason that winning these battles English people got lot of confidence they filled with enthusiasm and they started demanding their own language, because they don't have their own language All they had the old dialect, old English which was heavily influenced by Norman French and Latin.
- Geoffrey Chaucer as a settled poet at that time he became a national poet, he took this charge to introduced a new language at that time he had four languages in front of him four dialects to be chosen as an option to be converted into English language. The first language he had, was Northern Brium another language he had was Southern Barium third language he had East-Midland and the fourth language is Coltish Mercian "old long. Chaucer selected East Midland language and made some flexible changes, introduced some grammatical things and finally introduced a language which is called English.

- English became the language of the Court in 1362. Edward III made it
- English became the language of the Parliament in 1363.
- English replaced French from school syllabus in 1386.
- East-Midland was a dialect that covered maximum area of England. It was spoken by maximum of majority. It was the language of Chaucer and his ancestors. Chaucer was quite competent using this language.
- This was the time that religious authorities they would sell pardons to everyone saying that if you buy or pay a certain amount, we will provide you pardon, the pardon has been given to you by God. These church authorities they started making a lot of money by selling pardons. This is the reason when Black Death appeared and lot of people died. People started distrusting and doubting the religion. Their faith was in doubt because they started questioning for eg- people said that we have taken pardon, you brought some pardon to us we paid money and took pardon so why we people are getting killed.
- This was the time, a famous writer first reformer, first writer of the Reformation Wycliff Came with his translation of Bible.
- John Wycliff is the first man to translate the Bible into English. He translated Old Testament and text was S.-I. Jerome's Bible written in Latin language. It is also called Vulgate's Bible.
- Geoffrey Chaucer has been famously called the Father of English Poetry by Dryden. Dryden praised Chaucer's art of characterization by saying here is god's plenty. It is said for Canterbury Tales.
- **Matthew Arnold said for Chaucer:**
'Chaucer lacks high seriousness'
 - According to Arnold when a poet, is dealing with a serious subject his tone should be very serious but Chaucer's tone is not serious because he has used the mock style, he has made fun of lot of characters so he is not serious though Chaucer is dealing with the vices of society. he is doing the job of a poet but still he is not serious with his content. This is the reason he lacks high seriousness.
 - "It is with him that our real poetry is born" Arnold
 - "Chaucer's is the will of English underfill" He is the purest English poet ever.
- A. C. Ward has famously said for Chaucer "Chaucer's characters are individual as well as their types". He means to say that in Canterbury Tales there are lots of

characters have been used they are not only individual but they represent their types also. for example- When Chaucer talks about Nun Prairies, they represent all the corrupt nun of that society but when Chaucer says that Nun Prairies had a nasal voice, she would speak using her nose then here nun becomes an individual.

- Thus, Chaucer is not representing everyone but he is talking about some individual character also. Spenser praised him for purest writer in English
- Chaucer has been called the prince of -Plagiarism.
- Book-II -It opens with an Eagle who picks the poet in his claws and gives him the lecture. The poem has auto-biographical passages and eagle takes him to the house of fame where he lectures him about unhappy man
 - It is written in an octo-syllabic couplet.
 - It invokes the god of signs and light.
 - It imitates the book of style is Dante's 'Paradiso'.
- It starts from the picture of a poet who is suffering from insomnia. He is reading the story of Ceyx and Alcione. The book is full of natural charm and freshness. (But the repetition of words verbose and new words made it gaudy).
- There is quotation by Hudson - Chaucer shows that truth to life and impatience of artificiality which are to become two most Striking features of his.

Italian Phase

- Chaucer talks about Italian Renaissance where Petrarch is called the father of Italian Renaissance and Humanism. Dante is called the last representative of Italian Renaissance.

"House of Fame"

- It is inspired by Dante's "Divine Comedia".
 - "Comedia' word is attributed by Boccaccio.
 - Here the book - 1 opens with the discussion of dream by which poet finds himself in a glass temple engraving story of Virgil's "Aenaid". It is written on walls with special emphasis on Queen Dido's episode.
 - Story of Aneas's marriage with Lavinia it is also the part of book-1. This poem has been famously called Dante in English it is by Lydgate.
 - The origination of Modern England in Elizabethan comes from Bible.
 - Black Death occur in - 1348, 1362 1367 and 1370
-

Geoffrey Chaucer as a writer

- Geoffrey Chaucer (1343-1400)
- He was born in London.
- He belongs to a small town
- His father John Chaucer, Mother agnes Chaucer are very common people.
- Chaucer in the age of 17 became the attendant of the duke Edward III. He joined Edward III and then participated in the “War of hundred years” where he was abducted and king Edward paid 16 pounds ransom to get Chaucer back.
- Geoffrey Chaucer was ransomed for 16 pounds.
- Chaucer as a writer lived in the age of three different kings. He lived in the age of Edward III he approved Rime-Royal whose reigning time was 1327-1377, then Richard II (1377-139) Henry IV whose time on the throne was 1399-1413. Henry IV-was chosen by the parliament.
- Chaucer married a lady Philippa poet and this is how he made royal contacts Philippa poet was a sister of third wife of John of Gaunt.
- Having the royal contact Chaucer was appointed as a national poet and he started writing. Chaucer's first career was in French he wrote lots of book in French. All the books by Chaucer which were published before 1372 were in French. Here the first book we have is "The Book of the Duchess", it is written in octosyllabic couplet and deals with the death of Duchess Blanche. Duchess Blanche belongs to Lancashire. It's a kind of elegy and dream allegory Another book by Chaucer in French Carrier is "Roman De La Rosé (in English Romance of the Rose). It is the translation of a writer's work which were in old French, the writers were Jaen De Meung and William DeLarris .
- Next work which is in French "ABC" a long prayer, it’s just a long prayer but it is divided into three sections this is why it is called ABC. It is for Virgin Mary.

Chaucer's career after 1372

- As Chaucer became a national poet, he went on lots of diplomatic tour in Italy and in Italy he came in contact lots of writers like Petrarch, Dante and Boccaccio. When he came in contact with these writers he got heavily influenced by Dante and Petrarch and the started imitating them in his works.
 - This is the Chaucer's career in Italian language.
 - **The very first book is:** "The Parliament of the Fowls" It was written to celebrate the marriage Richard II with Anne of Bohemia. Its allegory. Here The Parliament
-

is of birds it is an assembly where St. Valentine is sitting white eagle on his wrist and all the birds they come to marry this eagle to woe her partner They claim their superiority their power to impress the female eagle which is on the wrist of St. Valentine. But they cannot able to win the heart. So, the whole book gives a message that love don't need any power, Superiority, any claim, love needs only love. St. Valentine is the head of the assembly It was written in the marriage of Richard II and Anne; they both were the age of 14 and the month of their marriage was February.

- **Second book "House of Fame"**: House of fame is a copy of Dante's Divine comedy. It is also called the masterpiece of comic fantasy. It is a dream allegory and Chaucer saw a dream that in his dream he has been picked up by an eagle who drops him at a glass place which is called house of fame. Here Chaucer finds three types of people: first type of people those who did not want to work but wanted to be famous, second type of people those who wanted to work to be famous and the third type those who simply believed in work but did not concern about the fame or being famous. So, fame is given to the third type.
- After this Chaucer wrote "**Troilus and Criseyede**". It is based on Trojan war. It is a story where Troilus a warrior falls in love with a Lady or widow Lady Creseyede. But eventually he has been deceived by the lady and he dies in a war. It is a long poem where using Rime Royal Chaucer gives a message that women can't be trusted. Chaucer has used Rime Royal stanza in Troilus and Criseyde which was invented by him.
- Rime Royal is a seven-line stanza with the rhyme scheme of ABAB.BC, C. Rime Royal was invented by Chaucer, approved by Edward III and used by King James I of Scotland in King's squire in 1424.
- Why this Rime Royal Called Rime the Royal?
 [It was approved by Edward III and famously used by King James I in his work King's Squire (1424)] In this book Chaucer criticized women, Chaucer Saw a dream that goddess Alceste is un-happy with his deed and she is going to punish him as the Chaucer has defamed Women in his book. Chaucer pleaded guilty and goddess Alceste gave him a chance, she asked him to write a book where he can praise the woman.
- So, Chaucer woke up and wrote another book which is called "**The Legend of Good Women**". Here he has praised all the female characters there are totally ten female characters. Chaucer this style is written in Deca-syllabic couplet. And

its a work which is called Palinode, it is a literary device. Troilus and creseyede is an adaptation of Boccaccio's Second Illustator. It is the re-telling of Boccaccio's story.

Chaucer's Career in English

- Chaucer's famous work in English is "Prologue to The Canterbury Tales" "Prologue to the Canterbury Tales is written in English. It is the first ever book written in English, written in 1388.
 - It is believed that Chaucer wanted to write 124 tales but we have only 24 tales It is debatable thing that how many pilgrims were there.
 - At that time in England, it was a tradition to go to the pilgrimage of various provinces. Here the pilgrims are going to the shrine of Thomas Beckett. These are 29 pilgrims living in Tabard Inn. 29 pilgrims they are hosted by Harry Baily. He is the very jolly person. And the narrator is here which is Geoffrey Chaucer. So, in total we have - 31 people. 29 pilgrims 1 narrator
 - Geoffrey Chaucer and one host of Tabard Inn Jerry Baily When they start their journey, the very opening line of Prologue to the Canterbury Tales is "April is the month of showers" when they started their journey Harry Baily suggested the idea that it was the long and tedious journey and to make it comfortable every pilgrim is supposed to tell four stories mean each of them will tell four stories, two while going to the journey and two while returning The best story teller would be given a supper by all.
 - The first storyteller is the Knight. The Knight tells us the story of Palamon and Arcite, two fast friends who fight for a girl Emily. It's a tragedy. Knight's story is selected as the best story. knights story is based on Dessida, Boccacio is the writer.
 - The last story teller is Parson and his story deals with 'Seven deadly sins' Out of 24 tales, 22 tales are in verse and 2 are in prose one by Parson. by Chaucer and one by Parson.
 - Now there are 23 persons who have told stories means Chaucer told two tales. His two tales are Tale of Sir Thapa's and Tale of Sir Milibeus.
 - Harry Baily didn't like the tale of Sir Thopas and criticized it but Chaucer's another tale of Sir Melibius was praised by Harry.
 - Harry Baily asked Chaucer what man are thou and Chaucer said I am of short wet I will tell a little thing in prose.
-

- None Priest's tale is a beast fable where he cleans with Chanticleer the rooster and the fox.

The Tale of wife of Bath, which is the tale of a loathely lady

- He says wife of Bath. She belongs to bath. Her name is Elisen. She is famously called madam gossit by her friend's wife of Bath had five husbands and she became deaf because her fifth husband gave her a blow. Her fifth husband Janekin was over- powered by her and more over she counts: her all marriages as experience. So, this is how wife of Bath becomes the first feminist character who says that all these marriages were experience and Wife of Bath questions the need of Chastity through her tale which is answered by student of Oxford.
- Wife of Bath's story is she talks about member of round table of King Arthur. She tells the story that King Arthur's courtier, a famous courtier raped a woman and king Arthur punished him he said that come with the answer that which is the thing which is desired by the most of the women and if you don't come with the answer after one year you will be killed.
- So, this courtier goes in the search of this answer, he comes across various women asking the only desire they have but he doesn't get the final answer. When one year is totally over, he comes back for his punishment as he is going to be killed. He meets an old and ugly lady says I can help you. I can answer you that what is the thing which is most desired by a woman, but you will have to marry me.
- So, the courtier thinks that it is better to marry her than to die. He marries the lady and on the wedding night the lady tells him that it is the complete sovereignty complete control on lover or husband. Then the ugly lady asks to the courtier do you want me to be a most beautiful but unfaithful or you want me to be ugly but loyal. He says I want you. Ugly but loyal and this is how the story ends. Complete sovereignty sought by woman is again a feminist thing.
- how character has given the personal details of all these characters?
Chaucer says Knight was a good man because he participated in lots of holy wars. While son of Knight, Squire was involved in lots of other things. Chaucer says a line for squire "he was as fresh as the month of May."
- There are four characters who have been praised by Chaucer because the various characters Chaucer has criticized.

Four characters who have been praised by Chaucer are:

- Ploughman - He is very honest; he pays his taxes regularly.
- Another person is praised by the Chaucer is poor Parson:
 - Parson is the only religious character praised by Chaucer.
 - Parson is very honest though he is a very small clergy.
 - Parson says if gold rust what shall Iron do? The message is if the upper-class clergies are corrupt what shall Iron (lower class) do, that means the lower-class clergies they are not supposed to do good if the upper class is bad.
- Then the student of oxford, he has been praised because he was devoted to studies.
- Knight has been praised because he participated in holy wars.
- Nun Priores, she belongs to aristocracy though she is the nun elevated to God. she should be devoid of all the materialistic pleasure -but our Nun in Canterbury Tales is fond of latest fashion, speaking French, she has a nasal voice and she is wearing an amilate where it is written “Amor vincit omnia” which means love Conquers all. This shows the aristocratic standard the fakeness of this Nun has been criticized.
- Monk, is a religious person but this Monk is fond of hunting Pardoner and Summoner both have been criticized as drunkard, eating garlics and being lot of Greedy' Chaucer's Pardoner gets drunk and tells everyone before he tells a story. He says that I did not complete my degree of being a Pardoner still I scare people on the name of God and I make my living by taking lots of money from them. He also tells that if people are not able to pay the money I force them to offer their wives or daughters to me. This is how Chaucer has painted out the vices of Church.

Dr. Of Physic.

- During the time of Black Death all these doctors they made lot of money. So here Dr. of Physic, Chaucer says he is too much greedy and he forced patient to give the money if they aren't able to do so he asked them to give gold While Dr of Physic denies this saying that the gold is cordial is cordial in Physic. I love the gold in special.
 - So, he says that gold is metal and this is important in Physics that is why I asked gold from my patients but in secret he is looting his patients.
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- Chase did not like alliteration and assonance and he called it Rim Ram Roff which means all is waste or all in vain.

John Gower (died in 1408)

- He is next contemporary of Chaucer. He has been called Moral gower. Chaucer called him Moral gower. Just like Chaucer his career is also divided in three parts- In his French career he has famously, written a book called "Mirror Delomme it's means. Mirror of the Meditative Man. This book deals foilus and corruption of the Church prevailing in society.
- Then next is Italian Phase. He has written a famous book "Vox clamantis"
- English title of famous book- Vox clamantis is "voice of the One Crying out". It is a Latin poem around 12-13 thousand lines. It is an elegiac verse. here he is mourning the loss of peasants. It deals with the peasant's revolt of 1381 which was lead Wat Tyler. Wat Tyler was the leader of peasant's revolt. It is also called Wat Tylor's Rebellion are great Rising.
- After Black Death a tension was created which was political tension and along with the thing that Hundred Years War was also going on. The peasants realized that the Church authority are Causing let taxes which is not needed. It was the reason all the peasants revolted... Here Gower is criticizing peasants Saying that the cause of peasants was not good because England was involved in a war with France. It is not the right time to cause a rebellion. Moreover, gower bring a religious person trusted Church blindly and he said that peasants are in wrong side they should have faith in church. (Story of vox clamantis)
- The third book in English Phase is "Confession Amantis".It is also called the lover's confession. It is having 30 to 40 thousand lines, written in middle English dialect. It is a Frame story (story within stories). It has lots of short and narrative poems Influence of Chaucer and Langland Can be seen.
- John Wycliff was the prof. in the university of Oxford.
- He is the first man who started questioning religion and formed a group Lollards'
- This group started talking against church started causing awareness against the church or the supremacy of the Pap. They talked about Iconoclasm means that we should not believe in images. God is everywhere. Thus, this group started talking or criticizing the corruption or draw backs of the religion.