

Instructional Recipe

How Does Chaucer's Canterbury Tales Mirror the Social Order of the Middle Ages?

Grade 9-12
English Language Arts IV
Cross Curricular Connection: World History
Education Service Center Region 20



Online research and information resources available through a partnership between the Texas State Library and Archives Commission, the Texas Education Agency and Education Service Center, Region 20
<http://web.esc20.net/k12databases>

Step 1 – Ask

[Click here for internet links/URLs](#)

Objectives:

Introduction:

Chaucer lived during a captivating, but tumultuous period in British history. He wrote for a courtly audience that was familiar with such medieval traditions as the Code of Chivalry, and as students explore this rich literary period, they should use the library print resources and the digital [K-12 Subscription Databases](#) to find out more about the Code of Chivalry and its influence upon the literature of the Middle Ages.

Ask the essential questions and instruct students to write a short feature article to share their findings. Ask them to find out more about Thomas à Becket and his shrine at Canterbury.



<http://www.flickr.com/photos/> (Click on photo to see enlarged frame.)

A dark chapter in the history of the Cathedral was the assassination of Thomas Becket in the northeast Transept on Tuesday 29 December 1170 by guards that overheard King Henry II say "Who will rid me of this meddlesome priest?" when he was having troubles with Becket. The guards took it literally and assassinated Becket in his own Cathedral. The income from pilgrims who visited Becket's shrine, which was regarded as a place of healing, largely paid for the subsequent rebuilding of the Cathedral and its associated buildings.

Ask:

- ★ Who was Thomas à Beckett?
- ★ What significant role does Thomas à Becket's Canterbury shrine play in British history?
- ★ What is the code of chivalry?
- ★ How do Chaucer's pilgrims mirror the medieval social order?

Vocabulary:

- ★ Feudalism
- ★ Chivalric code
- ★ Medieval pilgrimage
- ★ Allegory
- ★ Illuminated manuscript

TEKS:

TEKS: ELA IV: 110.45.9C
(9) Reading/variety of texts. The student reads extensively and intensively for different purposes in varied sources, including British literature, in increasingly demanding texts. Students are expected to (C) read British and other world literature, including classic and contemporary works.

Cross-Curricular TEKS Social Studies World History: 113.33.3(B)

(3) The student understands how, as a result of the collapse of the Western Roman Empire, new political, economic, and social systems evolved, creating a new civilization in Western Europe. (B) The student is expected to describe the major characteristics of the political system of feudalism, the economic system of manorialism, and the authority exerted by the Roman Catholic church.

Technology Application

TEKS: 126.24.8(A),(B)

Solving problems. The student uses research skills and electronic communication, with appropriate supervision, to create new knowledge. The student is expected to: (A) use communication tools to participate in group projects; and (B) use electronic tools and research skills to build a knowledge base regarding a topic, task, or assignment.

Step 2 – Investigate

[Click here for internet links/URLs](#)

As a foundational activity, have students research Thomas Beckett's life and present their findings in a paragraph. Include achievements and the importance of his shrine as a place of pilgrimage. Use search strategies (Thomas à Beckett and Middle Ages), (Canterbury Cathedral and Thomas à Beckett).

Online Subscription Resources:

- ✚ Chapter 4: England in the Late Middle Ages and the Renaissance. By: Brittan, Simon. *Poetry, Symbol, & Allegory: Interpreting Metaphorical Language from Plato to the Present*, Mar2003, p55-98, 44p. (Book Chapter) (AN 24274891).
- ✚ [“Canterbury Tales, The”: dramatization of “Pardoner’s Prologue” from “The Canterbury Tales”](#). Online. Encyclopædia Britannica Online School Edition. <<http://school.eb.com/eb/art-68306>>.

Additional Websites:

- ✚ **Photo Galleries:** [History and Heritage of Canterbury Cathedral](#) [Canterbury Photo Gallery](#)
- ✚ **Virtual Tours:** [Canterbury’s Brief History](#) [Canterbury Virtual Tour](#) [Bus Tour](#)
- ✚ **Illuminated Manuscripts:** [Tickhill Psalter Selected Folios from Boccaccio’s Famous Women](#) [Wingfield Hours and Psalter: Murder of Thomas à Becket](#) [Geoffrey Chaucer Turn the pages and listen to the Lindesfarne Gospels](#)
- ✚ **Audio:** [Chaucer’s Pilgrims Audio Clips](#) [British Library Audio: Chaucer’s Changing Language](#) [The Life and Times of Geoffrey Chaucer](#) [Chaucer the Pilgrim](#) [The Electronic Geoffrey Chaucer](#) [Turn the pages and listen to the Lindisfarne Gospels](#)

Books:

- “Chaucer Aboard a Spaceship,” by Naoshi Koriyama from *Collected Poems*, Tokyo: Hokuseido, 1996.
- West, Richard. *Chaucer, 1340-1400: The Life and Times of the First English Poet*. 1. New York: Carroll & Graff, 2000.
- Ellis, Steve. *Chaucer: An Oxford Guide*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Step 3 – Create

[Click here for internet links/URLs](#)

- ★ Use the online [concept web](#) to organize information gathered from the reading. Students should be able to identify main ideas with supporting information. Once the concept web has been completed, students may use it as a guideline for the main research points that will be used for their travel brochures in Step 4.
- ★ Review library and Internet resources about the pilgrimage. Extend your knowledge of the region and the culture by completing research using Google Earth.
- ★ Read the articles and view the websites found in [Step 2](#).
- ★ Arrange the information according to "topics" based on the assignment. For example, you might gather all information collected about living accommodations that a visitor might expect to find along the route for the pilgrimage; the kinds of terrain a traveler might expect; modes of transportation; the gifts tourists can expect to buy in medieval England; and things to see and do in the Middle Ages.
- ★ Remember to organize information for the travel brochure based on the specific social order to which you belong.

🔗 **Technology Link** - http://www.teachnology.com/web_tools/graphic_org/concept_web/

Use the online concept-web generator to organize the research and concepts that have already been completed. http://lexiconsys.com/graphic_organizers/ideaWebIndx.html

Step 4 – Discuss

[Click here for internet links/URLs](#)

- ★ Remind students to include appropriate details that would interest travelers of all social orders. (The teacher may want to divide the class into different social orders, having each order produce a brochure that would appeal to a particular class of travelers.)
 - ★ Use details found in *The Canterbury Tales*.
 - ★ Tips for designing a brochure: Prepare a letter-size sheet of paper by folding twice to form a tri-fold brochure. This provides three outside areas, or "panels," to work with and one large area, or "spread," inside
 - ✚ Create a colorful and eye-catching cover for your brochure.
 - ✚ Remember the idea is to attract visitors; present hardship and danger on the journey as excitement and adventure.
 - ✚ Make brochure as attractive, appealing, and informative as possible. Balance text with illustrations and use plenty of color
- 🔗 **Technology Link** – Students may use Microsoft Publisher for this assignment. If the work is going to be done online, teachers may consider using Google Docs for collaboration. (Have students create a Gmail account prior to beginning their projects. Teachers may take a tour of Google Docs at <http://www.google.com/google-d-s/intl/en/tour1.html>)
- ✚ View an interactive map gallery of [Sacred Texts](#) on Google Earth.
 - ✚ Download the free version of Google Earth to see the location of Canterbury England. www.earth.google.com/

Step 5 – Reflect

[Click here for internet links/URLs](#)

Allow students to present their projects to the rest of the class. Use the following suggested brochure rubric to assess the students' work. Make sure that the students are familiar with the [travel brochure rubric](#) before they begin creating their project. They should refer to the travel brochure rubric repeatedly to monitor their progress in creating their project.

🔗 **Technology Link:** You can also create your own rubric with your students at <http://rubistar.4teachers.org/index.php>.

Teachers may upload documents to a wiki space for easy access to all students and parents.

**For a tutorial on wiki spaces go to [YouTube - Wikis in Plain English](#)
[Wikispaces.com](#); [PBwiki.com](#); are just a few you can use.

Internet Links/URLs

Articles may be located by either the accession number (AN) or the persistent URL.

Step 1 - Ask

- **K-12 Subscription Databases**
<http://web.esc20.net/k12databases/accessk12.html>

Step 2 – Investigate

- **“*Canterbury Tales, The*”: dramatization of “*Pardoner’s Prologue*” from “*The Canterbury Tales*”**
<http://school.eb.com/eb/art-68306/A-dramatization-in-Modern-English-of-the-Pardoners-Prologue-from>
- **History and Heritage of Canterbury Cathedral**
<http://www.canterbury-cathedral.org/history/history.aspx>
- **Canterbury Photo Gallery**
<http://www.sacred-destinations.com/england/canterbury-cathedral-photos/index.htm>
- **Canterbury’s Brief History**
<http://www.faculty.de.gcsu.edu/~dvess/ids/medieval/canterbury/canterbury.shtml#tour>
- **Canterbury Virtual Tour**
http://www.clicksandclicks.com/vrc_00.shtml
- **Bus Tour**
<http://school.eb.com/eb/art-16428/Exterior-views-of-Canterbury-cathedral-Canterbury-Kent-Eng>
- **Tickhill Psalter**
<http://www.nypl.org/research/chss/splendor/book26/book26.html>
- **Selected Folios from Boccaccio’s *Famous Women***
<http://www.nypl.org/research/chss/splendor/book33/book33.html>
- **Wingfield Hours and Psalter: Murder of Thomas à Becket**
<http://digitalgallery.nypl.org/nypldigital/dgkeysearchdetail.cfm?trg=1&strucID=250813&imageID=427140&word=thomas%20becket&s=1¬word=&d=&c=173&f=&IWord=&IField=&sScope=Collection%20Guide&sLevel=&sLabel=Medieval%2520and%2520Renaissance%2520Illuminated%2520>
- **Geoffrey Chaucer**
<http://digitalgallery.nypl.org/nypldigital/dgkeysearchdetail.cfm?strucID=486924&imageID=1213586&word=chaucer&s=1¬word=&d=&c=&f=&IWord=&IField=&sScope=&sLevel=&sLabel=&num=0&total=74&pos=11&e=w>
- **Turn the pages and listen to the Lindesfarne Gospels**
http://www.bl.uk/collections/treasures/lindisfarne/lindisfarne_broadband.htm?middle
- **Chaucer’s Pilgrims Audio Clips**
<http://www.wvnorton.com/college/english/nael/noa/audio.htm>

- **British Library Audio: Chaucer's Changing Language**
<http://www.bl.uk/learning/langlit/changlang/activities/lang/chaucer/chaucerpage1.html>
- **Chaucer the Pilgrim**
<http://www.csis.pace.edu/grendel/projs2c/ch1.html>

Step 3 – Create

- **concept web**
http://lexiconsys.com/graphic_organizers/ideaWebIdx.html
- http://www.technology.com/web_tools/graphic_org/concept_web/
- http://lexiconsys.com/graphic_organizers/ideaWebIdx.html

Step 4 – Discuss

- <http://www.google.com/google-d-s/intl/en/tour1.html>)
- **Sacred Texts**
<http://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/sacredtexts/map/map.html>
- www.earth.google.com/

Step 5 – Reflect

- <http://rubistar.4teachers.org/index.php>.
- **YouTube - Wikis in Plain English**
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-dnL00TdmLY>
- Wikispaces.com
- **PBwiki.com**
<http://pbworks.com/>

Travel Brochure Rubric

Teacher Name: _____				
Student Name: _____				
CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Attractiveness & Organization	The travel flyer/brochure has exceptionally attractive formatting and well-organized information.	The travel flyer/brochure has attractive formatting and well-organized information.	The travel flyer/brochure has well-organized information.	The travel flyer's formatting and organization are confusing to the reader.
Writing - Organization	Each section in the travel flyer/brochure has a clear beginning, middle, and end.	Most all sections of the travel flyer/brochure have a clear beginning, middle and end.	Some sections of the travel flyer/brochure have a clear beginning, middle and end.	A few of the sections of the travel flyer/brochure have a clear beginning, middle and end.
Writing - Grammar	There are no grammatical mistakes in the travel flyer/brochure.	After feedback from an adult, there are no grammatical mistakes in the travel flyer/brochure.	After feedback from an adult, there are 1-2 grammatical mistakes in the travel flyer/brochure.	After feedback from an adult, there are several grammatical mistakes in the travel flyer/brochure.
Spelling & Proofreading	No spelling errors remain after one person other than the typist reads and corrects the travel flyer/brochure.	No more than 1 spelling error remains after one person other than the typist reads and corrects the travel flyer/brochure.	No more than 3 spelling errors remain after one person other than the typist reads and corrects the travel flyer/brochure.	There are several spelling errors in the travel flyer/brochure after one person other than the typist reads and corrects.
Writing - Mechanics	Capitalization and punctuation are correct throughout the travel flyer/brochure.	After feedback from an adult, capitalization and punctuation are correct throughout the travel flyer/brochure.	After feedback from an adult, there are 1-2 capitalization and/or punctuation errors in the travel flyer/brochure.	After feedback from an adult, there are several capitalization or punctuation errors in the travel flyer/brochure.
Content - Accuracy	All facts in the travel flyer/brochure are accurate.	99-90% of the facts in the travel flyer/brochure are accurate.	89-80% of the facts in the travel flyer/brochure are accurate.	Fewer than 80% of the facts in the travel flyer/brochure are accurate.

Sources	Careful and accurate records are kept to document the source of 95-100% of the facts and graphics in the travel flyer/brochure.	Careful and accurate records are kept to document the source of 94-85% of the facts and graphics in the travel flyer/brochure.	Careful and accurate records are kept to document the source of 84-75% of the facts and graphics in the travel flyer/brochure.	Sources are not documented accurately or are not kept on many facts and graphics.
Graphics/Pictures	Graphics go well with the text and there is a good mix of text and graphics.	Graphics go well with the text, but there are so many that they distract from the text.	Graphics go well with the text, but there are too few and the travel flyer/brochure seems "text-heavy."	Graphics do not go with the accompanying text or appear to be randomly chosen.
Knowledge Gained	All students in the group can accurately answer all questions related to facts in the travel flyer/brochure and to technical processes used to create the travel flyer/brochure.	All students in the group can accurately answer most questions related to facts in the travel flyer/brochure and to technical processes used to create the travel flyer/brochure.	Half of the students in the group can accurately answer most questions related to facts in the travel flyer/brochure and to technical processes used to create the travel flyer/brochure.	Several students in the group appear to have little knowledge about the facts or technical processes used in the travel flyer/brochure.