



Talk Like a Pilgrim: Reading Chaucer Aloud

Student Name _____ Date _____

Read the introduction and first five lessons on the "Teach Yourself to Read Chaucer's Middle English" page at the EDSITEment-reviewed Geoffrey Chaucer Website. You should notice two important differences between speaking Middle English and the English we speak today. First, many of the vowel sounds in Middle English were pronounced differently; second, the final "e" in Middle English is often pronounced rather than silent. After reading these brief lessons, write out the phonetic pronunciation of each line and practice reading it aloud. The stresses on the syllables are indicated by bold font. Next, listen to the recording of the first 18 lines of The General Prologue, available from the Chaucer Metapage Audio Files via the Geoffrey Chaucer Website. How does your own pronunciation compare with the one you just heard?

Teach Yourself to Read Chaucer's Middle English

- <http://www.courses.fas.harvard.edu/~chaucer/teachslf/less-0.htm>

The General Prologue, Lines 1-18, read by Tom Hanks (requires Real Player)

- http://academics.vmi.edu/english/audio/GP_Hanks.html

Whan that/ **A**-prill/ **with** his/ **shour**-es/ **soo**-te

The **droghte**/ of **March**/ hath **per**/-ced **to** the/ **roo**-te,

And **ba**/-thed **e-ve**/-ry **veyne**/ in **swich**/ li-**cour**

Of **which**/ ver-**tu**/ en-**gen**-/dred **is**/ the **flour**;

Whan **Ze**/phi-rus/ **eek** with/ his **swee**/te **breeth**

In-**spi**/red **hath**/ in **ev**-e-/ry **holt**/ and **heeth**

The **ten**/dre **crop**/pes, **and**/ the **yon**/ge **sonne**

Hath **in/** the **Ram/** his **half/** cours y/ronne,

And **sma/**le **fowe/**les **ma/**ken/ **mel-o/**dy-e,

That **sle/**pen **al/** the **nyght/** with **o/**pen **y-e**

(So **pri/**keth **hem/** Na-ture/ in **hir/** cor-a-**ges**),

Thanne **long/**en **folk/** to **goon/** on **pil/**gri-ma/-**ges**,

And **pal/**me-res **for/** to **se/**ken **straun/**ge **stron/**-des,

To **ferne/** **hal-wes,/** **kowthe** in/ **son-dry/** **lon-des**;

And **spe/**ci-al-ly/ **from/** e-ve-ry/ **shi-res/** **en-de**

Of **Eng/**elond **to/** **Caun-ter/**bury they/ **wen-de**,

The **hoo/**ly **blis/**ful **mar/**tir **for/** to **se-ke**,

That **hem/** hath **hol/**pen **whan/** that **they/** were **see-ke**.
