

Medieval Literature Syllabus

REVISION IV

2010-2011 Academic Year

Caedmon Tutorials are 32 weeks long. Below are the readings for the upcoming academic year. At the bottom of the syllabus, you'll find links to sites where you can purchase the course texts. Miss Thompson will also be posting additional readings in a PDF format on the website.

Your Assignments

In addition to weekly readings and mini homework assignments, each student will also be responsible for the following:

- three (3) essays (750-1000 words) due at the end of each term (except the short Lent Term)
- four (4) timed writings which will be conducted outside of class hours on a site called "Classmarker" (details to follow). These timed writings will be short responses to questions or passages based on readings to that point. They are intended to help you develop your ability to think and write about literature in a succinct manner.
- one (1) presentation: once classes begin, you will have an opportunity to sign up to lead a discussion on a text or portion of a text of your choice. Details to follow.
- Common Room contributions: after each class, you will have from that day to the next class to contribute your thoughts, questions, concerns, observations, etc. to your class's forum. The forum is accessed via the Caedmon Tutorial website on the "Medieval Common Room" page. This will be a lively place for you to engage with your classmates and tutor outside class time as you delve into the literature.

❖ Assignments: Marks breakdown.

- **Three Essays (each worth 15%): 45%** (750-1000 words. Each one is due last day of term)
- **Four Timed Writings (each worth 5%): 20%** (short written responses to questions or passages from readings so far. Open book)
- **One Presentation: 5%** (leading a class discussion on one of the day's readings or parts of a reading. Start thinking about what text you'd like to present on. More information to come. First come, first served; so if there's something you're really keen to do, drop me a line!)
- **Weekly homework assignments: 25%** (starting from this week, homework assignments must be completed and sent to me before the next class. I'll mark and send back to you with comments)
- **Attendance and Participation: 5%** (showing up for class; asking questions; making posts in common room, etc.)

Note: All texts marked with an asterisk (*) are to be found in the Additional Readings Packages available for you to download and print from the website.

Michaelmas Term		
Week 1	September 7	Introduction to the Medieval period: history, language, literature, culture. Overview of tutorial. Reading and discussion of “Caedmon’s Hymn*.” Common Room.
Week 2	September 14	Introduction to Old English poetry conventions, themes, etc. The Elegies: “The Wanderer*,” “The Seafarer,”* “The Wife’s Complaint*,” “The Husband’s Message*.” Common Room.
Week 3	September 21	The Elegies Cont. “The Ruin*,” “Durham,”* “Deor,”* Common Room.
Week 4	September 28	Riddles and Wisdom: “Riddles*,” “Gnomic Verses.”* Common Room.
Week 5	October 12	On the Battlefield: “The Battle of Maldon*,” “The Fight at Finnsburh,”* “The Battle of Brunanburh.”* Timed Writing #1.
Week 6	October 19	Beowulf ll. 1-989. Common Room.
Week 7	October 26	Beowulf: ll. 990-1998. Common Room.
Week 8	November 2	Beowulf: ll. 1999-3182. Common Room.
Week 9	November 9	“The Dream of the Rood” * and Excerpts from Bede’s <i>Ecclesiastical History of the English People</i> * Common Room.
Week 10	November 16	The End of English? The Effects of the Norman Conquest of English Literature: Excerpts from <i>The Anglo-Saxon Chronicles.</i> * Common Room.
Week 11	November 23	Chaucer: The Canterbury Tales: Introduction to Chaucer; <i>General Prologue.</i> Common Room.
Week 12	November 30	The Canterbury Tales: The Nun’s Priest’s Tale. Common Room.
Week 13	December 7	The Canterbury Tales: The Wife of Bath’s Tale. Common Room. Essay #1 due next week.
Week 14	December 14	Essay #1 Due. The Canterbury Tales: The Franklin’s Tale
<i>Christmas Break-No Classes</i>	<i>No classes December 16-January 10</i>	<i>Christmas Break-No Classes</i>
Epiphany Term		
Week 15	January 11	Medieval Romance: Introduction. <i>Sir Orfeo*</i> (Tolkien). Common Room.
Week 16	January 18	<i>Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*</i> (Tolkien) (Part I-II). Common Room.
Week 17	January 25	<i>Sir Gawain and the Green Knight</i> (Part II-IV)

Week 18	February 1	King Arthur: Introduction. <i>King Arthur and His Knights of the Round Table</i> (pp. 3-50) Common Room.
Week 19	February 8	<i>King Arthur and His Knights of the Round Table</i> (pp. 51-89) Common Room. Timed Writing #2
Week 20	February 15	<i>King Arthur and His Knights of the Round Table</i> (pp. 117-212) Common Room.
Week 21	February 22	<i>King Arthur and His Knights of the Round Table.</i> (pp. 213-306) Common Room.
Week 22	March 1	<i>King Arthur and His Knights of the Round Table.</i> (pp. 307-385) Essay #2 due after March Break. Common Room.
<i>March Break-No Classes</i>	<i>No classes week of March 14th</i>	<i>March Break-No Classes</i>
Lent Term		
Week 23	March 22	Medieval Theatre: Introduction. <i>The Chester Play of Noah.</i> Common Room Chat. Essay #2 due today
Week 24	March 29	<i>The Wakefield Second Shepherd's Play.</i> Common Room Chat.
Week 25	April 5	<i>Everyman.</i> Common Room Chat.
Week 26	April 12	<i>The Harrowing of Hell.</i> Timed Writing #3
<i>Easter Break-No Classes</i>	<i>No classes week of April 18th</i>	<i>Easter Break-No Classes</i>
Easter Term¹		
Week 27	April 26	Middle English Lyrics: Introduction. "Spring," "Summer is Ycumen In," "Separated Lovers," "He is Far," "Divine Love." Common Room Chat.
Week 28	May 3	"The Thrush and the Nightingale," "The Maid of the Moor," "A Woman Sat Weeping," "I Sing of a Maiden," "Of One That Is So Fair and Bright," "Adam Lay Y'bounden." Timed Writing #4.
Week 29	May 10	"The Agincourt Carol," "Bring Us in Good Ale," "All Too Late," "I Have Set My Heart So High," "Corpus Christi Carol." Common Room Chat.
Week 30	May 17	Medieval Ballads: Introduction. "The Cherry Tree Carol," "The Two Magicians," "The Carpenter's Wife."
Week 31	May 24	"The Unquiet Grave," "Lord Randal," "The Birth of Robin Hood," "Sir Patrick Spence." Essay #3 due next week. Common Room Chat.
Week 32	May 31	Essay #3 due. Beyond Medieval Literature: Class discussion, reflections, suggestions for further study.

Required Texts

¹ All Middle English Lyrics and Medieval Ballads will be provided in a PDF course booklet available for download from the Caedmon Tutorial website.

- Additional Readings Course Packages (one per term provided in PDF by tutor; download and print from website. Available on the “Medieval Resources” page.)
- Chaucer, Geoffrey. [*The Canterbury Tales*](#). Edited and Translated by A. Kent Hleatt and Constance Hleatt. (Note: this edition contains the original Middle English on one side and a Modern English translation on the other).
- [*Beowulf*](#). Bilingual Edition. Trans. Seamus Heaney. New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2000.
- Green, Roger. [*King Arthur and His Knights of the Round Table*](#). Puffin UK, 2008.
- Crawley, A.C. [*Everyman and Medieval Miracle Plays*](#). Everyman Paperbacks, 1993.