British Literature
Semester One, Week Two
Assignments Due 9/09/13

Quiz: Next Class on World-view identification - to study re-read about worldview in your textbook and study the Worldview Review section Lesson 2, pg. 35-36 (Stobaugh).

Quiz: (PH) Take home quiz next week on The Old English Period. Study from Study Guide

*Record: _____5 new vocabulary words (Remember format: Word, definition, use it in a sentence)

Read: (PH) If you didn't do this reading last week, read "The Middle Ages" @ tabbnet.com/britlit. Go to Week 1 Handouts- Read all the way to "Bede". This information should be helpful to you when you are answering essay questions. _____Fill out "Old English Study Guide" as you read.

____Lesson 3 (Stobaugh) - Middle Ages Part I

____The Middle English Period @tabbnet.com/britlit. Fill out Study Guide as you read.

____(P) The Canterbury Tales Excerpt (General Prologue and The Nun Priest's Tale: Prologue and Tale) @tabbnet.com/britlit as you read be thinking about "Were Chaucer's characters realistic pictures of Medieval people?"

Chaucer uses a unique literary device in telling The Canterbury Tales with many characters gathered together, each telling stories. This was used earlier by Boccaccio in the Decameron, a collection of 100 tales told by a group of 10 people fleeing plague-infested Florence. Also called a "frame story".

____(H) Preview Essay prompts on Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, Lesson 4 (Stobaugh)

You will be journaling (no essay) about 1 from the lesson.

____(H) Sir Gawain and the Green Knight @tabbnet.com/britlit - Week 2

____(P) Information on Rhyming Couplets (on back)

____(P) Handout on Kennings.

*Answer: _____The Ecclesiastical. . . Lesson 2, Biblical Application 'A' or 'C' as a one page essay.

Be SURE to include an outline. ALL essays require an outline or 5 points are automatically deducted.

____(P) The following questions about The Canterbury Tales

General Prologue
1. What are your thoughts and reflections
2. What is the central symbol (introduced at line 12)?
3. Where are they headed?
4. What do you think of the characters?
5. Which ones stand out in your mind?
6. How do you see them as a reflection of the corrupt society Chaucer is ridiculing?
7. How do Chaucer's descriptions of the outside appearance of the pilgrims (dress and physical attributes) reveal their inner nature?
8. Which of the pilgrims does Chaucer admire most? Why?
9. Chaucer is describing a type of person more than an individual. Explain.

The Nun Priest's Tale
1. Thoughts? observations? Questions?
2. What Biblical account might this tale symbolize or retell? How? Give examples and carry them throughout.
3. What similarities to a Middle English Romance can you make?
4. The introduction to this tale stated, "The satiric potentials of the beast fable are obvious: the very notion that animals can behave in a human way is deflating to human pride. Do you agree or disagree and why?
5. What is a Nun's Priest? How does a Nun Priest compare to Chanticleer?
6. Discuss the color symbolism in the tale. Locate references to color in lines 1-87 and discuss their meaning in terms of the themes of the tale. Keep in mind the general significance of the colors red and white and darkness/blackness in the Bible.
7. What is the obvious moral theme?
8. What is the more subtle theme of the story?
9. What is Chanticleer’s great fault?
10. What is the redeeming quality that prevents his destruction?

Sir Gawain (H)
1. What was important in the Chivalric code?
2. What kind of Hero was Sir Gawain?
3. How is the poem a satire of manners and, at the same time, a reverent and profoundly Christian
celebration of Judeo-Christian characteristics?

4. Pick any of the following and write a thesis statement.

1. The Powerful Female Figure: The Role of Women in Sir Gawain and the Green Knight
2. Gawain’s Likeability: A Character Analysis of Gawain
3. The Role of Games in Sir Gawain and the Green Knight
4. Sir Gawain and the Green Knight as a Morality Tale

Fill-In: ___(PH) Study Guide on website The Old English Period. DO NOT TURN IN TO ME. KEEP TO STUDY

*Write: ___(P) A Mock Epic. Don’t forget to include at least 12 kennings and to underline them. Your mock epic must be at least 1 page long, typed. You may use rhyming couplets for extra credit. (see student sample for example HO). Remember: The Nun’s Priest’s Tale is a mock epic. The intro. to this tale in your handouts has information on the mock epic.

Listen: __ to this sample of Beowulf being read. There is text of the reading to follow on the next page. You can find it at tabbnet.com/britlit Week 2 Beowulf Audio Sample.

Discussion Prep:
___Be prepared to discuss your work from this week
___Week 2 people bring a passage from Mere Christianity which is meaningful to you or stood out in some way and be prepared to read it to the class and share your thoughts on it.
___Bring Stobaugh

Rhyming Couplet and Quatrain
A rhyming couplet is a set of lines, back to back, that rhyme. Usually they have the same meter so that they appear as a coherent whole.

Example: Geoffrey Chaucer’s The Canterbury Tales is written in rhyming couplets. (Beware, though: it is in Middle English).

From the prologue:
Singing he was, or fluting all the day;
He was as fresh as is the month of May.

This couplet is in iambic pentameter.

A rhyming quatrain is a set of four lines that follow a rhyme scheme. The rhyme schemes could be:
AABB—(the first and second lines rhyme with each other and the third and fourth lines rhyme with each other. In other words, a pair of rhyming couplets together)
ABAB—(the first and third lines rhyme with each other and the second and fourth lines rhyme with each other)
ABBA—(the first and fourth lines rhyme with each other and the second and third rhyme with each other)
ABCB—(the second and fourth rhyme with each other).

Again, quatrains usually have a given meter so that they sound like they flow together.

Some examples: The Hippopotamus by Ogden Nash (my favorite poet of all time)

Behold the hippopotamus!
We laugh at how he looks to us,
And yet in moments dank and grim,
I wonder how we look to him.

Peace, peace, thou hippopotamus!
We really look all right to us,
As you no doubt delight the eye
Of other hippopotami.

Note the AABB rhyme scheme.

Here’s Look Back on Time with Kindly Eyes
by Emily Dickinson

Look back on time with kindly eyes,
He doubtless did his best;
How softly sinks his trembling sun
In human nature's west!

This is an ABCB rhyme scheme.

**Vital Statistics on Rhyming Couplets**

- **Rhyme Scheme:** aabbccddeeffg, etc
- **Length of verse:** Unlimited. *The Knight's Tale* alone is over 3000 lines.
- **Uses:** The first use in English seems to be in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, in which the form is used for long narrative poetry. Shakespeare and some Renaissance poets occasionally use rhymed couplets in the speeches of their plays.
- **Subjects:** Almost anything. Chaucer uses rhymed couplets to tell beast fables, bawdy stories called fabliaux, and chivalric romances. The 18th century poets often used heroic couplets for narrative poems, often satiric ones, and Alexander Pope's *Essay on Man* uses heroic couplet for philosophical discussion.

- **Examples:**
  - Geoffrey Chaucer
    - The General Prologue to the *Canterbury Tales*
    - *The Knight's Tale*
    - *The Miller's Tale*
    - *The Nun's Priest's Tale*
  - John Lydgate, Preface to the Siege of Thebes
  - Christopher Marlowe, "Hero and Leander"
  - Alexander Pope
    - *The Rape of the Lock*
    - *Essay on Criticism*