

Reading List for English Medieval Literature (12th to the 16th Century) as a Historical Field

[Students standing in this historical field are encouraged to demonstrate some knowledge of literature from the Old English Field as well as History of the English Language as background.]

Primary Texts:

Geoffrey Chaucer

The Canterbury Tales

Troilus and Criseyde

Dream Visions:

Book of the Duchess

The Parliament of Fouls

The House of Fame

The Legend of Good Women, including the F-text of the Prologue

Selected lyrics

Thomas Hoccleve

Selections from *Regiment of Princes*

John Gower

Confessio Amantis

William Langland

Piers Plowman B-text, with some consideration of differences in the A- and C-texts

The Pearl Poet

Pearl, Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, Patience, and Cleanness

Arthurian Literature

Sir Gawain: Eleven Romances and Tales (METS)

The Alliterative Morte Arthure and *The Stanzaic Morte Arthur*

Sir Perceval of Galles

Chretien de Troyes, *Ywain*

The Works of Malory

Middle English Romances (METS volumes)

Middle English Breton Lays

King Horn, Havelok the Dane, Bevis of Hampton, Athelstan

Sir Isumbras, Octavian, Sir Eglamour, Sir Triamour

Amis and Amiloun, Robert of Cisyle, Sir Amadace

The Storie of Asneth and *The Pistel of Swete Susan*

Floris and Blancheflour, The Squire of Low Degree, The Tournament of Tottenham

Selection of Middle English Lyrics. Explore *Middle English Lyrics*, ed. Maxwell Luria and Richard L Hoffman (Norton Critical Edition) to review 245 poems on many subjects.

The Gest of Robin Hood, Sir Gamelyn, and other selected Robin Hood Tales

At least two debate poems, such as Clanvowe's *The Boke of Cupid* (aka *The Cuckoo and the Nightingale*), *The Debate of the Body and Soul*, or *The Owl and the Nightingale*

At least two political or ecclesiastical satires, such as *Piers Plowman's Creed*, *Richard the Redeless*, or *Mum and the Sothsegge, Why I Can't be a Nun*

Medieval Drama

One complete cycle (N-Town or York) and selections from others, including Townley and Chester (Bevington's *Medieval Drama* provides a useful guideline here)

The Digby *Mary Magdalene* and *The Conversion of St. Paul*

Croxton's *Play of the Sacrament*

Castle of Perseverence, Mankind, and Everyman

One or two early humanist plays, such as *Johan Johan, The Play of the Weather, Wit and Science, Ralph Roister Doister, Gammer Girton's Needle, or Patient Grissel*

Mandeville's Travels

Selections from John Lydgate's works, such as *The Siege of Thebes, Troy Book, Isopes Fabules, or The Mummings.*

Religious and Meditational Writing

The Cloud of Unknowing

The Shewings of Julian of Norwich

The Book of Margery Kempe

Selections from *The Ancrene Wisse*

Selected Saints Lives, including *St. Erkenwald*

Selections from Wycliffite writings, including Prologue to the Bible, chapter 15

Scottish Poetry

Selections from the Poetry of Robert Henryson (especially *The Testament of Cresseid*)

Selections from the Works of William Dunbar

James I, *Kingis Quair*

Selections from Gavin Douglas, including *Palis of Honoure*

Continental and Anglo Norman Literature (in Middle English or Modern English translation):

Boethius, *The Consolation of Philosophy*

Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meun, *The Romance of the Rose*

Geoffrey of Monmouth, *The History of the Kings of Britain*

Christine of Pisan, *The City of Ladies*

Selections from Chrétien de Troyes

Selections from Marie de France

Anyone working in this historical field should be able to demonstrate some awareness of the importance of Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio to the study of Middle English Literature.