CHARACTERS

1. Song of Roland

- Charlemagne – The Holy Roman Emperor. Makes war against the Saracens (Muslims) living in Spain. Charlemagne is gifted with prophecy and is given a strong band of warriors in order to establish the story.
- Turpin – The Archbishop of Rheims. The force of the Church within Charlemagne’s army. Delivers an inspirational speech to the troops right before they are about to be ambushed telling them to ‘Fight for the King, fight for the Church, and fight because the enemy is at the doorstep.’
- Oliveir – Friend of Roland. Representation of wisdom within the story. During the battle asks Roland to sound his trumpet three times in order to signal the King for help, however Roland refuses to do so.
- Roland – Nephew of Charlemagne. Leads the Rear Guard of the Holy Roman Army as it journeys back to the Empire. Right hand of Charlemagne. Roland becomes the target of Ganelon after he anoints Ganelon to discuss the terms of peace with the Saracens, Ganelon believes this is an attempt on Roland’s part to be rid of Ganelon. Ganelon plots with the Saracens to ambush the rear guard which Roland will undoubtedly lead.
- Ganelon – Stepfather to Roland. Plots to attack the rear guard of the Holy Roman Army with the Saracens under Marsile, in order to take vengeance upon Roland.
- Pinnabel – Member of the Holy Roman Army. Defends Ganelon when he is tried by Charlemagne for treason. Succeeds in nearly swaying the Judges verdict until Thierry comes before the Court and opposes Pinnabel. In order to decide the matter, the two men fight one another. Although Pinnabel is the stronger warrior, God intervenes giving Thierry victory.
- Thierry – Member of the Holy Roman Army. Opposes Pinnabel’s attempt at influencing the Judge’s decision in regards to Ganelon being tried for treason. Is successful in fighting and killing Pinnabel through the will of God.
- Marsilla – Saracen King of Spain. Plots to get Charlemagne to leave Spain by promising that he himself with convert to Christianity and become a vassal to Charlemagne, but plans to go back on his promise once Charlemagne leaves. His hand is removed by Roland, he later dies from his wound after returning to his capital of Saragossa.
- Blancandrin – Wise Pagan who counsels Marsilla to get Charlemagne to leave Spain through trickery and deceit.

2. Beowulf

- Beowulf – Hero of the Geats. Comes to the aid of the Geats allies, King Hrothgar, King of the Danes. Seeks to defeat Grendel who has been terrorizing the Danes by plaguing their great hall Heorot. Defeats Grendel’s mother with a giant’s sword in her lair after she tries to avenge the death of her son. Later becomes the King of the Geats, after his liegeland dies. Leads the Geats to their most prosperous era, no country attacks the Geats out of fear and respect for Beowulf. Dies after he fights and kills a Dragon who is terrorizing his people.
- Unferth – Danish warrior who becomes jealous of the fame that Beowulf receives among his people. Begins to taunt Beowulf saying that he lost a swimming match to Breca. Beowulf then accuses Unferth of drunkenness and recounts what actually happened while swimming, which included defeating sea monsters that had pulled him under which only he could do.
4. **Wiglaf** – Kinsman and Thane to Beowulf. Only warrior to stick beside Beowulf as he faces the giant. Perfect example of heroism as he is willing to slay the dragon but more importantly save his lord. Reflection of Beowulf from younger years, testament to the future of heroism.

4. **Hrothgar** – King of the Danes. Wise ruler that understands the privileges and dangers of power, warns Beowulf against pride and that blessings have the ability to turn to grief.


4. **Grendel** – Demon descended from Cain. Terrorizes King Hrothgar and the Danes within their great mead hall Herot. His existence is part of the retribution exacted from God for Cain’s killing of Abel. Represents the ethos of vengeance that governs the world.

3. **Canterbury Tales**

4. **The Pardoner** – Pardoners were church workers who granted papal indulgences in exchange for charitable donations given to the church. Pardoners tended to be corrupt, taking money for themselves rather than for the church. This Pardoner carried a bag of fake relics including the ‘Veil of Mary’, has long greasy blond hair and is beardless. Complete hypocrite, excels at singing and preaching while within a church.

4. **Sir Russell** – The Fox who is able to capture the rooster Chanticleer through trickery and deceit. Allegorical figure for the Devil. Loses the Rooster when he in return is tricked into boasting about his capture of the fox, who escapes when he opens his mouth.

4. **Chanticleer** – The Heroic Rooster of the Nun’s Priest’s Tale. Has seven wives and is the most handsome of the roosters. Foolishly allows the Fox to trick him into being captured. Has a dream of his capture, but his wife Lady Pertelote tells him that dreams don’t matter.

4. **Lady Pertelote** – Chanticleer’s favorite wife, his equal in looks and talents. When Chanticleer has a dream about his capture, she tells him that dreams don’t matter and calls him a wuss.

4. **Nun’s Priest** – Vague character who can only be defined through his story of Chanticleer which describes him as being a witty self-effacing preacher.

4. **The Physician** – Best within his field of medicine. Can identify every disease and cure most of them. The Physician’s physical health is perfect, but his spiritual health is put into great question as he rarely consults the bible and clings to his wealth.

4. **The Prioress** – Described as modest and quiet, charitable and compassionate. Shares a tale about the boy whose throat is slit by Jews but continually is able to sing praises about Mary, the boy is able to do so because Christ wills that miracles continue to give testament to his glory.

4. **Le Morte D’Arthur**

4. **Arthur** – Son of Uther Pendragon. Gifted with the sword Excalibur through Merlin. Raised by Sir Ector through his childhood. Becomes the mightiest King to rule the Britains.

4. **Merlin** – Magician who counsels King Arthur. Bewitches Uther to appear as Igwayne’s husband as he comes into her bed chamber, their union leads to the birth of Arthur.

4. **Galahad** – Elayne and Lancelot’s son. Knight of the Round Table. Fills the Sege Perilous, which is a seat that no other Knight of the Round Table has been able to fill before. Able to pull the sword from the floating rock which gives him the name of Best Knight in the World, but curses him with a destiny where the sword will cause a grievous wound. Accomplishes the quest for the Holy Grail.

4. **Gawain** – A son of King Lot. Knight of the Round Table. Strong friends with Launcelot, who happens to kill him in battle. Fails the quest for the Holy Grail because he refuses to offer penance to God for his sins. First to declare that he will quest for the Grail. Loses a duel with Launcelot after King Arthur declares war upon him, he asks Launcelot to kill him for his loss.
- **Morgan le Fay** – Uther Pendragon’s third daughter. Tries to kill Arthur so that her husband Accolon can become King. Familiar with Witchcraft. At one point enchants Sir Launcelot within her castle. Is present at Arthur’s funeral.

- **Sir Bors** – Knight of the Round Table. One of the Finest Knights in the land, his glory comes from the Quest for the Holy Grail. Proves himself worthy to witness the Grail alongside Percival, Lancelot, and Galahad. Is one of virtuous character, moment where he resists the temptation of sleeping with a maiden after she threatens to commit suicide if he does not. Sir Bors, Percival, and Galahad are the only knights to achieve the Holy Grail, they take the Grail to an island in the Middle East, where Percival and Galahad die. Bors is the only one to return.

- **Sir Percival** – Raised by his mother in a wilderness outside of the workings of corrupted men, but desires to become a knight when some pass on through. Becomes a Knight of the Round Table and journeys on the quest for the Holy Grail alongside Sir Bors and Sir Galahad. Becomes a monk for a year after the Holy Grail Quest.

- **Lancelot** – Considered the Greatest Knight in the world, remains faithful to Guinevere throughout his entire life. Is banished from Camelot by Guinevere after he is tricked into sleeping with Elayne who gives birth to Galahad. When banished, Lancelot goes half mad with grief, comes back to Camelot after Galahad successfully finds the Grail. Lancelot knew that he was not able to achieve the Holy Grail, because he knew his own secret sin. In a scene he is transfixed after sleeping by a stone cross, during this scene, the Holy Grail passes by him but he is unable to attain it.

- **Sangreal** – The Holy Grail.

5. **1001 Nights**

- **Shahrazad** – Daughter of the Vizier, who goes before the King with a plan that will keep her alive unlike the other women who had been killed by the King. Tells the King a story that continues for 1001 nights, in that time she has a few children for the King and he decides that she is worthy to continue living and be his wife.

- **Ma’aruf** – A poor and honest cobbler who had a wretched wife, Fatimah. He ran away from the country after she sought to frame him for abuse. He was crying in a hovel when a Jinnee heard him and took him to a faraway land. There he reunited with a long lost friend who became rich through deceiving the people about a caravan bringing his riches. So Ma’aruf copied him, eventually he married the King’s daughter. But after time the King became skeptical and so upon hearing this, Ma’aruf ran away from the city. Upon fleeing, Ma’aruf came across a chamber filled with treasure and a Jinnee. So Ma’aruf traveled back to the city and lived happily ever after, becoming King himself.

- **Fatimah** – Wife of Ma’aruf. Wretched woman whose greed was tremendous. Sought the demise of Ma’aruf.

6. **Sir Gawain**

- **Gawain** – Knight of the Round Table who decides to accept the Green Knight’s challenge in order to save King Arthur from having to receive a wound “a year and a day later”. He severs the Green Knight’s head, but he survives. So a year later Gawain seeks out the Green Knight at the Green Chapel to serve his end of the bargain. Gawain slays many beasts in the wilderness, but at one point finds himself at a place where he cannot continue, so he prays to the Virgin Mary for help. Afterwards he sees a castle, through the wilderness. Gawain goes to the castle and is met by the Lord Bertilak. Bertilak is extremely generous to Gawain and tells him to rest at the castle for a while. He leaves Gawain there while going out for a hunt telling him to have anything for the castle and he will trade him whatever he receives on the hunt in return. Gawain is tempted greatly by the
Lady of the Castle. After Gawain refuses to compromise over the course of several days, he is met with his doom. The one compromise he makes is by taking a green girdle which is supposed to protect him from man-made weapons. At the Green Chapel, the Green Knight does not cut off Gawain’s head, for he has be admirable whilst staying in Lord Bertilak’s castle, for the Green Knight is Lord Bertilak. All Gawain receives is a scratch for the girdle wrapped around him.

- **Green Knight** – Lord Bertilak under a spell by Morgan le Fay in order to identify the character which exists within Arthur’s knights. Spares Gawain’s life, and proves to be a very generous and grand knight.
- **King Arthur** – King of Camelot and the Britains. Hosted the great Games in Camelot during New Years, went up to meet the Green Knight’s challenge, but is saved from having to do so through the courage and fealty of Sir Gawain.
- **Lady of the Castle** – Wife of the Lord Bertilak. Attempted seducing Gawain several times over his stay within the castle, however it was just a ruse by Lord Bertilak who was testing his character as the Green Knight.

**TERMS**

1. **Caesura** – a break, especially a pause, usually near the middle of the verse, marked by a double vertical line.
2. **Kenning** – a conventional poetic phrase used for or in addition to the usual name for a person, place, or thing
3. **Alliteration** – the commencement of two or more stressed syllables of a word group either with the same consonant sound or sound group
4. **Syncretism** – the merging of two or more categories in a specified environment into one (typically done as by the historical changes in language)
5. **Iambic Pentameter** – a common meter in poetry containing an unrhymed line of five feet, each foot containing an unaccented syllable and an accented syllable
6. **Simony** – the making of profit out of sacred things
7. **Requiem** – any musical service, hymn, or dirge for the repose of the dead
8. **Fealty** – Faithfulness
9. **Usury** – the lending or practice of lending money at a ridiculous interest rate
10. **Allusion** – an incidental mention of something, either directly or by implication
11. **Piety** – reverence for God or devout fulfillment of religious obligations
12. **Indulgence** – a remission of the temporal punishment for sin after its guilt has been forgiven
13. **Isogloss** – a line on a map marking the limits of an area within which a feature of speech occurs, as the use of a particular word or pronunciation.

**ESSAYS**

1. **Song of Roland**
   - *How does the story demonstrate the medieval concept that “right makes might”?*
     - Within the story the theme “right makes might” is clearly demonstrated. For instance the fact that the Christian’s under Charlemagne have been so successful against the Saracens and they are now left to their last fortress, testifies to the fact that God is behind the “right”. Another demonstration of this comes in the fight between Pinnabel and Thierry in which Thierry is victorious in battle over the stronger warrior Pinnabel because God willed it.

   - *How does Turpin fit the Medieval conception of the godly man?*
     - Within medieval cultures there are two common themes and important characteristics which all men ascribe to, God and Glory. Within the story of the Song of Roland, Turpin fits
this classification as an Archbishop who is serving God while also fighting for the King. Turpin gives glory to God, and to Charlemagne who all believes is blessed by God and is His holy messenger. Turpin fights alongside the common man, and thus shows that God is still there upon the battlefield, caring for them just the same.

- **How does his sermon satisfy the needs of those about to do battle?**
  - All the men who are about to fight are worried about one thing, death and their future in Purgatory or Hell. Turpin, the Archbishop, eases their worries through his speech. In his speech he declares that all men who die fighting for the King that day will die as holy martyrs, which is something to be praised in Catholic Tradition. In his speech he also tells the men that if they repent now of their sins they will not stay in purgatory as long. He rallies their will to fight by declaring, “Fight for the King, Fight for the Church, and Fight because the enemy is in front of us.”

2. **Beowulf**

- **How does Beowulf demonstrate a model Christian?**
  - Beowulf demonstrates being a model Christian in several ways:
    - Through serving the King and giving him glory
    - Through being humble with regards to his great defeats of Grendel and his Mother.
    - Through ascribing to the truth that all earthly treasures are a gift from the Lord.
    - Through sharing the wealth that God has blessed him generously with others.
    - Through acknowledging God as his protector in battle
    - Gives credit to God for presenting opportunities before him, like with the Giant’s sword with which he killed the Mother of Grendel.

- **How does he succeed and fail in demonstrating Philippians 4:13?**
  - God indeed blessed Beowulf with strength, and he gave credit to God numerous times about how the strength came from God. Every success he realized was a gift from God. However the ways in which he failed God would probably be his failure to prepare disciples. He perishes in his battle against the Dragon alongside one of the twelve men that he brought along to fight. He was a terrible leader and relied upon his own power to try and lead the people; however God wanted him to rely upon His strength. Another way in which this can be demonstrated is through the last battle and his motives for fighting at all, which was all wrapped up in pride and revenge.

- **What part does Wiglaf serve in providing a model for the hearer/reader?**
  - Wiglaf serves as a reminder of the debt of kinship and the importance of remaining loyal to one’s Lord. As Christian’s upon this earth we are aliens, completely foreign to this land, and so God calls each and every one of us to serve and honor the governing powers over us, because it serves as a witness of who Christ is. Wiglaf also serves to keep others accountable so which is something that we as brothers are called to do.

- **How does the text demonstrate Christian authorship?**
  - For one instance, the story of Beowulf is written during a time period in which the entire European continent is ruled under the banner of Christianity. Within the Germanic people, there is an emphasis placed upon family and raising good, strong children. This is a Christian perspective. Another demonstration is the fact that Beowulf attributes almost all of his victories to the strength of the Lord working through his life.

3. **Canterbury Tales**
“But Christ, whose glory you find in books, will it be also kept in mind...” What is the source and significance of this statement?

- The source of this quote is the Little Boy whose throat was cut and who was left for dead after being attacked by a group of Jews. The significance of this statement is that we ought to keep the Glory of Christ who is our Lord and our King upon our mind frame at all times. Through thinking about the glory of Christ we are driven to live different lives of meaning for God.

From “The Prioress’ Tale” what is the honor due Mary?

- The honor that Mary is due comes from her faith in the promise given to her by God. When she is told about God’s plan for the baby that will come through her, she at first is skeptical as is a typical human reaction, especially since she was a virgin. However she replies, “I am the Lord’s Servant, may it be to me as you have said.” She chooses to believe in this promise and have faith in that God that can do all things, and for that she deserves honor.

“From the “Nun’s Priest’s Tale,” what is the significance of dreams?

- Dreams are significant in the fact that God has used dreams as messages to others and they can be used as ways to disclose His will. Dreams are also important because a great deal of our time here upon this earth is spent asleep and thus a great deal is spent dreaming. As Christians this is an important realization because dreams are to honor God just as all of our life is to do so also. We might not be able to will that we would dream good things, but we have the power and often utilize the power to dream bad things; this is what we are called not to do, and honor God through even our dreams.

What do you hold to be the thing which women most want from men?

- What women desire most is the sovereignty to reign over their husband and lover, which is what the book ascribes as truth. While I can find truth in this statement, I believe that within this truth is also the desire to be respected and to be needed.

What are the right relationships between husband and wife?

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What is the relationship between the messenger and the message?

- The messenger should only relate messages that they view as truth through their intellect and through their actions as well. A messenger ought not relay a message that he cannot himself ascribe to. An audience is less apt to listen to a messenger if they know that the messenger goes against that which he preaches and thus has no right informing the people of the message at all.

4. Le Morte De’ Arthur

What was the nature of the quest for the Holy Grail?

- The quest for the Holy Grail was a quest to prove that strength of arms was not enough to accomplish the task at hand. The quest was a lesson and a reminder to us all that God calls us to live according to a certain standard and that unless we live that standard out we are not truly serving His purposes. The Holy Grail testifies that the salvation of the soul is more important than live within the physical realm.

What was the relationship between spiritual purity and worldly success in battle?

- There were those who decided to live spiritually pure and blessings were placed upon them due to the way in which they lived their life. However those that chose the ways of this world were also successful in battle, however not as successful, for they always had upon their consciousness a reminder of their sin and their inefficiency. The spiritually pure
on the other hand were able to accept the King's praise and serve him accordingly without
the ill favor of dark secrets.

5. **Sir Gawain and the Green Knight**
   - *How does Gawain demonstrate nobility in the story?*
     - First off Gawain decides to protect his King by taking the challenge of the Green Knight
       upon himself rather than risk the life of his liege lord. Gawain also displays nobility through
       his respect of the Host/Guest relationship and his ability to withstand the sexual
       temptations of the Lady of the Castle.
   - *How does the testing at the Castle serve to complete Gawain?*
     - The testing at the castle serves to humbling Gawain and displaying that God's grace is
       more important than any power which we ourselves possess. Beforehand Gawain relied
       heavily upon his strength, like for instance when he cuts off the Green Knight's head, that
       is upon his own strength. However when he is caught for taking the green girdle and not
       gifting it back to Lord Bertilak, he sins and for that sin is given a cut upon the neck. Later
       the green belt serves as a reminder to why he needs the grace of God.
   - *What lesson does the wearing of the belt serve Gawain?*
     - The Belt symbolizes that Gawain could not rely upon his own strength in order to remain in
       this world, and that it is only through the Grace of God forgiving his sins that he is able to
       live a life worth living. The belt reminds him to live without sin.
   - *What lesson does the wearing of the belt serve in Arthur’s castle?*
     - By wearing the belt, the Court signifies that they support the service that Gawain has done.
       They also signify that they will war against sin as well and that they will serve God and
       remain thankful for His grace within their lives.