

## **Key Stage 3**

### **English Career Resources**

(Career Education Guidance Objective 7)

#### **The Changing World of Work**

##### **Introduction**

This short film provides an overview of the unit of work.

Click [on the thumbnail](#) to play the VIDEO.



## **Starter**

This activity introduces students to the selected pilgrims and helps them with definitions of their occupations.

The task is to match the pilgrim with a definition of their occupation, using PDF.

If you have access to the online [Oxford English Dictionary](#) students could look up the definitions themselves

**A** CLERK

**1** One whose occupation is the preparation of food for the table.

**B** COOK

**2** A bailiff, steward, or overseer; a minor officer appointed by a landowner to superintend his estates, tenants, or workmen.

**C** DOCTOR OF PHYSIC

**3** A person presented to an ecclesiastical living by a patron and admitted and instituted to it by the bishop; a rector.

**D** HOUSEWIFE

**4** A man (or woman) of book learning, one able to read and write; a scholar.

**E** KNIGHT

**5** A man who follows, guides, or drives a plough. Hence more generally: a farm labourer; a rustic or peasant.

**F** MANCIPLE

**6** A person whose occupation is the purchase and sale of goods or commodities for profit.

**G** MERCHANT

**7** A woman (usually married) who manages or directs the affairs of her household; the mistress of a family; the wife of a householder.

**H** MILLER

**8** A master mariner; the master of a ship; a skipper.

**I** PARSON

**9** An officer or servant who purchases provisions for a college, Inn of Court, monastery, etc.

**J** PLOUGHMAN

**10** A person who grinds corn; a person whose trade is the grinding of corn in a mill; the proprietor or tenant of a corn-mill.

**K** REEVE

**11** A doctor of medicine.

**L** SHIPMAN













**12** One raised to honourable military rank by the king or other qualified person; a military servant of the king or other person of rank.

## ANSWERS

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L
4	1	11	7	12	9	6	10	3	5	2	8

## Recordings

Read some or all of these portraits (in Modern English) of selected pilgrims from Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*

KNIGHT 	MERCHANT 	CLERK 	COOK 
SHIPMAN 	DOCTOR 	HOUSEWIFE 	PARSON 
PLOUGHMAN 	MILLER 	MANCIPLE 	REEVE 



**A CLERK** from Oxford was with us also,  
Who'd turned to getting knowledge, long ago.  
As meagre was his horse as is a rake,  
Nor he himself too fat, I'll undertake,  
But he looked hollow and went soberly.  
Right threadbare was his overcoat; for he  
Had got him yet no churchly benefice,  
Nor was so worldly as to gain office.  
For he would rather have at his bed's head  
Some twenty books, all bound in black and red,  
Of Aristotle and his philosophy  
Than rich robes, fiddle, or gay psaltery.  
Yet, and for all he was philosopher,  
He had but little gold within his coffer;  
But all that he might borrow from a friend  
On books and learning he would swiftly spend,  
And then he'd pray right busily for the souls  
Of those who gave him wherewithal for schools.  
Of study took he utmost care and heed.  
Not one word spoke he more than was his need;  
And that was said in fullest reverence  
And short and quick and full of high good sense.  
Pregnant of moral virtue was his speech;  
And gladly would he learn and gladly teach.



**A COOK** they had with them, just for the nonce,  
To boil the chickens with the marrow-bones,  
And flavour tartly and with galingale.  
Well could he tell a draught of London ale.  
And he could roast and seethe and broil and fry,  
And make a good thick soup, and bake a pie.  
But very ill it was, it seemed to me,  
That on his shin a deadly sore had he;  
For sweet blanc-mange, he made it with the best.



With us there was **A DOCTOR OF PHYSIC;**  
In all this world was none like him to pick  
For talk of medicine and surgery;  
For he was grounded in astronomy.  
He often kept a patient from the pall  
By horoscopes and magic natural.  
Well could he tell the fortune ascendent  
Within the houses for his sick patient.  
He knew the cause of every malady,  
Were it of hot or cold, of moist or dry,  
And where engendered, and of what humour;  
He was a very good practitioner.  
The cause being known, down to the deepest root,  
Anon he gave to the sick man his boot.  
Ready he was, with his apothecaries,  
To send him drugs and all electuaries;  
By mutual aid much gold they'd always won-  
Their friendship was a thing not new begun...



There was **A HOUSEWIFE** come from Bath, or near,  
Who- sad to say- was deaf in either ear.  
At making cloth she had so great a bent  
She bettered those of Ypres and even of Ghent.  
In all the parish there was no goodwife  
Should offering make before her, on my life;  
And if one did, indeed, so wroth was she  
It put her out of all her charity.  
Her kerchiefs were of finest weave and ground;  
I dare swear that they weighed a full ten pound  
Which, of a Sunday, she wore on her head.  
Her hose were of the choicest scarlet red,  
Close gartered, and her shoes were soft and new.  
Bold was her face, and fair, and red of hue.  
She'd been respectable throughout her life,  
With five church'd husbands bringing joy and strife,  
Not counting other company in youth;  
But thereof there's no need to speak, in truth.  
Three times she'd journeyed to Jerusalem;  
And many a foreign stream she'd had to stem;  
At Rome she'd been, and she'd been in Boulogne,  
In Spain at Santiago, and at Cologne.  
She could tell much of wandering by the way...



**A KNIGHT** there was, and he a worthy man,  
Who, from the moment that he first began  
To ride about the world, loved chivalry,  
Truth, honour, freedom and all courtesy.  
Full worthy was he in his liege-lord's war,  
And therein had he ridden (none more far)  
As well in Christendom as heathenesse,  
And honoured everywhere for worthiness.  
At Alexandria, he, when it was won;  
Full oft the table's roster he'd begun  
Above all nations' knights in Prussia.  
In Latvia raided he, and Russia,  
No christened man so oft of his degree.  
In far Granada at the siege was he  
Of Algeciras, and in Belmarie.  
At Ayas was he and at Satalye  
When they were won; and on the Middle Sea  
At many a noble meeting chanced to be.  
Of mortal battles he had fought fifteen,  
And he'd fought for our faith at Tramissene  
Three times in lists, and each time slain his foe...



There was **A MANCIPLE** from an inn of court,  
To whom all buyers might quite well resort  
To learn the art of buying food and drink;  
For whether he paid cash or not, I think  
That he so knew the markets, when to buy,  
He never found himself left high and dry.  
Now is it not of God a full fair grace  
That such a vulgar man has wit to pace  
The wisdom of a crowd of learned men?  
Of masters had he more than three times ten,  
Who were in law expert and curious;  
Whereof there were a dozen in that house  
Fit to be stewards of both rent and land  
Of any lord in England who would stand  
Upon his own and live in manner good,  
In honour, debtless (save his head were wood),  
Or live as frugally as he might desire;  
These men were able to have helped a shire  
In any case that ever might befall;  
And yet this manciple outguessed them all.



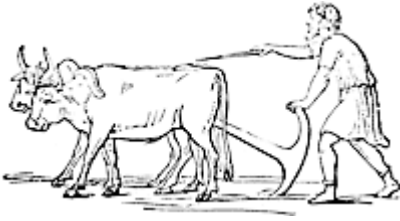
There was **A MERCHANT** with forked beard, and girt  
In motley gown, and high on horse he sat,  
Upon his head a Flemish beaver hat;  
His boots were fastened rather elegantly.  
His spoke his notions out right pompously,  
Stressing the times when he had won, not lost.  
He would the sea were held at any cost  
Across from Middleburgh to Orwell town.  
At money-changing he could make a crown.  
This worthy man kept all his wits well set;  
There was no one could say he was in debt,  
So well he governed all his trade affairs  
With bargains and with borrowings and with shares.  
Indeed, he was a worthy man withal,  
But, sooth to say, his name I can't recall.



**THE MILLER** was a stout churl, be it known,  
Hardy and big of brawn and big of bone;  
Which was well proved, for when he went on lam  
At wrestling, never failed he of the ram.  
He was a chunky fellow, broad of build;  
He'd heave a door from hinges if he willed,  
Or break it through, by running, with his head.  
His beard, as any sow or fox, was red,  
And broad it was as if it were a spade.  
Upon the coping of his nose he had  
A wart, and thereon stood a tuft of hairs,  
Red as the bristles in an old sow's ears;  
His nostrils they were black and very wide.  
A sword and buckler bore he by his side.  
His mouth was like a furnace door for size.  
He was a jester and could poetize,  
But mostly all of sin and ribaldries.  
He could steal corn and full thrice charge his fees;  
And yet he had a thumb of gold, begad.  
A white coat and blue hood he wore, this lad.  
A bagpipe he could blow well, be it known,  
And with that same he brought us out of town.



There was a good man of religion, too,  
**A COUNTRY PARSON**, poor, I warrant you;  
But rich he was in holy thought and work.  
He was a learned man also, a clerk,  
Who Christ's own gospel truly sought to preach;  
Devoutly his parishioners would he teach.  
Benign he was and wondrous diligent,  
Patient in adverse times and well content,  
As he was ofttimes proven; always blithe,  
He was right loath to curse to get a tithe,  
But rather would he give, in case of doubt,  
Unto those poor parishioners about,  
Part of his income, even of his goods.  
Enough with little, coloured all his moods.  
Wide was his parish, houses far asunder,  
But never did he fail, for rain or thunder,  
In sickness, or in sin, or any state,  
To visit to the farthest, small and great,  
Going afoot, and in his hand, a stave...



With him there was **A PLOUGHMAN**, was his brother,  
That many a load of dung, and many another  
Had scattered, for a good true toiler, he,  
Living in peace and perfect charity.  
He loved God most, and that with his whole heart  
At all times, though he played or plied his art,  
And next, his neighbour, even as himself.  
He'd thresh and dig, with never thought of pelf,  
For Christ's own sake, for every poor wight,  
All without pay, if it lay in his might.  
He paid his taxes, fully, fairly, well,  
Both by his own toil and by stuff he'd sell.  
In a tabard he rode upon a mare.



*The Steward*

**THE REEVE** he was a slender, choleric man  
Who shaved his beard as close as razor can.  
His hair was cut round even with his ears;  
His top was tonsured like a pulpiteer's.  
Long were his legs, and they were very lean,  
And like a staff, with no calf to be seen.  
Well could he manage granary and bin;  
No auditor could ever on him win.  
He could foretell, by drought and by the rain,  
The yielding of his seed and of his grain.  
His lord's sheep and his oxen and his dairy,  
His swine and horses, all his stores, his poultry,  
Were wholly in this steward's managing;  
And, by agreement, he'd made reckoning  
Since his young lord of age was twenty years;  
Yet no man ever found him in arrears.  
There was no agent, hind, or herd who'd cheat  
But he knew well his cunning and deceit;  
They were afraid of him as of the death...



There was **A SHIPMAN**, living far out west;  
For aught I know, he was of Dartmouth town.  
He sadly rode a hackney, in a gown,  
Of thick rough cloth falling to the knee.  
A dagger hanging on a cord had he  
About his neck, and under arm, and down.  
The summer's heat had burned his visage brown;  
And certainly he was a good fellow.  
Full many a draught of wine he'd drawn, I trow,  
Of Bordeaux vintage, while the trader slept.  
Nice conscience was a thing he never kept.  
If that he fought and got the upper hand,  
By water he sent them home to every land.  
But as for craft, to reckon well his tides,  
His currents and the dangerous watersides,  
His harbours, and his moon, his pilotage,  
There was none such from Hull to far Carthage.  
Hardy. and wise in all things undertaken,  
By many a tempest had his beard been shaken.  
He knew well all the havens, as they were,  
From Gottland to the Cape of Finisterre,  
And every creek in Brittany and Spain;  
His vessel had been christened Madeleine.

## **Questions 1**

These questions invite students to consider the work each pilgrim does and how Chaucer represents this, using close reading of the text to support their ideas.

Small groups could work on one portrait each before sharing with the whole class.

- **What occupation does this pilgrim have?**
- **In what kind of context do they carry on this occupation? City? Country? Elsewhere?**
- **Who do you think might pay them? A lot? A little?**
- **Is this pilgrim good at his/her job?**

## **Questions 2**

These questions invite comparison of Chaucer's Medieval world of work and today's world of work.

You might develop the discussion into contemporary issues of gender, diversity, industrialisation, post-industrialisation, globalisation, as student interest and experience allows.

- **What world of work does Chaucer represent? What kinds of occupation are in it?**
- **How does this compare with what you know about today's world of work?**
- **If Chaucer were alive today, what occupations would make for an up to date 'slice of life'?**

## Language

Having identified contemporary 'slice of life' occupations, the next task is for students to write their own pilgrim portrait e.g. a coffee barista, or a chugger, or whatever is familiar from their landscape.

You could develop the technical finesse with which this could be tackled by first exploring Chaucer's use of rhyme and metre, as illustrated here.

Pink arrows show  
rhyming couplets

A **COOK** they had with them, just for the nonce,  
To boil the chickens with the marrow-bones,  
And flavour tartly and with galingale.  
Well could he tell a draught of London ale.  
And he could roast and seethe and broil and fry,  
And make a good thick soup, and bake a pie.  
But very ill it was, it seemed to me,  
That on his shin a deadly sore had he;  
For sweet blanc-mange, he made it with the best.

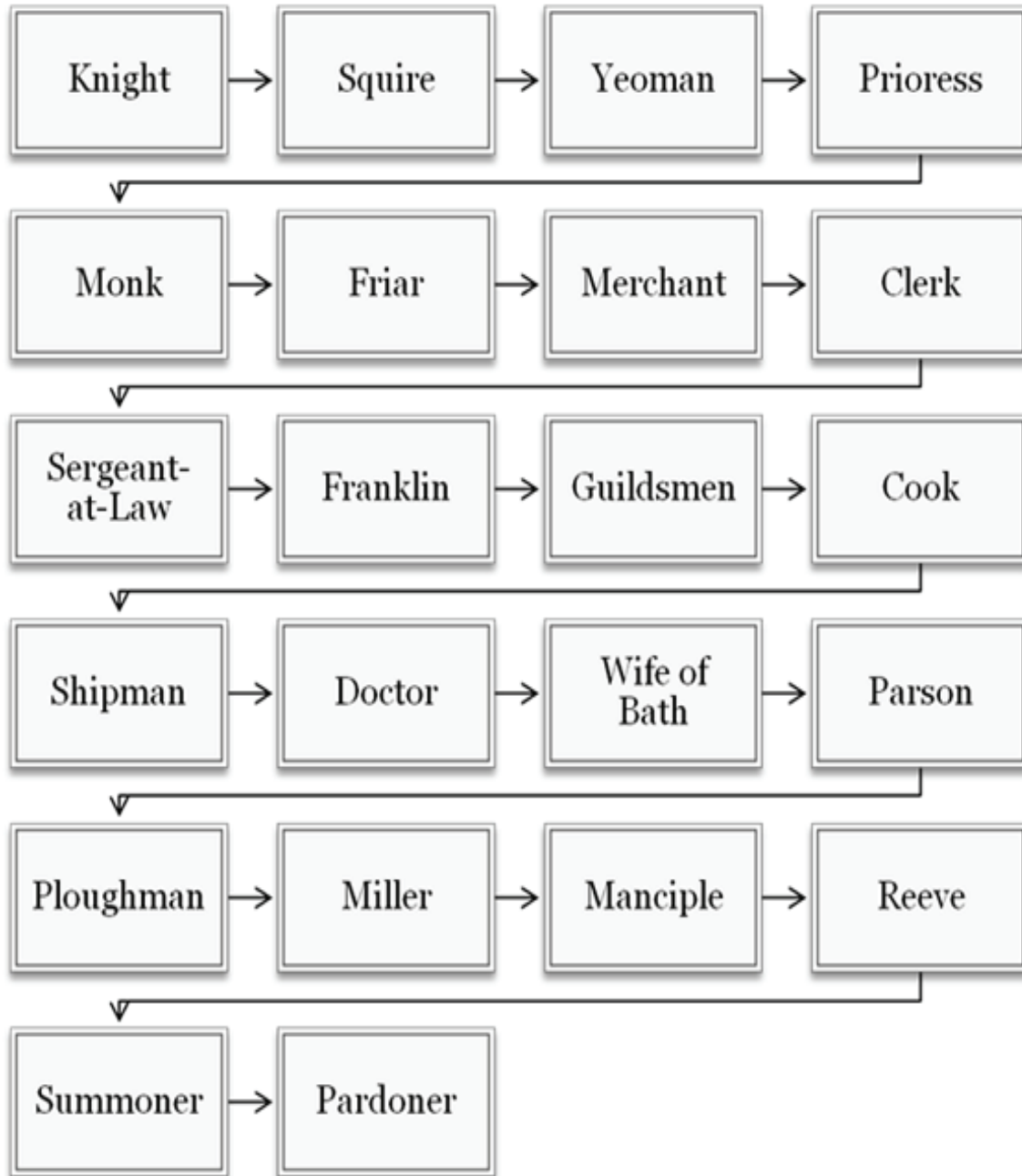
Green and yellow splodges  
show stressed syllables  
forming iambic pentameters

## Extensions

Compile a class *General Prologue* from the portraits written by students, perhaps accompanied by illustrations.

Further work could be done with Chaucer's *General Prologue*, with ideas about sequencing explored using chart.

Ideas about sequencing could be applied to class *General Prologue*



## References

This unit was created by Julie Blake and Tim Shortis

Dictionary definitions from the full online Oxford English Dictionary at [www.oed.com](http://www.oed.com) (available free via membership of most UK public libraries)

Modern English and Middle English versions of *The General Prologue to The Canterbury Tales*, with audio recordings in Middle English, available at <http://pages.towson.edu/duncan/chaucer/index.htm>

Images of the pilgrims (and many other characters from literature) are sourced from and available for educational use at <http://etc.usf.edu/clipart/sitemap/literature.htm>

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