The Middle Ages Test

Multiple Choice
Identify the letter of the choice that best completes the statement or answers the question.

Comprehension
The questions below refer to the selection “The Middle Ages 1066–1485: The Tales They Told.”

1. After William the Conqueror triumphed at the Battle of Hastings, England changed because of its —
   a. acceptance of Anglo-Saxon culture
   b. defeat of the Germanic tribes
   c. adoption of the Norman feudal system
   d. emergence as the leading European political power

2. Feudalism’s religious concept of hierarchy featured —
   a. romantic attitudes toward women
   b. endless international warfare
   c. classes in Latin for young knights
   d. a caste system of lords, vassals, and serfs

3. In the Middle Ages, women of rank —
   a. were never allowed to manage their husbands’ estates
   b. had political rights concerning domestic affairs
   c. held social positions determined by the status of their husbands or fathers
   d. improved their social positions through peaceful protest

4. The 1170 martyrdom of Thomas à Becket, the Archbishop of Canterbury, led to —
   a. hardships for the common people of England
   b. the establishment of a new religion
   c. changes within the Church of England
   d. greater power in England for the Church of Rome

5. The most positive effect of the medieval church was —
   a. a rebellion against the monarchy
   b. the use of Latin for everyday business
   c. the fostering of common beliefs and symbols
   d. the creation of a refuge for landless serfs

6. As a result of the Hundred Years’ War between England and France, —
   a. France gave part of Normandy to England
   b. the English aristocracy disappeared as a political force
   c. England lost most of its population to disease and warfare
   d. the yeoman class became the backbone of England

7. The Black Death ultimately resulted in —
   a. the reemergence of Anglo-Saxon religion
   b. freedom for the serfs and greater power for the lower classes
   c. increased awareness of proper sanitation
   d. victory for the Lancasters over the Tudors

Comprehension
The questions below refer to the selection “The Prologue from The Canterbury Tales.”

8. In “The Prologue,” Chaucer’s main objective is to —
   a. describe a London inn
   c. analyze religious customs
b. reveal the narrator’s thoughts
d. introduce his cast of characters

9. The pilgrims are traveling to Canterbury because —
   a. it is part of a longer tour of England
   b. the innkeeper has dared them to make the journey
   c. they want to escape the plague that is attacking London
   d. the shrine of St. Thomas à Becket is there

10. The pilgrims agree to tell tales during the journey to —
    a. reduce fighting and bickering
    b. preserve their stories for the future
    c. win a free meal and entertain one another
    d. teach the innkeeper a lesson about pride

11. Which profession found among Chaucer’s pilgrims can still be found today?
    a. Parson
    b. Manciple
    c. Reeve
    d. Pardoner

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**Literary Focus: Characterization**

The questions below refer to the selection “The Prologue from The Canterbury Tales.”

12. Chaucer’s characterization —
    a. never shows the reader what the character is feeling
    b. uses the same basic techniques that writers use today
    c. is based on dialogue rather than action
    d. shows the characters as basic types rather than as believable individuals

13. The member of the clergy given the most admiring, flattering description is the —
    a. Friar
    b. Nun
    c. Parson
    d. Monk

14. Which of the following quotations from “The Prologue” is the best example of imagery?
    a. “In fifteen mortal battles he had been.”
    b. “Thinly they fell, like rat-tails, one by one.”
    c. “He’d seen some service with the cavalry.”
    d. “Just home from service, he had joined our ranks.”

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**Reading Skills: Analyzing Style: Details**

The question below refers to the selection “The Prologue from The Canterbury Tales.”

15. Which detail is least directly connected to characterization?
    a. Appearance
    b. Chronology
    c. Behavior
    d. Dress

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**Comprehension**

The questions below refer to the selection “from The Pardoner’s Tale.”

16. A Pardoner is an official of the —
    a. feudal manor
    b. king
    c. local government
    d. church

17. The Pardoner earns money from all of the following activities except —
    a. begging from church to church
    b. making and selling baskets
    c. preaching against greed
    d. selling relics and papal pardons

18. The stories about Death that the servant boy and the tavern-knave tell suggest that —
The rioters go looking for Death because they —
a. want to banish him from England
b. know he has great treasure
c. want to repent of their sins and find salvation
d. plan to avenge the deaths of their friends

20. In “The Pardoner’s Tale,” Death is portrayed as —
a. an old man selling wares by the side of the road
b. both the price of wickedness and an actual person
c. both a skeletal figure and an evil angel
d. an archangel who kills people through natural disaster and war

21. Which of the following statements best describes the end of the tale?
a. The rioters become rich.
b. The rioters meet death.
c. Death takes the gold florins.
d. Death takes a holiday.

22. The Pardoner’s pious story reveals his —
a. ignorance
b. sensitivity
c. immorality
d. honesty

23. After telling his tale, what does the Pardoner offer to do for his fellow pilgrims?
a. Buy them a round of drinks
b. Explain the moral of the tale
c. Sell them relics and pardons
d. Pray for their souls

**Literary Focus: Irony**
The questions below refer to the selection “from The Pardoner’s Tale.”

24. The old man’s comment to the three rioters that Death “isn’t one to hide for all your prating” is an example of —
a. verbal irony
b. situational irony
c. a moral
d. imagery

25. It is ironic that the Pardoner preaches against avarice, because he is —
a. a friend of the Summoner’s
b. rude to the Host
c. a pious man
d. especially greedy

26. What is ironic about the attitude that the old man has toward Death?
a. He refers to his grave as his “mother.”
b. Most people refer to death as an event not a person.
c. He has seen death more than once.
d. Most people seek to avoid death, but the old man looks for it.

27. After the rioters abandon their search for Death, they murder one another. This act is an example of —
a. poetic irony
b. verbal irony
c. situational irony
d. dramatic irony

**Comprehension**
The questions below refer to the selection “from The Wife of Bath’s Tale.”

28. The knight undertakes a quest to —
a. learn what it is that women want most
b. protect women from evil upon the road to Canterbury
29. The knight’s quest is a(n) —
   a. ambitious mission he sets himself  
   b. duty imposed on him by the church  
   c. task given to him by the queen  
   d. test of courage set by the king

30. Before he sees the old woman in the woods, the knight sees —
   a. his own future in a dream  
   b. the figure of Death  
   c. more than twenty-four ladies dancing  
   d. his own face reflected in a pool of water

31. According to the old woman, what women really want is —
   a. mastery over their husbands  
   b. money, jewels, and treasure  
   c. to be flattered and attended to  
   d. freedom and entertainment

32. As a reward for giving him the answer that will save his life, the old woman demands —
   a. a large sum of money  
   b. to learn the secret of youth  
   c. to marry the knight  
   d. to be pardoned by the queen

33. The knight shows that he has learned what women want most when he —
   a. pays the old woman as much as she asks  
   b. asks his wife to decide which form she will take  
   c. keeps his promise to return after a year and a day  
   d. agrees to marry the old woman

34. The old woman makes an eloquent philosophical argument about —
   a. the differences between men and women  
   b. the magical beauty of nature  
   c. true and false gentility and virtue  
   d. the harmfulness of greed

35. Chaucer’s characterizations of the Prioress, the Monk, and others connected with the church are mainly —
   a. idealized  
   b. realistic  
   c. satirical  
   d. flattering

36. Who narrates the tale about the knight and the old woman?
   a. The old woman  
   b. The knight  
   c. Chaucer  
   d. The Wife of Bath

**Literary Focus: Narrator and Couplets**

The questions below refer to the selection “from The Wife of Bath’s Tale.”

37. The narrator of a story should not be confused with —
   a. the storytelling voice  
   b. one of the minor characters  
   c. the main character  
   d. the author

38. Which adjective does not describe the Wife of Bath’s narrative voice?
   a. mournful  
   b. earthy  
   c. witty  
   d. lively

39. Which of the following quotations from “The Wife of Bath’s Tale” is a couplet?
   a. “In honor to us both, I don’t care which; / Whatever pleases you suffices me.”
   b. “His heart went bathing in a bath of blisses / And melted in a hundred thousand kisses . . .”
   c. “The knight thought long, and with a piteous groan / At last he said, with all the care in life . . .”
   d. “May I go howling mad and take my life / Unless I prove to be as good and true . . .”
Reading Skills: Interpreting Character

The question below refers to the selection “from The Wife of Bath’s Tale.”

40. The Wife of Bath’s opinions suggest that she may be described by all the following words except —
   a. modest
   b. well-read
   c. humorous
   d. bossy

Vocabulary Development

Indicate the letter for the choice that is the best synonym for the Vocabulary word.

41. pestilence
   a. poison
   b. plague
   c. insect
   d. termite

42. contemptuous
   a. respectful
   b. scornful
   c. admiring
   d. indifferent

43. prowess
   a. foresight
   b. judgment
   c. ability
   d. lack

44. reprove
   a. decide
   b. doubt
   c. approve
   d. disapprove

45. concede
   a. dispute
   b. grant
   c. overcome
   d. contest

Matching

Vocabulary Development

Match the definition with the Vocabulary word from the list below.

a. benign
b. obstinate
c. frugal
d. agility
e. guile

46. thrifty; careful with money
47. ability to move quickly and easily
48. kind; gracious
49. sly dealings; skill in deceiving
50. unreasonably stubborn