

Introduction to Geoffrey Chaucer: Biography



IN THIS LESSON WE WILL COVER:

» SECTION 1: BIOGRAPHY (1343 – 1400)

» SECTION 2: FRENCH PERIOD (1343-1370)

» SECTION 3: ITALIAN PERIOD (1370-1385)

» SECTION 4: ENGLISH PERIOD (1385-1400)



IN THIS LESSON WE WILL COVER:

» SECTION 5: CONTRIBUTION TO LANGUAGE

» SECTION 6: THEMES

» SECTION 7: CRITICISM



SECTION 1: BIOGRAPHY (1343 – 1400)

- 1 Most notable writer of Middle English Period.
- 2 Regarded as the Father of English Literature and Poetry
- 3 First poet to be buried in Poets' Corner of Westminster Abbey



SECTION 1: BIOGRAPHY (1343 – 1400)

4 Aided by 3 kings:

a King Edward III

b King Richard II

c King Henry IV

5 Writings can be divided into 3 periods:

a French

b Italian

c English

SECTION 2: FRENCH PERIOD (1343-1370)

- 1 **1357:** Became a public servant to Countess Elizabeth of Ulster
- 2 **1359:** Went to fight the 100 years war between England and France
- 3 16 Pounds were paid to the French army to free Chaucer.



SECTION 3: ITALIAN PERIOD (1370-1385)

- 1 Joined the Royal Services after being released by the French army.
- 2 Travelled for diplomatic missions to :
 - a France
 - b Spain
 - c Italy
- 3 Became the Controller of Customs
- 4 **1366:** Married Philippa Roet



SECTION 4: ENGLISH PERIOD (1385-1400)

- 1 Commissioned as *'Justice of Peace'*
- 2 Became a member of Parliament



SECTION 5: CONTRIBUTION TO LANGUAGE

- 1 Latin and French were majorly used in Courts, Church and in literary works
- 2 Chaucer used English in his works.
- 3 His works made Midland dialect the main language of England
- 4 Introduced Rime Royal Form through his poetry



SECTION 6: THEMES

- 1 Observer, storyteller and a satirist.
- 2 Poems have a theme of morality
- 3 Chaucer was also a reformer
- 4 Commented on flaws of mankind

SECTION 7: CRITICISM

- 1 **Thomas Hoccleve:** *"the firstefyndere of our fair language."*
- 2 **John Lydgate:** *"lodesterre ... off our language"*
- 3 **Sir Philip Sidney:** Praised Troilus and Criseyde
- 4 **John Dryden:** Said for him *"a rough diamond, and must first be polished ere he shines"*

