**Wife of Bath: Prologue & Tale**

Look for and note references to nobility, truth, integrity, honor, etc. as you read ("gentilesse"/"gentil" and "trouthe"/"trewe" in Middle English). Notice their thematic function in the WB's Prologue and Tale.

Another key term is ***maistrye***, mastery or domination. The WB uses ***maistrye*** to denote **a woman's power to make decisions for herself in love [or erotic] relationships)**. Look for and note these and related terms in the WB's P&T.

Tasks:

Pre: Gather information about the role and rights of women in England in the Middle Ages. Ask students to summarize their findings in 1- 2 paragraphs and be prepared to discuss their research process and sources.

1) What do we know about the WB from her prologue?

2) What allusion does the Wife make to Dante’s *Inferno*? What references to other character(s) in the General Prologue does the Wife make? To what purpose? (what’s her point?)

3) Is the Knight’s punishment (start of Tale compared to end) really appropriate for his crime? Why or why not? If not, why would Chaucer/the Wife of Bath have chosen it?

4) What does the WB prologue do for the story?

5) What specific language does the author use to develop the tone, setting, and characters?

6) What can you determine about the Wife of Bath’s life experiences from the story she told?

7) How do you feel about the resolution of the story?

Post:

How does the WB P&T reflect Medieval culture? What does Chaucer think of the WB? Is this a feminist tale or is she a comic figure?