

Assignment instructions for ENGL 390

English poetry from manuscript to print

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1 Course introduction: writing systems and speech sounds (week 2)

Write about 250 words in response to one of the following prompts. Post your reply to the Sakai Blog.

1. From the readings for this week, select any concept, theoretical approach, argument, or claim that you have not previously encountered in your study of English literature. Make a connection to some aspect of your studies to date in other coursework.
2. In a book about the “phonographic claims” of literary writing — that is, its capacity to encode and transmit sound — Shane Butler asks us to consider the relations between literature and letters:

“doubt [about the purpose of writing] may perhaps best be understood in terms of the alphabet itself, the single elements of which are capable of expressing sounds that are less than words, but which, as an ensemble, simultaneously makes possible the inscription of something that is *more* than (mere) language. This latter category is dominated by that class of texts we have come to call ‘literature,’ after the Latin word for the very letters (*litterae*) of the alphabet. In such texts, literary heights plunge back to their alphabetic base in search of such ‘sound effects’ as alliteration: to give us more than words, the writer calls attention to what is less than one.”¹

Unpack Butler’s contrast between what is “more than words” and “what is less than one.” How might the readings for this week contribute to a critical project like the one sketched by Butler in this passage? What possibilities do you see here, in connection to your previous study of English literature?

¹Shane Butler, *The Ancient Phonograph* (New York: Zone Books, 2015), 15.

2 Exploring Middle English words (week 3)

From the primary-text reading assignment for this week, select one [word-token](#) glossed in the edition from which you are reading. Then do the following:

2.1 Supply bibliographic details for the edition you use

Do this if you are not reading from the preferred edition listed on the syllabus. Skip this step if you are reading from the preferred edition.

2.2 Identify the word-token that you have selected

Quote the line in which the word-token appears and give the line number. Quote the editor's gloss on this word. Here are two examples:

his, glossed 'its' in *Whan that Aprill with his shoures soote* (line 1).

corages, glossed 'hearts' in *So priketh hem Nature in hir corages* (line 11).

2.3 Identify the appropriate entry in the Harvard Chaucer Glossary

Look your word up in the [Harvard Chaucer Glossary](#); copy the full text of the appropriate entry.

The initial task here is to identify the word-type that most nearly corresponds to your word-token. For this token-to-type matching, use the criteria of sense (as conveyed in the editorial gloss) and part of speech (as implied in the editorial gloss and required by grammatical context).

Finding your way to the correct glossary entry may require ingenuity and creative ctrl+f searching. For *his*, I scroll to the *h*- section of the glossary; or I perform a ctrl+f search for "his@" (the keys with the @ symbol are supplied to facilitate searching). For *corages*, a ctrl+f search for that character string takes me directly to the entry I seek:

his pron.(1) "(sg. masc. and neuter poss.) his," s.v. his poss. pron., 3rd sing. masc., and neut sb. OED. KEY: his@pron1

his pron1 5011 his 4872 hise 17 hys 122

corage n. "courage, valor; heart; feelings, disposition; inclination, desire," s.v. courage sb. OED. KEY: corage@n

corage n 94 corage 78 corages 15 courage 1

Some annotation on these glossary entries:

- The element in bold is the **headword**. This is the spelling under which a glossary or dictionary organizes information about a given word.
- After the headword comes notation of the **part of speech**. If there are two or more words with the same headword spelling and the same part of speech, these are disambiguated with a numeral in parentheses.

- The headword, the part of speech, and the numerical disambiguators together form the **title** of the glossary **entry**.
- After the title comes a brief **definition** of the word. The Harvard Chaucer Glossary places this definition within quotation marks.
- After the definition comes a cross-reference to the corresponding entry in the *Oxford English Dictionary*. “s.v.” is an abbreviation for Latin *sub voce* ‘under the word’. “s.v. courage sb.” means “You will find more information about this word in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, within the entry titled ‘courage, n.’” (“sb.” = “substantive,” here synonymous with “noun”).
- The “KEY” is supplied to facilitate ctrl+f searches on the Harvard Chaucer Glossary webpage.
- On the second line of each entry, the Harvard Chaucer Glossary repeats the entry title (headword + part of speech + numerical disambiguator). Then follows the total count of occurrences of this word in [the edition that supplies the text analyzed in this glossary](#). Finally, the glossary lists all the forms (i.e., spellings) of this word in the edition analyzed and the count of occurrences of each form.

2.4 Look the word up in the *OED* and *MED*

Supply a link to the relevant entries and report something interesting about what you find there.

The cross references supplied by the Harvard Glossary (see annotations, above) are usually accurate and sufficient to locate the correct corresponding entry in the *Oxford English Dictionary*. The headword in the *Middle English Dictionary* is usually the same as the headword in the Harvard Glossary. Once you have identified the correct entries in these two dictionaries, consider questions such as these:

- Do the dictionaries cite the line in which you initially found your word? Do they cite other occurrences of the word in Chaucer’s works? What senses do the dictionaries assign to the occurrences of the word in Chaucer’s writings?
- Where did the word come from? (See the “Origin” and “Etymology” sections of the OED entry.)
- What happened to the word in the centuries between Chaucer’s time and our own? Did the word develop new senses, lose the sense(s) in which it was used by Chaucer, or fall out of use entirely?

Here is a sample response, again using *his* and *corages*:

The relevant *OED* entry for *his* is “[his, adj.](#)”; the *MED* entry is “[his pron.\(1\)](#)”. (The *OED* treats the pronoun and the possessive adjective in separate entries, whereas the *MED* groups them together in one entry.) Chaucer’s use of this word in line 1 of the General Prologue is quoted by the *OED* as an illustration of sense I.2 “Referring to a thing: its.” Clicking links within the *OED*’s etymological essay, I come to the *OED* entry “its, adj. and pron.”, where I learn that *its*, possessive of *it*, did not exist yet when Chaucer wrote. For Chaucer, the possessive of *it* is *his*; *its* first appears in the English language towards the end of the sixteenth

century, not long before Shakespeare began writing. In fact, the system of English pronouns has changed a lot since Chaucer's time and continues to change today.

The relevant *OED* entry for *corages* is “[courage, n.](#)”; the *MED* entry is “[corāġe n.](#)”. Both dictionaries cite the line in which I found this word in Chaucer's poem, in both cases as an illustration of the sense “The heart as the seat of feeling, thought, etc.; spirit, mind, disposition, nature”. (I quote the *OED*'s definition; the *MED*'s corresponding definition differs only slightly). The *OED* marks this sense (the first recorded in either dictionary) with an obelisk aka dagger (†), [indicating that this meaning is obsolete](#), that is, [no longer in use in the English language](#). The *OED*'s etymological entry shows me that this word was assimilated into English from French and that the French word derives from Latin *cor* ‘heart’. The English word has lost the original concrete meaning of its ancestor, yet an associated abstract meaning remains in frequent use.

2.5 Reflection

Step back and reflect on the work you have done in this assignment. What larger issues do you perceive here, in terms of methodology, interpretation, and the relationship between literature and language? What connections can you draw to previous readings or discussions in this course or in your other courses?

Bon courage!

3 Translation and commentary (week 4)

Select a passage of about 12 lines from any of the works of Chaucer that we have read thus far. The passage should make grammatical sense on its own. (Do not start or stop in the middle of a clause, for example.)

3.1 Supply bibliographic details for the edition you use

Do this if your text derives from a source other than the preferred edition listed on the syllabus. Skip this step if you are reading from the preferred edition.

3.2 Keyboard the passage

If you copy and paste from an on-line text of the *Canterbury Tales* supply bibliographic details for your source. Check the text, letter-by-letter, against the one printed in our textbook; summarize the differences.

3.3 Translate

Translate the passage into modern English prose. Your translation should express the meaning of the Middle English poem as precisely as possible, but in fluent modern English. There are translations on the web and in the library. My advice is that you not look at them for this assignment. Here is an example of an acceptable translation of the opening of the Knight's Tale:

Once, as old stories tell us, there was a duke named Theseus. He was lord and governor of Athens and in his time he was such a great conqueror that there was none greater under the sun.

For comparison, here is the passage as printed in our textbook:

Whilom, as olde stories tellen us,
Ther was a duc that highte Theseus:
Of Atthenes he was lord and governour,
And in his time swich a conquerour
That gretter was there noon under the sonne.

3.4 Discuss

Write a critical commentary on your passage. Critical commentary aims to show how the details of language and form contribute to the meaning of a selected passage of literary verse or prose. Critical commentary should explain what is said in the passage under consideration:

- Who is speaking?
- What is the scene?
- How does the passage fit within larger arcs of narrative and thematic development?

Yet the focus should be on the *how* of saying:

- vocabulary and word choice
- metaphor, simile, and other figures of speech
- rhyme and other sound patterns, if significant
- sentence structure, style, and tone

Consider the following questions:

- What is distinctive about the vocabulary; what do individual words contribute to the meaning of the passage?
- If there is figurative language, how does it work and what does it contribute?
- Is the style colloquial, formal, or a mix of the two? What details create this impression?
- How do the qualities of the passage under consideration relate to the wider stylistic, thematic, or narrative development of the poem?

Write about those details that promise the best return on the attention you invest in them.

Be sure to read the editor's notes and marginal word-glosses on your passage. The glossary at the back of our textbook may also be of use to you. You should refer at least twice to a historical dictionary of the English language (either the *Middle English Dictionary* or the *Oxford English Dictionary*). Your critical commentary should be approximately 500 words in length.

The due date and other instructions are stated in the syllabus.

4 Rubric for poetry recitation (week 4)

Each student will memorize a passage of the *Canterbury Tales*, as described in the course syllabus, and recite these lines in office hours or at another time to be arranged. The objective in this exercise is to sharpen your understanding of Chaucer's language and art.

There are three components to a good recitation of poetry:

1. **phonological.** Vowels and consonants are pronounced in accordance with scholarly understanding of the poet's language.
2. **formal.** The reading expresses the rhythmic and metrical form of the poet's verse.
3. **semantic.** The reading expresses the meaning, style, and tone of the passage, typically through modulation of voice and pacing.

To prepare for this assignment, do the following:

- read the passage with care and attention
- follow the 'Reading Chaucer Tutorial' and listen to readings of Chaucer's lines at <https://digital.wwnorton.com/canterbury>
- read the description of "Chaucer's Language of Meter" at pp. 35–45 in our edition of the *Canterbury Tales*
- complete the 'word study' exercise on the forum

Grade rubric:

- **A:** Successfully embodies all three components of a good recitation. Fluent delivery.
- **B:** Displays effort and thought about the three components.
- **C:** Incomplete memorization; rote or unreflective delivery.

5 Introduction to medieval handwritten books (week 5)

Respond to one of the follow prompts. For general instructions see the syllabus.

1. G.S. Ivy states that “the whole aim of mediaeval book-making” can be summed up as “the intention to produce an accurate record and the intention of giving aesthetic pleasure” (p. 55). Select one of these two intentions and describe how it is expressed, drawing on Ivy’s article and the Harvard METRO pages.
2. Transcribe the manuscript page depicted on p. 3 of *Opening up Middle English Manuscripts*. Then briefly describe some of your transcription decisions. In your discussion, refer to “A transcription is not an edition” (*Opening up Middle English Manuscripts*, pp. 4–5).
3. Translate the following short poem by Chaucer and write a critical commentary on it. In your commentary on the poem draw on the readings for this week to describe relevant aspects of medieval book-making. Words followed by an asterisk are glossed in the right column. Virgules (/) are added by me to mark the mid-line pause. You can ignore these in your translation.

Adam scriveyn* / if ever it thee bifalle	<i>scrivener, copyist</i>
Boece or Troylus / for to wryten newe,	
Under thy long lokkes* / thou most have the scalle,*	<i>locks / scabby disease of the scalp</i>
But* after my makyng / thow wryte more trewe;	<i>unless</i>
So ofte adaye / I mot* thy werk renewe,*	<i>must / revise</i>
It to correcte / and eke to rubbe and scrape,*	<i>erase</i>
And al is thorough* / thy negligence and rape.*	<i>on account of / haste</i>

6 Manuscripts and/of Chaucer's poetry (week 6)

Respond to one of the following prompts. For general instructions see the syllabus.

1. Compare the transcription of the Cook's Tale on p. 16 of *Opening up Middle English Manuscripts* with the manuscript image on p. 17. Using this transcription as a model, transcribe the first thirteen lines of the Wife of Bath's Prologue from [the Ellesmere manuscript](#). Briefly describe some of your transcription decisions, including doubts or questions that are provoked by this assignment. Then compare your transcription of these lines with the text printed in our edition. What differences do you notice? Attempt to organize, classify, and explain some of the differences.
2. Julia Boffey and A.S.G. Edwards state their intention to demonstrate "some of the essential differences between medieval and modern modes of literary production" (p. 49). Discuss one or two differences that seem to you especially important. Draw connections, where appropriate, to the essay by Ivy and to readings from the Harvard METRO site and *Opening up Middle English Manuscripts*.
3. Schedule a research visit to Loyola's Archives and Special Collections and request to view one of the manuscripts we viewed during our visit on 27 September. Leaf through the manuscript, carefully. Then select one page and describe it in as much detail as you can: report the size and shape of the leaf; the material support (is it paper or parchment? what color and texture?); the layout of text, blank space, and any images (how many columns of text and how many lines? what visual relationships are there between text, image, and blank space?); the color of the ink; and the appearance of the writing (without trying to transcribe the text, describe what it looks like up close and from a few feet back). Refer, where appropriate, to the essay by Ivy and to readings from the Harvard METRO site and *Opening up Middle English Manuscripts*. Finally, explain briefly why you selected this particular page. Include an image of the page at the end of your response paper.

7 Alisoun of Bath: sources, texts, glosses (week 7)

Respond to one of the following prompts. For general instructions see the syllabus.

1. Do you think that David Lawton prints the correct reading for line 117 of the Wife of Bath's Prologue? Discuss Lawton's note to this line and the argument of the essay by E. Talbot Donaldson.
2. View the Wife of Bath's Prologue in [the Ellesmere manuscript](#). Notice the marginal glosses, written in Latin. These are translated into English in [the notes to *The Riverside Chaucer*](#). Most of the glosses are quotations from Chaucer's sources, including the Bible and the misogynist literature depicted within the fiction as Jankyn's "book of wikked wyves" (described at lines 669–81). Select one gloss and discuss its relation to the English text of Alisoun's Prologue. Should modern editions suppress the marginal glosses or make them part of the reading experience? If so, how?
3. Read Theophrastus's *Golden Book of Marriage*, pp. 357–59 in A. J. Rigg's [translation of Chaucer's sources](#). Notice that Rigg records, in footnotes, corresponding passages of the Wife of Bath's Prologue. Select one passage from Theophrastus's text and discuss Chaucer's (or Alisoun's?) use of it. Recall that Alisoun would have known Theophrastus's text, as one of the components of Jankyn's "book of wikked wyves." Do you think it is significant that Chaucer has given Alisoun knowledge of the texts he has used to create her character? Why?
4. Ralph Hanna, in a discussion of lines 15–23 of The Wife of Bath's Prologue, states that Alisoun "reasserts gender-marking in a way that reveals precisely the closed male ideological system" of the source-text, Jerome's *Against Jovinian* (p. 254). What does Hanna mean by a "closed male ideological system"? How does Alisoun (and Chaucer?) challenge that system and open it to interpretation?

8 Midterm essay (week 8)

Respond to one of the following prompts. For general instructions, including page count and documentation, see the syllabus.

1. Explore some of the differences between a medieval manuscript and a modern edition. Take the Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale as a test case and support your argument with reference to scholarship on our syllabus. Compare the presentation of this poem in our modern edition with the presentation of (the same?) poem in the Ellesmere manuscript of the *Canterbury Tales*. Do the edition and the manuscript in fact present the same poem? What are some of the differences between the presentations, and what are their implications?
2. Expand your response to a prompt from last week, on the sources for and annotations to The Wife of Bath's Prologue.
3. Select one of the medieval manuscript books in University Archives and Special Collections. To what extent does the book conform to the general features of manuscript books, as described by G. S. Ivy and the Harvard METRO site?
4. Write an essay on a topic of your own choice. Clear your topic with me in advance.

9 Introduction to early printed books (week 9)

Respond to one of the following prompts. For general instructions see the syllabus.

1. Compare Sarah Werner's account of early modern printed books with G.S. Ivy's "Bibliography of the Manuscript-Book." Identify and briefly discuss two features of book production that remained constant across this technological change.
2. Read William Thynne's dedicatory preface to his 1532 edition of Chaucer's *Works* and elaborate or respond to Megan Cook's analysis of this text (pp. 26–29 in "The First First Folios"). Thynne's preface may be read in Loyola's copy of the 1687 *Works* or on [Early English Books Online](#).
3. Schedule a research visit to University Archives and Special Collections and request to view one of the early printed books we viewed during our class visit. Leaf through the book, then select one page and describe it in as much detail as you can. To what extent does this page conform to general features of early printed books, as described by Werner? Include an image of the page at the end of your response paper.
4. Select Caxton's prologue to either the *Canterbury Tales* or the *Eneydos*. Discuss briefly the relation of this text to central themes of our seminar, as described in [section 2](#) of the syllabus.

10 Encountering *Hamlet* (week 10)

Respond to one of the following prompts. For general instructions see the syllabus.

1. Read Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor’s statements of editorial method (Introduction, pp. 8–12, 88–96). Compare the Arden editors’ handling of Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* with David Lawton’s approach to editing Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales*. (See pp. vii–viii and 42–45 in the Norton *Canterbury Tales*.)
2. Select two annotations to Act 1 of *Hamlet* (the second quarto text) in the edition of Thompson and Taylor — one annotation that you find helpful and one that you find less than helpful. For the helpful annotation, explain what it adds to your reading experience. For the unhelpful annotation, identify the reasons for your dissatisfaction. If you think the annotation is insufficient, say what is missing. If you think the annotation is superfluous and should have been omitted, speculate on the editors’ motivations for writing and printing it.
3. Select one line from Act 1 of *Hamlet* (the second quarto text). Using the [The Oxford Dictionary of Original Shakespearean Pronunciation](#) construct an IPA transcription of the line as it might have been spoken in early seventeenth-century English. What differences do you observe between the reconstructed Shakespearean pronunciation and your own everyday pronunciation of English? What does this exercise contribute to your experience of the play? (For more on this topic, listen to the podcast “[Pronouncing English as Shakespeare Did](#)”.)
4. Read chapter 1 of David Scott Kastan’s *Shakespeare and the Book*, taking note of themes or topics that you have encountered previously in Sarah Werner’s *Studying Early Printed Books* or Adrian Johns’s “The Coming of Print to Europe.” Select one shared topic and compare Kastan’s presentation with either Werner or Johns. What do you learn about this topic from Kastan and Werner (or Kastan and Johns) and what do you learn about Shakespeare from Kastan? What does this study of printing practices contribute to your understanding and experience of Shakespeare’s plays?
5. Find a translation of *Hamlet* into a language other than English that you can read. Supply bibliographic details for the translation. Select a passage of 2–4 lines from Act 1 of *Hamlet*, then keyboard the lines from the translation and compare the translation with the English text. Is there, in general, a word-for-word correspondence between the English text and the translation? At what points does a word-for-word correspondence give way to looser correspondences, and what do these divergences allow you to infer about idiom, figurative language, or grammatical structure? What difficulties do you think the translator might have encountered in these lines? What translation choices do you find especially effective, or ineffective, and why? If this exercise draws your attention to specific words in the English text (translation does that), discuss those words and the way they are rendered in the translation. Write for someone who might not be able to read the language of the translation.

11 The second quarto *Hamlet* (week 11)

Respond to one of the following prompts. For general instructions see the syllabus.

1. Respond to any prompt you did not select in last week's assignment. You may write on material from any part of the second quarto text of *Hamlet*.
2. Select two title pages from among those reproduced by Kastan in chapter 1 of *Shakespeare and the Book*. Describe the title pages in as much detail as you can, drawing on Kastan's exposition and the relevant sections of Werner's *Studying Early Printed Books*. What are the salient differences between the two title pages you have selected, and what significance do you attribute to them? What are the salient differences from a modern title page, as represented by Werner's book or Thompson and Taylor's editions of *Hamlet*?
3. View a copy of the second quarto of *Hamlet* in the digital facsimile published by Internet Shakespeare Editions, available [here](#). What, in your view, are the most important differences between the presentation of the text in the facsimile and in the modern edition you are using? Make an argument for reading from the digital facsimile (or not). What would be the best way to read this play today?

12 Three texts of *Hamlet* (week 12)

Write a 1.5-page research proposal. Select a topic from the prompts for the research essay. Identify the topic and articulate some questions that you would hope to answer, or explore further, in research on this topic. Include at least one concrete example. You are not obligated to retain the topic that you propose in this response paper.

13 Annotated bibliography and presentation (week 13)

As a step toward the final essay for this class, each student will construct an annotated bibliography and deliver a class presentation supported by slides.

13.1 Locating sources

Begin with the editions used in this class. Most of our editions contain introductions or bibliographies with recommendations for further reading.

Turn next to the [Library search page](#), the [MLA International Bibliography](#), and the [Oxford Bibliographies](#). For links to some relevant Oxford Bibliographies, see the syllabus, section on “Annotated bibliography”.

Library specialists are helpful in the research stage of assignments involving secondary sources. For details, visit <http://libraries.luc.edu/specialists>.

Additional guidance on sources:

- Reviews of books are not suitable sources for this assignment.
- The Oxford Bibliographies are guides to the sources; they do not count as sources in their own right.
- Information available on the web varies widely in quality. Resources linked in Loyola’s library catalogue and [database collection](#) have been subjected to quality control, much like the scholarly books and journals housed in Cudahy Library. By contrast, most sites on the open web are uncontrolled. For this assignment, you may select and annotate one source from the open web. The rest must be physical or on-line resources supplied by Loyola’s libraries.

13.2 The annotated bibliography

Select **ten** sources relevant to your topic. Read abstracts, tables of contents, and introductory and closing paragraphs. On this basis select **five** sources for annotation.

Each entry on the annotated bibliography should have three parts, as follows:

1. **Bibliographic reference.** Identify your source in MLA or Chicago format. For guidance follow the links in the syllabus (“Formal writing” > “General instructions”).
2. **Summary.** Summarize the content and argument of the source.
3. **Commentary.** Explain why you selected this source. What makes this source valuable to your project and how is it distinguished from other sources on your bibliography? What insights or important information does this source provide? What questions does it raise or answer?

The annotation for each source should be between 200 and 300 words.

At the end of the annotated bibliography, list an additional five sources that you inspected and decided not to select for annotation.

13.3 The presentation

Create a slide presentation that introduces your topic to the class and summarizes your research. Each presentation should have the following components:

- An introduction to your topic and explanation of your approach and aims
- A report on your most interesting or surprising findings to date
- A text, image, or object for study and discussion in our class (supply some questions to guide our attention)
- A description of next steps, additional research you plan to undertake, or plans for turning your research into an argued essay
- A list of sources (put this on your final slide)

Aim to speak for about 10 minutes. Each presentation should include one moment when you say, “And here’s the passage (or image, or object) that I want to hear your opinion on.” Supply some questions and context to guide our attention. Then be silent and let your audience observe, think, and respond.

Usually a presentation will be followed by class discussion; the best presentations invite thoughtful response from your peers.

14 Final essay (week 15)

14.1 Instructions

Write a research essay in which you advance an interpretative argument about (an aspect of) one of the poems you have read in our course. Your essay should engage the original language of the poem and the material form(s) in which it circulated. Due dates and general instructions (including the target page length and requirements for documentation of sources) are stated in the syllabus.

I encourage you to discuss your project with me outside of class. Email me to set up a meeting time if you cannot attend regular office hours.

14.1.1 Research and argument

Conduct independent research on your topic. Follow the bibliographical references within our primary text editions and the secondary literature on our syllabus, and use library catalogs and databases to seek out relevant sources in the print and on-line collections of Loyola's Cudahy Library. Your essay should use and cite **six** scholarly sources, not counting primary text editions, historical dictionaries, or *Oxford Bibliographies*. You should engage with the argument of at least two sources; other sources may supply background or evidentiary support for your argument.

Engaging with the argument of a source means that you devote some space in your essay to exposition of the argument of that source, and that your own argument responds to and enters into conversation with the source, often by extending its argument to new materials, or by modifying, reframing, or contesting its claims. For more instruction on engaging the argument of secondary sources, see [The Craft of Research](#), pp. 39-41 and 89-94. Quote only when you have something to say in reply to the language quoted. Always follow quotations with commentary that folds the quotation into your own developing argument.

14.1.2 Documentation

The Works Cited section should include all secondary sources cited in your essay. It should also include your citation text(s) – that is, the edition or editions from which you cite the poem or poems that you interpret. For guidance on citation styles follow the links in the syllabus (“Formal writing” > “General instructions”).

14.1.3 Working with Middle English

If you write about a work of English literature prior to 1500, quote the original language, followed by a translation into modern English. The translation may be either your own or a published translation. Identify clearly the source of translations. Explain your translational practice early in the essay and be alert to differences between the original text and the translation. Important divergences or ambiguities should be discussed as part of your argument. Refer to the historical dictionaries (the *Oxford English Dictionary* and *Middle*

English Dictionary) to support your interpretation of key words and passages. Quote often and always follow quotations with analysis.

The *Middle English Dictionary* extends to 1500. For English literature written after 1500, use the *Oxford English Dictionary*.

14.1.4 Abstract and keywords

Write a 150-word summary of your essay (the “abstract”) and select four or five keywords. Place the abstract and keywords at the beginning of your essay, between the title and introductory paragraph.

14.2 Prompts

Select one of the following topics or devise one of your own.

1. Extend and revise your midterm essay. If you choose this option, submit your midterm essay (the paper copy with my comments) together with your final essay. Write a cover letter (approximately 200 words) in which you identify the new work you have done. The midterm essay should be revised comprehensively, with new introductory and concluding paragraphs and reworked body paragraphs.
2. Extend and revise one of your response papers written since midterm. If you are interested in this option, contact me in advance to confirm that your topic lends itself to expansion into a research essay.
3. Compare the first folio edition of Chaucer’s works, printed in 1532, with the first folio edition of Shakespeare’s plays, printed in 1623. Consult the 1532 Chaucer folio in the digital facsimile published by [Early English Books Online](#) and the 1632 Shakespeare folio in the digital facsimile published by [Internet Shakespeare Editions](#). Pay attention especially to the preliminary matter in each edition and to the design of pages and presentation of the text. For help with the Chaucer folios, consult Cook’s “The first first folios” and sources cited by her. For the Shakespeare folio, consult chapter 2 of Kastan’s *Shakespeare and the Book* and conduct your own independent research. What similarities and differences do you observe between these publications and what significance do you attribute to your observations?
4. Compare the first folio edition of Shakespeare’s plays, printed in 1623, with the first folio edition of the plays of Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher, printed in 1647. Consult the Shakespeare folio in the digital facsimile published by [Internet Shakespeare Editions](#) and the physical copy of the Beaumont and Fletcher folio held in Loyola Archives and Special Collections (see [here](#)). Pay attention especially to the preliminary matter in each edition and to the design of pages and presentation of the text. What similarities and differences do you observe between these publications and what significance do you attribute to your observations?
5. Select one or two scenes from *Hamlet* and analyze differences between the three early texts of this play. You might want to study especially *Hamlet* 3.4, 4.4, and 5.2. Or

follow the lead of Murphy's essay "What Happens in Hamlet?"