

第一篇 文学史练习

(Part One Exercises on Literary History)

Chapter 1

The Medieval Period

I. Fill in the blanks.

1. In 55 B.C., Britain was invaded by _____, the Roman conqueror, who brought the Roman _____ of life into Britain.
2. British literature started from the Middle Ages, which embraced two quite different periods of literary history, the _____ English and the _____ English.
3. The Old English is also known as Anglo-_____ English.
4. Angles, Saxons and _____ usually known as Anglo-Saxons are the first Englishmen. Language spoken by them is called the Old English, which is the foundation of English language and literature.
5. The literature of the Anglo-Saxon period falls naturally into two divisions, _____ and Christian.
6. Anglo-Saxon Christian poetry is represented by the religious poetry produced by _____ and Cynewulf.
7. In the 8th century, Anglo-Saxon prose appeared. The famous prose writers of that period were Venerable Bede and _____ the Great.
8. _____ is the oldest poem in the English language, and also the oldest surviving national epic in the English language.
9. Caedmon is the first known religious poet of England. He is known as the “_____ of English songs”.
10. The didactic poem *The Christ* was produced by _____, the greatest Anglo-Saxon poet.
11. The early inhabitants in the island now we call England were _____, a tribe of Celts. From the Britons the island got its name of Britain, the land of Britons. The Britons were _____ people.
12. In 1066, the Normans defeated the Anglo-Saxons in the battle at _____.



13. In the 14th century, the two most important writers are Geoffrey _____ and William Langland.
14. Geoffrey _____ has been called not only “the father of English poetry”, but also “the founder of English realism”.
15. The 15th century has been traditionally described as the barren age in British literature. But it is the spring tide of English _____.
16. In the 15th century, there is only one important prose writer whose name is Thomas _____, who wrote an important work called *Morte d'Arthur*.
17. The _____ Conquest marks the establishment of feudalism in England.
18. By the time when England entered into feudal society, the society was divided into two classes: landlords and _____.
19. The year of _____ witnessed a famous peasant uprising led by Wat Tyler and John Ball.
20. The romances were usually composed for the noble, of the noble, and had nothing to do with the _____ people.
21. *The Canterbury Tales* contains in fact a general Prologue and only _____ tales, among which two are left unfinished.
22. The _____ provides a framework for the tales in *The Canterbury Tales*, and it comprises a group of vivid pictures of various medieval figures.
23. *The Canterbury Tales* is Geoffrey Chaucer's greatest work and written for the greater part in _____ couplets.
24. Geoffrey Chaucer's work _____ gives us a picture of the condition of English life of his day, such as its work and play, its deeds and dreams, its fun and sympathy.
25. _____ is Geoffrey Chaucer's longest complete poem (about 8,000 lines) and his greatest artistic achievement.
26. Geoffrey Chaucer's contribution to English poetry lies chiefly in the fact that he introduced from France the rhymed stanza of various types to English poetry, which replaced the old Anglo-Saxon _____ verse.



II. Choose the best answer for each blank.

- When we speak of the old English prose, the first name that comes into our minds is _____, who is the first scholar in English literature and has been regarded as “father of English learning”.
A. William Shakespeare B. Beowulf
C. Julius Caesar D. Venerable Bede
- The most important work of Alfred the Great is _____, which is regarded as the best monument of the old English prose.
A. *Beowulf*
B. *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicles*
C. *The Ecclesiastical History of the English People*
D. *Brut*
- _____ is the most important example of Anglo-Saxon literature and the oldest surviving epic of Germanic people.
A. *Beowulf* B. *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicles*
C. *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* D. *Robin Hood*
- _____ is the first important religious poet in English literature.
A. John Donne B. George Herbert
C. Caedmon D. John Milton
- In Anglo-Saxon period, *Beowulf* represented the _____ poetry.
A. pagan B. religious C. romantic D. sentimental
- Prose literature did not show its appearance until the _____ century.
A. 6th B. 7th C. 8th D. 10th
- The Anglo-Saxons were Christianized in the _____ century.
A. 5th B. 6th C. 7th D. 8th
- Beowulf* describes the exploits of a _____ hero, Beowulf, in fighting against the monster Grendel, his revengeful mother, and a fire-breathing dragon.
A. Denmark B. Scandinavian
C. England D. Norway
- The Roman occupation lasted for about 400 years in Britain, and in _____, all the Roman troops went back to the continent and never returned.
A. 55 B.C. B. 78 A.D. C. 400 A.D. D. 410 A.D.



10. English literature began with the _____ settlement in England. In old English literature, *Beowulf*, the national epic of the English people, is an example of the mingling of nature myths and heroic legends.
A. Anglo-Saxon B. Roman C. Norman D. Britain
11. In 1066, _____ led the Norman army to invade and defeat England.
A. William the Conqueror B. Julius Caesar
C. Alfred the Great D. Claudius
12. In the 14th century, the most important writer is _____.
A. William Langland B. John Wycliffe
C. John Gower D. Geoffrey Chaucer
13. The prevailing form of literature in the feudal England is _____, which represents a courtly and chivalric age.
A. ballad B. alliterative verse
C. romance D. heroic couplet
14. The story of _____ is the culmination of the Arthurian romances.
A. *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* B. *Beowulf*
C. *Piers the Plowman* D. *The Canterbury Tales*
15. William Langland's _____ is written in the form of a dream vision.
A. *Kubla Khan* B. *Piers the Plowman*
C. *The Dream of John Bull* D. *Morte d'Arthur*
16. After the Norman Conquest, three languages existed in England at that time. The Normans spoke _____.
A. French B. English C. Latin D. Swedish
17. _____ was the greatest English religious reformer and the translator of the first complete English Bible.
A. William Langland B. John Gower
C. John Wycliffe D. Geoffrey Chaucer
18. *Piers the Plowman* describes a series of wonderful dreams the author had, through which, we can see a picture of the life in the _____ England.
A. primitive B. feudal C. bourgeois D. modern
19. The theme of _____ to king and lord was repeatedly emphasized in romances.
A. loyalty B. revolt C. obedience D. mockery



28. Apart from original poems, Geoffrey Chaucer translated various works of French authors. Among them is the famous _____.
- A. *The Canterbury Tales* B. *The Romaunt of the Rose*
C. *The Parliament of Fowls* D. *The House of Fame*
29. Geoffrey Chaucer composes a long narrative poem named _____ based on Giovanni Boccaccio's poem *Filostrato* (*The Love-Stricken*).
- A. *The Legend of Good Women* B. *Troilus and Criseyde*
C. *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* D. *Beowulf*
30. Generally speaking, Geoffrey Chaucer's works fall into three main groups corresponding roughly to the three periods of his adult life. Which period is wrong? _____.
- A. The period of French influence (1359-1372)
B. The period of Italian influence (1372-1386)
C. The period of English influence (1386-1400)
D. The period of American influence (1371-1382)
31. In *The Canterbury Tales*, the tales of the Knight, the Pardoner, the Nun's Priest and the Wife of Bath together with _____ are generally regarded as the best of the whole collection.
- A. the monk's tale B. the prioress's tale
C. the Prologue D. the Miller's tale
32. Geoffrey Chaucer's diplomatic missions to Italy enabled him to study the poems of the following famous Italian writers of the Renaissance period except _____. These writers were later to have profound influence upon his writing.
- A. Dante Alighieri B. Homer
C. Francesco Petrarch D. Giovanni Boccaccio

III. Find the relevant match from Column B for each item in Column A.

Column A	Column B
() 1. Alfred the Great	a. <i>The Christ</i>
() 2. Venerable Bede	b. <i>Hymn</i>
() 3. Cynewulf	c. <i>The Anglo-Saxon Chronicles</i>
() 4. an unknown scribe	d. <i>The Ecclesiastical History of the English People</i>



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| () 5. Caedmon | e. <i>Beowulf</i> |
| () 6. William Langland | f. <i>Morte d'Arthur</i> |
| () 7. Geoffrey Chaucer | g. <i>The Canterbury Tales</i> |
| () 8. Thomas Malory | h. <i>Piers the Plowman</i> |
| () 9. Layamon | i. <i>The History of the King of Britain</i> |
| () 10. Geoffrey of Monmouth | j. <i>Brut</i> |
| () 11. cycle of the English ballads | k. <i>Chanson de Roland</i> |
| () 12. the matter of Britain | l. Alexander the Great |
| () 13. the matter of France | m. <i>The Geste of Robin Hood</i> |
| () 14. the matter of Rome | n. <i>Sir Gawain and the Green Knight</i> |

IV. Answer the following questions.

1. What are the main characteristics of Anglo-Saxon literature?
2. What are the main events of the poem *Beowulf*?
3. What are the writing features of *Beowulf*?
4. What is the influence of the Norman Conquest upon English language and literature?
5. What are the essential features of romance in the Medieval English literature?
6. Make comments on the romance *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*.
7. How many groups do the great majority of the romances fall into? What are they?
8. What are the differences between romance and epic?
9. What are the artistic features of *Piers the Plowman*?
10. What is the most important department of English folk literature?
11. Make comments on the Robin Hood Ballads.
12. What is the function of the Prologue to *The Canterbury Tales*?
13. What is Geoffrey Chaucer's contribution to English language?
14. What is the social significance of *The Canterbury Tales*?
15. Summarize the poem of *The Canterbury Tales*.