Old & Middle English Literature Ph.D. Exam

To begin with, students are encouraged to read the Old and Middle English material in the *Broadview Anthology of British Literature* volume 1 and the *Norton Anthology of English Literature* volume 1. One way to begin preparing for these examinations is to read the most current editions of the major anthologies of Old and Middle English Literature (listed below).

- Burrow and Turville-Petre, *A Book of Middle English*
- Dunn and Byrnes, *Middle English Literature*
- Garbaty, *Middle English Literature*
- Gray, *Oxford Book of Late Medieval Verse and Prose*
- Haskell, *Middle English Anthology*
- Marsden, *The Cambridge Old English Reader*
- Mitchell and Robinson, *A Guide to Old English*
- Norton Anthology of *Middle English Lyrics*
- Trapp, *Medieval English Literature*.

OLD ENGLISH

Primary Texts: All of these are to be read in Old English, except for Latin works, which may be read in a modern translation.

- Aelfric, *The Colloquy, Life of St. Edmund, Preface to Genesis*
- Alfred, *Preface to The Pastoral Care*
- Anglo-Saxon Chronicle(s): *The Battle of Brunanburh, The Battle of Maldon, “Cynewulf and Cyneheard”*
- Asser, *Life of Alfred* (in translation)
- Bede, *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (read all in translation)
  ---, *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (read in Old English: Book 1, ch. 15-16; Bk 2, ch. 12-14; Bk 4, ch. 23-24)
- Beowulf Manuscript: *Beowulf, Judith*
- Junius Manuscript: *Genesis A & B, Life of St. Mary of Egypt*
- Vercelli Manuscript: “The Dream of the Rood,” “Elene”
- Wulfstan, *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos*

Continental Works: To be read in translation.
- *The Nibelungenlied*
- *Njal’s Saga*
- *The Poetic Edda* (aka *The Eldar Edda*)
Secondary Texts: items preceded by * are required reading; read as many of the others as possible

Alexander, *A History of Old English Literature*

*Baker, The Beowulf Reader* (read everything)

*Baugh and Cable, A History of the English Language* (sections on Old and Middle English)

Bessinger and Kahrl, *Essential Articles for the Study of Old English Poetry*

*Bjork and Niles, A Beowulf Handbook*

*Chase, et al., The Dating of Beowulf*


Davidson, *The Gods and Myths of Northern Europe*

*Fulk, Interpretations of Beowulf* (read everything)

--- and Cain, *A History of Old English Literature*

*Godden and Lapidge, The Cambridge Companion to Old English Literature*

Greenfield and Calder, *A New Critical History of Old English Literature*

*Kaske, “Sapientiae et Fortitudo as the Controlling Theme of Beowulf” (Studies in Philology 1958)*

*Kiernan, Beowulf and the Beowulf Manuscript*

Lee, *Gold-Hall and Earth-Dragon: Beowulf as Metaphor*

Liuzza, *Old English Literature: Critical Essays*

Mitchell, *An Introduction to Old English & Anglo-Saxon England*

*Neidorf, The Dating of Beowulf: A Reassessment*

Newton, *The Origins of Beowulf and the Pre-Viking Kingdom of East Anglia*

Nicholson, *Anthology of Beowulf Criticism*

Niles, *Old English Literature: A Guide to Criticism with Selected Readings*

North, *The Origins of Beowulf: From Vergil to Wiglaf*

*Orchard, A Critical Companion to Beowulf*

---, *Pride and Prodigies: Studies in the Monsters of the Beowulf Manuscript*

Pyles and Algeo, *The Origins and Development of the English Language* (sections on Old and Middle English)

*Robinson, Beowulf and the Appositive Style*

*Whitelock, The Audience of Beowulf*

---, *Beginnings of English Society*

*Wrenn, A Study of Old English Literature*

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MIDDLE ENGLISH

Primary Texts: To be read in Middle English, except for Latin or Anglo-Latin works, which may be read in a modern translation.

*The Alliterative Morte Arthure*

*The Ancrene Riwle*

Chaucer, *Parliament of Fowls, Legend of Good Women, Troilus and Criseyde,* and *The Canterbury Tales*

Chestre/Chester, *Sir Launfal*
Dame Sirith
Everyman
Geoffrey of Monmouth, *The History of the Kings of Britain* (selections)
Gower, *Confessio Amantis* (selections)
Henryson, *Testament of Cresseid*
Julian of Norwich, *Revelations of Divine Love* (selections)
Kempe, *The Book of Margery Kempe* (selections)
Langland, *Piers Plowman* (selections)
Layamon, *Brut* (selections)
The Mabinogion
Malory, *Le Morte Darthur*
Mandeville, *Travels* (selections)
Pearl Poet, *The Pearl, Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*
The Owl and the Nightingale
The Second Shepherd’s Play
Sir Orfeo
*The Wedding of Sir Gawain and Dame Ragnell*

Continental Works: To be read in translation.
Boccaccio, *The Decameron* (selections)
Boethius, *The Consolation of Philosophy*
Dante, *The Divine Comedy*
Marie de France, *Lais* (selections)
Lorris and de Meun, *The Romance of the Rose*
Virgil, *The Aeneid*

Secondary Texts: Although students are encouraged to read as many of the following works as possible.

Archibald, *The Cambridge Companion to Arthurian Legend*
Boitani and Mann, eds., *The Cambridge Chaucer Companion*
Brewer, *A Companion to the Gawain-Poet*
Cawsey, *Twentieth-Century Chaucer Criticism*
Chambers, *The Mediaeval Stage*
Cohen (ed.), *The Postcolonial Middle Ages*
Cooper, *The Oxford Guide to the Canterbury Tales*
Corrie, *A Concise Companion to Middle English Literature*
Dalrymple, *Middle English Literature, A Guide to Criticism*
Dinshaw, *Chaucer’s Sexual Poetics*
Elbow, *Oppositions in Chaucer*
Evans and Johnson, *Feminist Readings in Medieval Literature: The Wife of Bath and All Her Sect*

Revised 2017
Fenster (ed.), *Arthurian Women: A Casebook*
Field, *The Life and Times of Sir Thomas Malory*
Ingham, *Sovereign Fantasies: Arthurian Romance and the Making of Britain*
Lewis, *The Allegory of Love and The Discarded Image*
Mann, *Chaucer and Medieval Estates Satire*
*Oxford History of English Literature*, Volumes 1-3 (Middle English Literature, 1100-1400; Chaucer and Fifteenth-Century Verse and Prose; and Malory and Fifteenth-Century Drama, Lyrics, and Ballads)
Stephens, *Medieval Romance: Themes and Approaches*
Vasta, *Middle English Survey*
Windeatt, *The Oxford Guide to Troilus and Criseyde*