

WESTERN UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH & WRITING STUDIES
PhD FIELD EXAMINATION READING LIST
OLD AND MIDDLE ENGLISH

In order to develop a wide-ranging competency to teach and research in the field of Old and Middle English, candidates will prepare a reading list according to the instructions and requirements below.

1. Instructions for the Field Exam

Students will read all the material listed as the CORE material. Students are expected to read the material in the original.

2. Exam Structure

The examination will have three questions: the first question will offer you two passages, one from Old English and one from Middle English, and ask you to discuss one of them offering a close analysis of its linguistic and stylistic features, and its interpretation. The second question will address Old English texts, and the third will consider Middle English texts.

CORE TEXTS

Students should be well acquainted with the relevant sections of Laurel J. Brinton and Leslie K. Arnovick, *The English Language: A Linguistic History* (Oxford University Press, 2016).

Old English

Poetry:

Battle of Brunanburh, Battle of Maldon, Caedmon's Hymn, Deor, The Wanderer, The Seafarer, The Wife's Lament all in *Eight Old English Poems*. Ed. John C. Pope and R.D. Fulk. New York: Norton, 2001.

Cynewulf's Juliana, ed. Rosemary Woolf. Exeter: U of Exeter P, 1977.

Klaeber's Beowulf. Ed. R.D. Fulk, Robert E. Bjork, and John D. Niles. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2008.

The Riddle Ages: Early Medieval Riddles, Translations and Commentaries, ed. by Megan Cavell, with Matthias Ammon, Neville Mogford, Jennifer Neville, Alexandra Reider and Victoria Symons (2013; redeveloped 2020), <https://theriddleages.com>.

Prose:

The Old English Apollonius of Tyre, ed. Peter Goolden. London: Oxford UP, 1958.

Blickling Homilies 3 "The First Sunday in Lent" and 10 "The End of the World is Near" in R. Morris, ed. *The Blickling Homilies*. EETS OS 58, 63. London: Oxford UP, 1880, rep. 1967.

Ælfric, Easter Sunday Homily in P. Clemoes, ed. *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies. The First Series*. EETS SS 17. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1997. 299-306.

Sermo Lupi ad Anglos. Ed. Dorothy Whitelock. Exeter: U of Exeter P, 1976.

Janet Bately, Joseph C. Harris, and Katherine O'Brien O'Keeffe with Susan Irvine, eds. *The Old English Chronicle, Volume I: The A-Text to 1001 and Related Poems*. (Harvard: Dumbarton Oaks, 2025).

Middle English

The Broadview Anthology of Medieval Drama. Ed. Christina M. Fitzgerald and John T. Sebastian. Peterborough, ON: Broadview, 2012. [Includes Everyman and the Wakefield plays, selection of York and Chester plays, Lydgate's mummings, the Croxton Play of the Sacrament.]

The Brut: or, The Chronicles of England. Ed. Friedrich W.D. Brie. EETS o.s. 131,136. London: Oxford UP, 1906, 1908. [Arthurian selections only: chapters 68-90, pp. 63-91.]

Chaucer, Geoffrey. *The Riverside Chaucer*. 3rd ed. Ed. Larry D. Benson. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987.

Confessio Amantis, vol. 1. Ed. Russell Peck, Latin trans. Andrew Galloway. 3 vols. TEAMS: Middle English Text Series. Medieval Institute Publications, 2013. [Vol. 1 includes Prologue, Books 1 and 8.]

Henryson, Robert. *The Testament of Cresseid*. In *The Poems of Robert Henryson*. Ed. Denton Fox. Oxford: Clarendon, 1981.

Kempe, Margery. *The Book of Margery Kempe*. Ed. Barry Windeatt. New York: Longman, 2000.

Langland, William. *Piers Plowman: A New Annotated Edition of The C Text*. Ed. Derek Pearsall. Exeter Medieval Texts and Studies. University of Exeter Press, 2008.

Malory, Thomas. *The Works of Sir Thomas Malory*. Ed. Eugene Vinaver. Rev. ed. P.J.C. Field. 3rd ed. Oxford: Clarendon, 1990.

Middle English Lyrics. Ed. Maxwell Luria and Richard Hoffman. Norton Critical Edition. New York: Norton, 1974. [Includes all the Harley lyrics and others]

Middle English Verse Romances. Ed. Donald B. Sands. Exeter: U of Exeter P, 1986. [Anthology includes: *Horn*, *Havelok*, *Athelston*, *Gamelyn*, *Orfeo*, *Launfal*, *le Fresne*, *Squire of Low Degree*, *Floris and Blancheflour*, *Tournament of Tottenham*, *Wedding of Sir Gawain*, *Carl of Carlyle*]

The Owl and the Nightingale. Ed. Neil Cartlidge. Exeter: U of Exeter P, 2001.

The Paston Letters and Papers of the Fifteenth Century. Ed. Norman Davis. EETS SS 20-22. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2004-5. [elections: 13, 124, 125, 126, 14, 129, 130, 444, 131, 132, , 861, 203, 204, 242, 205, 244, 334, 373, 789, 790, 791, 792, 415, 416, 374, 375, 376, 377, 773]

The Poems of the Pearl Manuscript. Ed. Malcolm Andrew and Ronald Waldron. 5th ed. Exeter: U of Exeter P, 2007.

Secondary Sources

Students are invited to pursue relevant secondary reading in preparation for the exam. Your answers should demonstrate an awareness of the historical and cultural moment in which the material was written or produced, and an awareness of the current debates in the field, but you are not required to quote or refer directly to secondary readings.

Departmental regulations regarding PhD comprehensive exams can be found @ the following site: <https://www.uwo.ca/english/graduate/phd/index.html>.