

**Learning objective:** Revise what we have learnt about the Prioress and Chaucer's opinion of her. Look at the Wife of Bath's portrait and consider more Middle English words and the ways in which language has changed.

## **Starter:**

Students write down three words for each of the characters we have met so far to best summarise these characters. Share the words with the class to create a comprehensive list for writing about the pilgrims.

## **Introduction:**

Next we are going to look at the Wife of Bath's portrait. Listen to the Wife of Bath's portrait at: [http://academics.vmi.edu/english/audio/GP\\_WOB\\_Farrell.html](http://academics.vmi.edu/english/audio/GP_WOB_Farrell.html). Students should follow the reading on their sheets.

## **Development:**

Hand out the attached sheet for the Wife of Bath and students should have a go at working out the modern versions of the words and then finding them in the wordsearch. The words can be forwards, backwards, diagonally and back to front.

Once students have completed the task they should then try to find some more words in the portrait that they can either see the meaning of or think they can work out the meaning. They should then fill out the 'blank' wordsearch.

## **Plenary:**

What sort of impression do we get of the Wife of Bath from these words that we have translated? Each student say one thing that they think the vocabulary suggests about the Wife of Bath.

## **Homework:**

Choice of: students complete a pilgrim's passport for the Wife of Bath.  
Photocopy the students' wordsearches and get each student to try out someone else's puzzle.

**The portrait of the Wife of Bath**

Listen to the Wife of Bath's portrait at [http://academics.vmi.edu/english/audio/GP\\_WOB\\_Farrell.html](http://academics.vmi.edu/english/audio/GP_WOB_Farrell.html) and follow it on your printed copy.

The following words are all from the Middle English version of the Portrait. See if you can find the modern translation in the wordsearch below:

- |            |          |         |           |             |
|------------|----------|---------|-----------|-------------|
| bifore     | ful fyne | weyeden | heed      | hosen       |
| reed       | shoes    | moyste  | face      | lyve        |
| housbondes | speke    | koude   | wandrynge | weye        |
| gat-tothed | ywmpled  | hat     | paire     | felaweshipe |

a	g	x	c	q	h	w	a	n	d	e	r	i	n	g
u	s	d	n	a	b	s	u	h	i	c	j	u	y	z
d	p	w	b	l	k	f	r	e	d	o	n	o	l	i
e	e	b	f	v	d	m	g	a	p	m	k	h	i	t
h	a	w	e	i	g	h	e	d	k	p	j	c	f	w
t	k	a	v	f	j	e	l	m	l	a	i	o	e	i
o	c	y	a	e	o	w	t	a	h	n	s	u	a	m
o	d	c	o	r	t	r	s	h	n	y	h	l	s	p
t	e	q	o	x	p	b	e	p	e	f	o	d	g	l
p	r	d	n	y	c	a	n	d	q	x	e	a	b	e
a	c	s	r	t	p	t	i	g	h	t	s	f	v	d
g	m	t	s	z	w	b	f	r	a	u	w	z	g	y



**The Wife of Bath's Portrait from the General Prologue**

A good wif was ther of biside Bathe,  
But she was somdel deaf, and that was scathe.  
Of clooth makyng she hadde swich an haunt,  
She passed hem of Ypres and of Gaunt.  
In al the parisshes wif ne was ther noon  
That to the offrynges bifore hire sholde goon;  
And if ther dide, certeyn so wrooth was she  
That she was out of alle charitee.  
Hir coverchiefs ful fyne weren of ground.  
I dorste swere they weyeden ten pound  
That on a Sunday weren upon hir heed.  
Hir hosen weren of fyn scarlet reed,  
Ful streite yteyd, and shoes ful moyste and newe.  
Boold was hir face, and fair, and reed of hewe.  
She was a worthy womman al hir lyve.  
Housbondes at chirche dore she hadde fyve,  
Withouten oother compaignye in youthe--  
But therof nedeth nat to speke as nowthe.  
And thries hadde she been at Jerusalem.  
She hadde passed many a straunge strem.  
At Rome she hadde been, and at Boloigne,  
In Galice at Seint-Jame, and at Coloigne.  
She koude muchel of wandrynges by the weye.  
Gat-tothed was she, soothly for to seye.  
Upon an amblere esily she sat,  
Ywympled wel, and on hir heed an hat  
As brood as is a bokeler or a targe,  
A foot-mantel aboute hir hipes large,  
And on hir feet a paire of spores sharpe.  
In felaweshipe wel koude she laughe and carpe.  
Of remedies of love she knew per chaunce,  
For she koude of that art the olde daunce.

## The Wife of Bath's Portrait from the General Prologue in Modern English

There was a housewife come from Bath, or near,  
Who- sad to say- was deaf in either ear.  
At making cloth she had so great a bent  
She bettered those of Ypres and even of Ghent  
In all the parish there was no goodwife  
Should offering make before her, on my life;  
And if one did, indeed, so wroth was she  
It put her out of all her charity.  
Her kerchiefs were of finest weave and ground;  
I dare swear that they weighed a full ten pound  
Which, of a Sunday, she wore on her head.  
Her hose were of the choicest scarlet red,  
Close gartered, and her shoes were soft and new.  
Bold was her face, and fair, and red of hue.  
She'd been respectable throughout her life,  
With five church'd husbands bringing joy and strife,  
Not counting other company in youth;  
But thereof there's no need to speak, in truth.  
Three times she'd journeyed to Jerusalem;  
And many a foreign stream she'd had to stem;  
At Rome she'd been, and she'd been in Boulogne,  
In Spain at Santiago, and at Cologne.  
She could tell much of wandering by the way:  
Gap-toothed was she, it is no lie to say.  
Upon an ambler easily she sat,  
Well wimpled, aye, and over all a hat  
As broad as is a buckler or a targe;  
A rug was tucked around her buttocks large,  
And on her feet a pair of sharpened spurs.  
In company well could she laugh her slurs.  
The remedies of love she knew, perchance,  
For of that art she'd learned the old, old dance

From: [http://www.canterburytales.org/canterbury\\_tales.html](http://www.canterburytales.org/canterbury_tales.html)