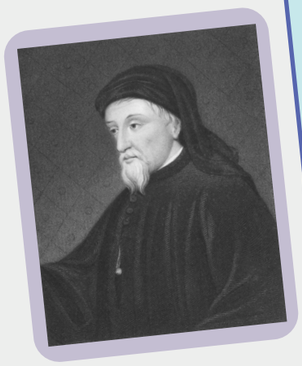
# Knowledge Organiser

## Section A Part (i) Questions

### 1 Select

5 extracts of about 20 lines from different parts of both the Prologue and Tale. Extracts do not have to exist between two full stops but choose samples that can coherently stand alone. See past papers for examples.



### 2 Process

*The Merchant's Prologue and Tale,*
Geoffrey Chaucer (Cambridge University Press)

In each of the extracts you have selected:

- check the meaning and your understanding of obscure language e.g. "trowe" line 4; "cursedeness" line 27; "ragerye" line 635
- look for image or language patterns e.g. "brustles"; "unsofte"; "sharpe"; "brere" in lines 612-613; or "feend"; "malice"; "crueltee" in lines 7-13
- consider the tone of language choices and how this might be augmented by effects such as punctuation, rhyme and metre
- think about the ways in which the reader is guided to make judgements about the presentation of characters through implicit meanings
- decide how interactions between characters are used to create dramatic effects and to reveal Chaucer's ideas and attitudes
- Consider the ways in which Chaucer allows the character and concerns of the narrator to emerge in the *Tale*
- Look for evidence of possible ironies and implicit contradictions e.g the repetition of "fresshe May" (is she not deeply tainted?) or the description of Januarie as a "worthy Knight " – is he not selfish, predatory and abusive?

**USE ONLY THE SPECIFIED EDITION:**
**Cambridge University Press (ISBN: 978-1316615645).**

### 3 Approaches

Take one of the extracts you have selected and consider the different angles from which it might be approached. Under the heading **"Analyse the ways in which Chaucer presents…"** You could also build upon this list as far as you can:

- romantic love
- duty
- blindness
- age and youth
- conflict
- deceit
- service
- loyalty.

### 4 Exercise

Choose two topics from your list of approaches and write the first 100 words of a response to both. Take careful note of the ways in which you shape your response differently but relevantly (from the very start) in each case. If you have a study partner ask for comments on your work. If you are working alone, leave your responses for 24 hours and then see what improvements you could make.

#### Do

- start directly and relevantly
- look for patterns of language and imagery
- make and support points succinctly
- use technical terminology for economy and to demonstrate understanding/appreciation
- take care with your expression and judge the impact of your own language. For instance, see how important well-chosen adverbs are in the following: "Tellingly, May's feelings about the antics on her wedding night are left unspoken" or " Despite her husband's bluster, Proserpine shows herself to be the real force in her relationship with Pluto as she authoritatively claims the last word in their debate."

#### Don't

- start at the first line and work through
- write descriptively or narratively
- write lengthy and redundant introductions e.g. " This narrative poem from the Canterbury Tales by Geoffrey Chaucer…"
- make extended references to context
- try to take account of other readings
- use overlong quotations or copy out large portions of the text
- use technical terms descriptively and for their own sake.