Guided Reading Questions for “The Wife of Bath’s Prologue”  
(from The Canterbury Tales)  

Instructions: While reading (or after completing) “The Wife of Bath’s Prologue” from The Canterbury Tales, answer the questions at the bottom and on the back of this sheet. Then complete the front.

Author:  ________________________________________________________________

Language:  ______________________________________________________________

Date Written:  ____________________________________________________________

Genre:  _________________________________________________________________

Style:  _________________________________________________________________

Synopsis:  ______________________________________________________________

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Major Themes  

and Concepts:  ____________________________________________________________

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1. At the beginning of her Prologue, what position does the Wife of Bath cites the apostle Paul in support of?

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2. What is the meaning of the metaphor the Wife of Bath cites: “As in a noble household… / Not every dish and vessel’s made of gold, / Some are of wood, yet earn their master’s praise”?  

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3. The Wife of Bath says her first three husbands were “good.” What, to her mind, made them so?

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4. What is one of the (false) accusations the Wife of Bath would make against her first three husbands to keep them in line?

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5. What did her fourth husband do that bothered the Wife of Bath?

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6. Who helped carry her fourth husband’s coffin, and what did she notice about him?

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7. Describe the contents of the book *Theophrastus and Valerian* from which her fifth husband often read.

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8. How did the Wife of Bath lose her hearing in one ear?

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9. How did the Wife of Bath finally manage to get the upper hand over husband number five?

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Guided Reading Questions for “The Wife of Bath’s Tale”  
(from The Canterbury Tales)  

Instructions: While reading (or after completing) “The Wife of Bath’s Tale” from The Canterbury Tales, answer the questions at the bottom and on the back of this sheet. Then complete the front.

**Genre:**

**Style:**

**Synopsis:**

1. What crime does the knight commit at the beginning of the story?

2. Who intervenes on the knight’s behalf?

3. What condition does she set in exchange for the knight’s life? How long does she allow him to complete that task?

4. The Wife of Bath interrupts her main story with a digression from Ovid’s Metamorphoses about Midas’s ears. What is the main point she’s making with that story?
5. What does the old lady promise the knight?

6. When he returns to court, what answer does the knight provide for the question he was assigned?

7. What does the old lady demand from the knight in exchange for her having helped him?

8. How does the knight respond to this demand?

9. What offer does the old lady make to the knight on his wedding night?

10. How does he respond to this offer?

11. How does he know he made the right response?