

Pardoner's Prologue and Tale **Comprehension Check**

Directions: As you read the *Pardoner's Tale*, complete the following activity. Answer the questions using complete sentences on a separate piece of paper.

1. The Latin phrase *Radix malorum est cupiditas* is used a few times in the prologue. Use the resources available to you to look up the meaning of this phrase and explain how it prepares the reader for the tale that follows.
2. What does the Pardoner reveal about himself in the prologue and tale? How does this match his description in the General Prologue?
3. What is ironic about the Pardoner's sermons?
4. The Pardoner begins his tale by mentioning three rioters and then spends the next five pages talking about something else. What is the topic of those five pages and why does he devote more than a third of his tale to a topic other than the main characters in his tale?
5. Who is the adversary? What literary device is being used for this character?
6. Before starting their search for Death, what oath do the three men take?
7. How do the rioters treat the old man they find along the way? What does this say about their characters?
8. How does the old man even the score with the rioters?
9. Returning to the five pages of lecture on the evils of lying and gluttony for money and wine, how does the information on these pages tie into the tale of the three men?
10. After telling his tale, what does the Pardoner suggest? Who replies and what does he say?