The Pardoner’s Prologue/Tale Reading Guide

*Please answer in complete sentences unless otherwise stated*

Prologue

1. How does the Pardoner characterize his own profession? What is his opinion of his followers?
2. What is the Pardoner’s sermon/tale about? Why is this ironic?

Tale

1. Briefly describe what’s going on in the opening scene with the revelers.
2. The pardoner goes on for several pages about three sins. What are they?
3. What triggers the revelers’ quest for death?
4. When the men ask where they can find death, what are the old man’s directions?
5. What do the men find beneath the tree?
6. When the men first discover what’s under the tree, the worst of the revelers proposes a plan for how they will get their discovery home. Explain his plan.
7. Once the youngest goes to town, how do the other two plan to get rid of him?
8. The youngest also has a plan to kill the other two. What is it?
9. What happens to each of the revelers at the end of the tale? Be specific.
10. How does the conclusion of the pardoner’s tale contradict what he says in the prologue?
11. Read the excerpt from the Parable of the Rich Fool. How are these stories similar?

**Luke 12:13-21**

New International Version (NIV)

**The Parable of the Rich Fool**

13 Someone in the crowd said to him, “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.”

14 Jesus replied, “Man, who appointed me a judge or an arbiter between you?” 15 Then he said to them, “Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; life does not consist in an abundance of possessions.”

16 And he told them this parable: “The ground of a certain rich man yielded an abundant harvest. 17 He thought to himself, ‘What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.’

18 “Then he said, ‘This is what I’ll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store my surplus grain. 19 And I’ll say to myself, “You have plenty of grain laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.”’

20 “But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?’

21 “This is how it will be with whoever stores up things for themselves but is not rich toward God.”