The Summoner’s Prologue/Tale Reading Guide

*Please answer in complete sentences unless otherwise stated*

Prologue

1. Why is the summoner upset at the friar at the beginning?

Tale

1. As he gives his sermon to his parishioners, what does the friar ask for? Why does he need it?
2. As he begs for alms, what does the friar do with the names of those who give him good stuff?
3. According to the friar, why are his prayers more acceptable to God than Thomas’ wife’s prayers?
4. Why has Thomas not recovered his health according to the friar?
5. Read the description of the seven deadly sins. Which of these is the friar guilty of? Justify your answer.
6. Which of the seven deadly sins does the friar accuse Thomas of?
7. What does the friar want from Thomas before he leaves?
8. Thomas will give the friar something under what conditions?
9. After the friar agrees to Thomas’ conditions, where does Thomas say his gift is? What happens while the friar is reaching around looking for it?
10. What puzzles the friar after he has received Thomas’ gift?
11. What is the wealthy lord’s solution to the friar’s quandary?
12. What is the moral of this tale?

**The Seven Deadly Sins**

**Lust** or **lechery** (carnal "*luxuria*") is an intense desire. It is usually thought of as excessive sexual wants, however the word was originally a general term for desire. Therefore lust could involve the intense desire of money, fame, or power as well.

**Gluttony:** Derived from the Latin *gluttire*, meaning to gulp down or swallow, **gluttony** (Latin, *gula*) is the over-indulgence and [over-consumption](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Over-consumption) of anything to the point of waste. In Christian religions, it is considered a sin because of the excessive desire for food, and its withholding from the needy. Gluttony can be interpreted as [selfishness](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Selfishness); essentially placing concern with one's own interests above the well-being or interests of others.

**Greed** (Latin, *avaritia*), also known as **avarice** or **covetousness**, is, like lust and gluttony, a sin of excess. However, greed (as seen by the church) is applied to a very excessive or rapacious desire and pursuit of material possessions. "Avarice" is more of a blanket term that can describe many other examples of greedy behavior. These include disloyalty, deliberate [betrayal](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Betrayal), or [treason](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Treason),especially for personal gain, for example through [bribery](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bribery)

**Sloth** (Latin, *Socordia*) can entail different vices. While sloth is sometimes defined as physical laziness, spiritual laziness is emphasized. Failing to develop spiritually is key to becoming guilty of sloth.

**Wrath** (Latin, *ira*), also known as "[rage](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rage_(emotion))", may be described as inordinate and uncontrolled feelings of hatred and anger. Wrath, in its purest form, presents with self-destructiveness, violence, and hate that may provoke [feuds](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Feuds) that can go on for centuries. Wrath may persist long after the person who did another a grievous wrong is dead. Feelings of anger can manifest in different ways, including [impatience](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Impatience), [revenge](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Revenge), and [vigilantism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vigilantism).

Like greed and lust, **Envy** (Latin, *invidia*) is characterized by an insatiable desire. Envy is similar to jealousy in that they both feel discontent towards someone’s traits, status, abilities, or rewards. The difference is the envious also desire that entity and [covet](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Covet) it.

In almost every list, **pride** (Latin, *superbia*), or **hubris** (Greek), is considered the original and most serious of the seven deadly sins, and the source of the others. It is identified as a desire to be more important or attractive than others, failing to acknowledge the good work of others, and excessive love of self (especially holding self out of proper position toward God).