

Extract from Chaucer's Canterbury Tales

Extract from The Canterbury Tales – The Cook's Tale

Attempt to translate this extract of The Cook's Tale. Read through the first nine lines which have been both literally translated and turned into Modern English.

Translate lines 10-12 into Modern English. For lines 13-15 you are on your own – but use the glossary to help you.

Heer bigynneth the Cokes tale.	Here begins the cook's tale:
A prentis whylom dwelled in our citee, <i>An apprentice formerly lived in our city,</i>	An apprentice used to live in our city
And of a craft of vitaillers was he; <i>And of the craft of food and drink retailers was he;</i>	Who was in the trade of food and drink;
Gaillard he was as goldfinch in the shawe, <i>Lively he was as a goldfinch in the woods,</i>	He dressed as brightly as a goldfinch in the wood,
Broun as a berie, a propre short felawe, <i>Brown as a berry, a proper short fellow,</i>	He was brown as a berry and a really short man,
With lokkes blake, y-kempt ful fetisly. <i>With locks black, ordered very handsomely</i>	He had black hair which was carefully styled.
Dauncen he coude so wel and Iolily, <i>Dance he could so well and jollily</i>	He so danced well and happily
That he was cleped Perkin Revelour. <i>That he was called Perkin Reveller.</i>	That he was nick-named Perkin the Reveller.
He was as ful of love and paramour <i>He was as full of love and desire</i>	He was as full of love and desire
As is the hyve ful of hony swete; <i>As is the hive full of honey sweet;</i>	As a hive is full of sweet honey.

Wel was the wenche with him mighte mete. <i>Well was the woman with him might meet</i>	
At every brydale wolde he singe and hoppe, <i>At every bridal would he sing and hop</i>	
He loved bet the taverne than the shoppe. <i>He loved better the tavern than the shop.</i>	
For whan ther any ryding was in Chepe,	
Out of the shoppe thider wolde he lepe.	
Til that he hadde al the sighte y-seyn...	

Glossary

ryding - parade/procession

Chepe - Cheapside - an area of the city.

thider - towards it

lepe - leap

y-seyn - seen