

# DR. JOHN'S BLACKBERRY JAM

---

A guided imagery prereading activity for the prologue to Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*.

Dr. John's Blackberry Jam is a regional festival with all kinds of music: rock, hip-hop, jazz, country, classical, gospel. People come from all over for this festival, and you are there with some friends.

Your friends have left you with their things while they go to get some Cokes. You've been looking at all the different people when you notice someone in particular, someone you don't know.

- What does this person look like? What kind of clothing is s/he wearing? About how old is s/he? What makes you think this?
- What kind of job do you think this person has?
- You walk over to say hello. Is s/he friendly? What does s/he say?
- This person isn't here alone. Who is with him/her? Describe the companion. Give both people names.
- They start to tell you about their trip to Dr. John's Blackberry Jam. What happened to them on the way? Was it funny? frightening? saddening? Did it give you more hope for the future?

As they finish their story, you see your friends coming back with your Coke. You say good-bye and rejoin your friends.

---

Write the story of this incident. Include description of the people's appearance as well as the story they tell. What kind of person have you met? Friendly? Dishonest? Depressed? Devious? Honest? By the time reader finishes reading your story, we should know a great deal about the person you met.

ASSESSMENT			
	BEGINNING	DEVELOPING	PROFICIENT
Story includes thorough description of appearance and personality.	Limited description.	Some description of appearance and personality.	Details of appearance, speech, and mannerisms bring characters to life.
Story includes narrative of the other person's journey.	Limited narrative development	Simple narrative holds reader's interest.	Complex narrative holds reader's interest.
Story includes dialogue.	Limited or indirect quotations	Characters speak to one another.	Dialogue is lively and realistic.
The writer observes conventions of writing.	Several lapses in conventions noted.	Lapses in conventions do not distract the reader.	No lapses in conventions noted.

## FOLLOW-UP TO DR. JOHN'S BLACKBERRY JAM:

After reading Chaucer's Prologue, have students rewrite their earlier story in iambic pentameter. Put student stories together to create a prologue to the Blackberry Jam.

ASSESSMENT			
	BEGINNING	DEVELOPING	PROFICIENT
The story includes thorough description of appearance and personality.	Limited description.	Some description of appearance and personality.	Details of appearance, speech, and mannerisms bring characters to life.
The story includes narrative of the other person's journey.	Limited narrative development	Simple narrative holds reader's interest.	Complex narrative holds reader's interest.
The story is written in iambic pentameter.	Fewer than 80% of the lines are iambic pentameter.	At least 80% of the lines are iambic pentameter	Flawless iambic pentameter throughout
The story has a rhyme scheme.	Rhyme is absent.	Rhyme is inconsistent or distracting.	Careful rhyme adds to enjoyment of the story.
The writer observes conventions of writing.	Several lapses in conventions noted.	Lapses in conventions do not distract the reader.	No lapses in conventions noted.