



## Geoffrey Chaucer

**G**eoffrey Chaucer was born in London around 1340. His father was a prominent wine merchant, a member of the developing middle class. His father's successful business provided Geoffrey with the opportunity for a good education. He learned Latin, French and Italian. Besides, as a teenager, he became a page in the household of a son of King Edward III, thus getting close to the world of aristocracy.

Throughout his life, Chaucer was a high-level public servant, serving as a soldier, diplomat, and civil administrator. His diplomatic travels brought him twice to Italy, where he probably met Boccaccio, whose writing influenced Chaucer's work.

In addition to his government work, Chaucer was also a poet.

After translating the works of others, in 1369 he wrote his first major work, *Book of the Duchess*. His longest poem, *Troilus and Creseide*, was probably completed in 1385. He started his major work, *The Canterbury Tales*, around 1386 and continued to work on it until his death in 1400. He was buried in Westminster Abbey, in the area known as Poets' Corner.

Chaucer wrote in the vernacular, the English that was spoken by common people. Under this aspect, he was influenced by the works of the Florentines Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio, who wrote in the Italian vernacular.

### activities



### ↓ SPEAKING

Introduce Geoffrey Chaucer to the rest of the class.

