

HWÆT YE EARDAS
 na mæra dædum. þood cýningas
 þrym se þamon hada æþelingsas alle
 fe medon. oþe seýld seþing searþe
 þæt eum monegū mæghum meode seald
 of ceali esode eorl syddan aqer þæt
 fea searþe fundon he þæt þroþra seba
 þæx undeg polenum þeas myndum þald
 æþ him æþpyle þætta ymb sitzen drea
 oþe hron. þade hyran seolde. somþan
 sylðan þæt se god cýning. Ðan ærþra þæt
 ærþe comed soþus mæardum þone god
 sende folce coproþe fýro. Ðærfe on
 gear þæt ærþra aldor. Lange
 hyle him þæt lip. þæt pulþra. þæt lode
 þæt aldor. þæt searþe. þæt þæt. þæt
 blæd þæt. þæt searþe. þæt searþe. þæt
 landum in. þæt searþe. þæt searþe. þæt
 se þæt. þæt searþe. þæt searþe. þæt

Beowulf- Old English text

Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*- Middle English

Þerto he coude endure a masse a thyng
 Ther coude no man pynche at hese wrytyng
 And eyn sturte coude he pleyen he rote
 He rod but homely in a medel case
 Gyrt with a seynt of silf wif þæt searþe sturte
 of hese now telle I no semyre tale
 A frutfuler was in hese cýnyng
 wher was hese berd as is þe darsie
 Of copleron he was sungyn
 wel louede he se mote a sepe in wry
 To leyn in dert was euer beke wone
 for he was epur ouene some
 þæt held appon þæt pleyen dert
 was uery felate þæt se
 In housholdere a þæt a gret was he
 seynt jelson he was in that cýntee
 hese bred hese ale was alwey aser on
 a seere empouere man was noþer non

Enter Hamlet.
 Cor. Madame, will it please your grace
 To leave vs here?
 Que. With all my hart. *exit.*
 Cor. And here *Ofelia*, reade you on this booke,
 And walke aloofe, the King shal be vnscene.
 Ham. To be, or not to be, I there's the point,
 To Die, to sleepe, is that all? I all!
 No, to sleepe, to dreame, I mary there it goes,
 For in that dreame of death, when wee awake,
 And borne before an euerslalling Iudge,
 From whence no passenger euer returnd,
 The vndiscovered countrey, at whose sight
 The happy smile, and the accursed damn'd.
 But for this, the ioyfull hope of this,
 Whol'd beare the scornes and flattery of the world,
 Scorned by the right rich, the rich curst of the poore?

Shakespeare's *Hamlet*- Early Modern English

