“The Pardoner’s Tale”

1. Why would he admit that he preaches to make a profit?
2. Identify the “deadly” sins he is guilty of committing.
3. (lines 45-55) What do we learn about the rioters?
4. Why do they want to kill death?
5. Who is the old man? What purpose might he serve?
6. What personification of death does he offer? What does this image suggest?
7. (line 141) Why does the old man add, “if you should live till them”?
8. (line 166) What is ironic about this line?
9. What does the capital F in fortune tell you? What have the men forgotten?
10. (lines 185-234) Characterize each rioter at this point. What do they have in common with the Pardoner?
11. What is ironic about line 254?
12. What is meant by “the devil’s clay”?
13. Argue for or against his conclusion that the rioters “received their due”.
14. Respond to the request the Pardoner makes of the other pilgrims after he finishes his tale (lines 291-312). How does this justify Chaucer’s characterization of him in the Prologue?
15. The tale is a satire. Explain.
16. What moral do you think Chaucer wants drawn from this tale?