**S6 The Preaching of the Swallow Worksheet**

Name…………………….. Teacher……………. Date………….

The theological importance of this Fable is emphasised by the unusually lengthy introduction (ll.1622‑1712).

1. We are told in the first stanza that God's ways are beyond compare; what

reason is given for‑this ? (Own words:)

. ……………………

2. Because the soul is *fettent in presoun corporail* (l. 1630),what problem does

that impose on us?

. .

3. Be sure that you see the key words in each of these similes: l. 1635: *Lyke as*;

and l.1641: *Sa is.* In each case. what is being compared to what?

i is being compared to ………………………………………….

ii is being compared to ………………………………………….

4. Why does Aristotle say that man's soul is like a bat's eye?

………………………………………………………………………………………

5. What evidence is there that God is good, according to the fifth stanza?

. …………………………………………………………………

6. And what evidence is there that He is wise, according to the sixth?

. .

1. In ONE WORD EACH, what is the subject of:

stanza nine? ........................................................

stanza ten? ........................................................

stanzas eleven and twelve? ........................................................

stanza thirteen? ........................................................

8. Look at your answer to no. 7; what has this got to do with the fable itself?

. .

9. What figure of speech does Henryson use very frequently in his description of

winter? Copy out one line which seems a particularly good example:

The figure of speech is ...........................................................

Example...........................................................................................................................

10. In what way does stanza fourteen (ll.1713‑1719) introduce a new idea?

. .

11. You have come across some of the conventions of mediaeval writing by now,

like the dream vision., here are two others: the walk in a pleasant place ( known as

the *locus amoenus*) and the person who overhears a conversation or witnesses an

event, or, as in this case, a sequence of events.

12. In what way do stanzas 14‑23 (ll.1713‑1775) form a distinct section of the

poem?

. .

13. One of the most remarkable aspects of this fable is the manner in which

Henryson conveys a sense of urgency to the swallow's words. Look at some of the

**techniques** he employs to do so:

i The direct dialogue between the swallow and .....................................

ii The creation of a sense of actuality, as if he were describing something happening in front of their eyes, by means of *Se ye/lo se!/* and the word *yone: yone churll ... yone pleuch .... yone lint ... yone churll* … (ll. 1743‑1746).

iii The fact that the swallow already has it all thought out, the problem (ll. 1743‑

7), what to do about it (lines……………) and the moral behind it (lines….……….)

iv The inexorable movement of the poem through the seasons, giving the

feeling of the inevitability of fate approaching the birds.

v The frequent references to the state of the growing lint.

1. In what way do lines 1776‑1831 form a distinct section of the poem?

………………………………………………………………………………………….

1. Look at the urgency of the swallow's second speech (11. 1769‑1817)

i The demonstrative word *yone* is used again in these lines, how many times?

...............................

ii The swallow uses urgent imperatives, as in line 1792: "Lift up .........

Find two other such examples in these lines:

............................................. ...........................................................

16. The stanza beginning on line 1825 gives technical descriptions of the business of lint‑processing. It also contains nine examples of the past tense *‑it* ending. Write them down

…………………………….. ………………………. ……………………….

……………………………... ………………………. ……………………….

17. In the same stanza there are four other past tense verbs, write them down too:

………………. ………………… ……………….. …………………

18. Do you remember how Henryson described winter in the introduction? What

is he doing again in lines 1832‑8? Copy out an example:

.............................. ................................................................................................

19. Why is line 1851 significant?

. .

20. In the swallow's last speech on lines 1853‑1866, what does Henryson do to

create a sense of urgency ( ‑ apart from the *yone.)*

. .

. .

21. What structural device does he usein lines 1860‑6?

. .

22. As the fables progress, the endings become more and more bleak; these little

birds are certainly guilty of negligence, but their fate is violent in the extreme. Write

down some of the words by which Henryson conveys the violence of their end:

. .

23. Copy out the line from the *Moralitas* in which Henryson once again

deprecates the writing of fables:

………………………………………………………………………………………….

24. In the explanation of the fable,

the sower represents: ........................................................................

the birds represent: ........................................................................

the swallow represents: ........................................................................

25. Write a sentence in which you try to state what the lesson is that Henryson

would expect his readers to take from the fable (do not make any reference to birds).

…………………………………………………………………………………………