“The Wife of Bath’s Tale” Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

British Literature

1. According to the Wife of Bath, why can't people see elves any more? What has driven them out of their natural habitat?
2. What happens to the maid riding alone through the corn?
3. What crime does the lusty bachelor commit? What is "maidenhead"? [Hint: This does not mean he decapitated the girl, as some students have mistakenly declared.]
4. What is the initial punishment King Arthur orders for the knight? Who intervenes and requests a special trial?
5. Who is in charge of this special trial for the rapist knight?
6. What must the knight do to save his head (i.e., what mission does the court give him)?
7. How long does the Knight have to fulfill this mission?
8. What problem does the Knight find when he starts asking women what the want?
9. What strange sight does the knight see while riding through the forest on his return journey?
10. What do the twenty-four women do or what happens to them as the knight approaches?
11. What does the Old Hag say she wants in return for providing the answer to the knight's riddle? (Hint: She doesn't tell the knight she wants to marry him.)
12. What is the Queen and the court's reaction to the knight's answer?
13. What defense does the hag provide for her poverty and her ugliness?
14. Why are these advantages, according to her?
15. How does the hag's appearance change at the end of the story?