Originally writing over 600 years ago, Geoffrey Chaucer is today enjoying a global renaissance. Why do poets, translators, and audiences from so many cultures and different parts of the world find Chaucer so inspiring? In part, it is down to the character and sheer inventiveness of Chaucer’s work. His writing covered a range of social registers, from noble tragedy to barnyard farce, and his tale-telling geography is vast, his fascination with varieties of religious belief endless, and his desire to voice female experience especially remarkable. Geoffrey Chaucer: A Very Short Introduction introduces the life, performance, and poetry of Chaucer, and analyses his astonishing and enduring appeal, including what made his writing unique.

Medieval Literature: A Very Short Introduction
Elaine Treharne

Medieval Literature: A Very Short Introduction provides a compelling account of the emergence of the earliest literature in Britain and Ireland, including English, Welsh, Scottish, Irish, Anglo-Latin, and Anglo-Norman. Introducing the reader to some of the greatest poetry, prose, and drama ever written, it discusses the historical and intellectual background to these works, and considers the physical production of the manuscripts and the earliest beginnings of print culture. Covering well-known texts, like Beowulf, The Canterbury Tales, and the Mabinogion, as well as less familiar texts, such as sermons, saints’ lives, lyrics, and histories, major themes such as sin and salvation, kingship and authority, and myth and the monstrous are discussed.