Study Guide/Questions for “A Knight’s Tale”
Connecting the film to “The Canterbury Tales”

I. Characters – Fill in the appropriate boxes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Knight</th>
<th>His Squires</th>
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| AKA (Also Known As)                 | and
| Sir Ulrich von Lichtenstein from    | and
| Geldeland                           | and

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>His Lady</th>
<th>His Enemy</th>
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<tr>
<th>His Liege Lord</th>
<th>His father</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AKA</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The “Black Prince of Wales”</td>
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II. Plot

1. How does William become a “knight?”

2. According to the rules of feudalism, why would William never be allowed to be a knight?

3. What does William mean when he says “A man can change his stars” after his first joust posing as Sir Ector?

4. As William is convincing Wat and Roland to go along with his scheme, he mentions the unfairness of the system that only allows nobility to be knights. What is his argument?
5. Other than the fact that he is naked, what is a clear difference between Geoffrey Chaucer and William, Wat, and Roland?

6. Why is it not surprising that the three had not heard of Chaucer or his book “The Book of the Duchess”?

7. When Chaucer says “Oh well, it was allegorical” and Wat replies, “Well, we won’t hold that against you. That’s for each man to decide for himself!” what is the basis of the misunderstanding?

8. When William asks her to speak, Jocelyn replies “But sir, my sex are marred by their silence” when William asks her to speak. Also, when Kate is asking about William’s armor, she says “Do they say I can’t do it because I’m a woman?” What does this show you about the role of women in the Middle Ages?

9. Two characters from the Prologue are responsible for Chaucer’s troubles early in the film. Which two are they?

Even though this is not a part of The Canterbury Tales, why is it believable?

10. When Chaucer tells them later “I will eviscerate you in fiction – every last pimple, every last character flaw. I was naked for a day. You will be naked for eternity” what does he mean? Even though this movie is not based on fact, why would the film’s writer have had the character say that?

11. Chaucer serves as William’s herald, introducing him to the crowd before a joust. Why is this appropriate to what you know about Chaucer?
12. Chaucer’s second introduction of William before a much larger crowd, he begins by saying he first met William in Jerusalem praying after having been in Saracen, Italy and Greece. He also refers to him as “the seeker of serenity.” How does this fit with what you know of the knight in The Canterbury Tales?

13. When William is knocked unconscious briefly, his mind returns to his childhood and a conversation with his father. What do you learn about him?

14. In his third joust, William defeats his opponent after he is told “His people starve while he sits at banquet.” Why does this inspire William to fight harder?

15. William jousts Sir Thomas Colville in Rouen, but instead of defeating him after Colville is injured, William honors his request to keep his honor in tact. A. What does this show about William?

b. How does this pay off for William later in the story when the true identity of Colville is revealed?

16. Who did Sir Thomas Colville turn out to be? Why did he disguise himself?

17. In what country do the jousting tournaments take place? What nationality are William and his knights?

18. William and his knights speak English, as do Chaucer and Jocelyn. Given the location of their tournaments and the level of society each represents, what language should each character speak?

William: ____________________________  Wat & Roland: ____________________________
Jocelyn: ____________________________  Count Adhemar: ____________________________
Chaucer: ____________________________


20. Jocelyn tells William “If you would prove your love, you should do your worst…. Instead of winning to honor me with your fine reputation, I want you to lose …. To show your obedience to your lover and not to yourself.” A. What does this remind you of from The Canterbury Tales? B. She later changes her mind and tells him that in order to prove his love for her, he will win the tournament. Does this also fit with your answer to part A?
21. William has a flashback on the barge traveling back to England of when he was first placed in service to Sir Ector. For how long was his commitment and why would his father send him away?

22. [Setting] William visits Cheapside, an area of London populated by the lower class. Where is this reference in the Prologue of *The Canterbury Tales*?

23. After William is found out to be a phony, Jocelyn says she is willing to run away with him, even if it means living in a hovel with pigs because the poor can marry for love. Why is this a true statement of life in the Middle Ages?

24. “He that strives to touch a star oft stumbles on a simple straw. You have been weighed; you have been measured, and you have been found wanting. In what world would you have ever beaten me?” Who says these words to William; when are they said, and what do they mean?

25. Prince Edward knights William after William has been in the stockade. Why does he do this and does it fit with what you know about the rules of chivalry and knighthood?

26. William continues to fight in the final joust even after his is seriously injured. Why does he do this?

27. Did watching this movie help you understand the Middle Ages and *The Canterbury Tales*? If so, how? If not, why not?

b. Did you enjoy “A Knight’s Tale?” Would you recommend it to a friend or watch it again? What makes it a good story (use literary elements like plot, character, setting, theme in your answer.)