

Language Identification

What stage of the English language is represented in each of the following samples? As far as possible, describe the characteristics from which you can tell in the following domains:

- Orthography
- Inflection
- Vocabulary
- Syntax

i

And whan this myschaunce byfalle was, þe people of þe land made sorowe ynow, & were an-angryd; & for encheson þerof þei dreven Brut out of þe land, & wolde not suffre hym among hem. and he saw þat he moste not abyde, & went fro thens in-to þe Greek; & þer he fonde seven þusent men þat were of þe lynage & kynrede of Troy, þat weren come of gret blod, as þe story telleth as of men and wommen & childryn, þe wheche weren all holden in thraldom and bondage [by] the Kyng Pandras of Greek, for the deth of Achilles, þat was betrayed and slayn at Troye.

ii

Men ða leofestan, ute gehyran her Godes word and gelyfan on urne God, se þe gelyfan wyle, he bið gehealden on heofonan. And ute gemunan þæt we sculon ealle deade beon, for þam se æresta man se ðe wæs acenned on þissere worulde he onfeng deaðes. And ic eow secge to soþan þæt Elias and Enoch cumað of heofonum hider on eorðan us to tacne, and hy sculon deaðes onfon ær domes dæge.

iii

And as in arithmetic unpractised men must, and professors themselves may often, err, and cast up false; so also in any other subject of reasoning, the ablest, most attentive, and most practised men may deceive themselves, and infer false conclusions; not but that reason itself is always right reason, as well as arithmetic is a certain and infallible art: but no one man's reason, nor the reason of any one number of men, makes the certainty; no more than an account is therefore well cast up because a great many men have unanimously approved it.