

# CHASE

Consortium for the Humanities and the Arts South-East England

## Old English Language Training Adverbs, Conjunctions, and Prepositions

### PREPOSITIONS

Many are easy to recognize by their similarity to MnE words. See how well you can guess:

1) Which of these means *before* (in time)?

æfter      ær      æt      be

2) Which of these means *between*?

beforan      betweox      binnan      bufan

3) Which of these means *from*?

eac      for      fram      geond

4) Which of these means *with*?

in      innan      mid      of

5) Which of these means *in/on* or *into/onto*?

on      ongean      oð      to

6) Which of these means *through*?

togeanes      þurh      under      wið      ymbe

## ADVERBS

There are a few ways adverbs can be formed from adjectives and nouns. The easiest adverbs to spot are ones that end in *-lice*, equivalent to MnE *-ly*. Here are some examples:

baldlice	boldly
blīpelice	joyfully
freondlice	in a friendly manner
sarlice	painfully, sorely
wearmlice	warmly

Peter Baker gives a list of several dozen common adverbs in Chapter 10 of his *Introduction to Old English*. Many are identical, or nearly identical, to modern ones, e.g.: *æfter* (after), *eall* (entirely), *her* (here), *in* (in), *oft* (often), *to* (too), *up* (up), *ut* (out).

Some look entirely different to the MnE equivalents. Here are some that common enough to be worth remembering:

ætgædere	together
eac	also
fela	much
huru	indeed
hwæðre	nevertheless
hwilum	at times
na	not at all
sona	immediately
swiðe	very

## CONJUNCTIONS

The coordinating conjunctions:

and/ond	and
ac	but
oððe	or

Some useful subordinating conjunctions:

ær þam	until
butan	unless
gif	if
oð þæt	until

## ADVERBS/SUBORDINATING CONJUNCTIONS

Peter Baker gives a list of two dozen subordinating conjunctions. Of these, the majority are words that can also be used as (conjunctive) adverbs. (Sometimes the word is doubled or followed by a *þe* to indicate that the conjunction is intended, but not always.) Here are the terms that can function as adverbs or coordinating conjunctions depending on context:

OE WORD	AS ADVERB	AS CONJUNCTION
ær	before	before
for þam (þe)	therefore	because
nu	now	now that
siððan	afterwards	after
swa	so	as
swelce	likewise	as if
þa	then	when
þanon	thence	whence
þær	there	where
þeah (þe)	nevertheless	though
þenden	while	while
þider (þe)	thither	whither
þonne	then	when

## EXCERCISE

Adverb and Conjunction Practice—the opening lines of *Dream of the Rood*

- 1) Hwæt, ic swefna cyst secgan wylle,  
hwæt mē gemætte tō midre nihte  
**syðþan** reordberend reste wunedon.

*Lo I of the best of dreams wish to tell  
what came to me in the middle of the night  
\_\_\_\_\_ speech-bearers dwelled at rest.*

- 2) Þūhte mē **þæt** ic gesāwe syllicre trēow  
on lyft lædan, lēohte bewunden,  
bēama beorhtost.

*It seemed to me \_\_\_\_\_ I saw the best of trees  
lifted in the air, wound round by light,  
brightest of beams*

- 3) **Eall** þæt bēacen wæs  
 begoten mid golde; ġimmas stōdon  
 fægere æt foldan scēatum;
- \_\_\_\_\_ *that beacon was  
 covered with gold; gems stood  
 fair at the corners of the earth.*
- 4) **swylce** þær fife wæron / uppe on þām eaxlēgespanne.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ *there were five / up on the shoulder-span*
- 5) Behēoldon **þær** engel Dryhtnes ealle / fægere þurh forðgescaft.  
 Beheld \_\_\_\_\_ *the angel of the Lord all (those) / fair through forth-creation.*
- 6) Ne wæs ðær **hūru** fracodes ġealga,  
 ac hine þær behēoldon hāliġe ġāstas,  
 men ofer moldan, ond eall þēos mære ġescaft.
- Nor was there \_\_\_\_\_ the gallows of a criminal,  
 but beheld him there the holy spirits,  
 men over the earth, and all this great creation.*
- 7) Syllic wæs se siġebēam ond ic synnum fāh,  
 forwunded mid wommum. Ġeseah ic wuldres trēow  
 wædum ġeweorðode, wynnum scīnan,  
 ġeġyred mid golde; ġimmas hæfdon  
 bewriġene **weorðlice** Wealdendes trēow.
- Glorious was the victory-beam and I by sins stained,  
 wounded with corruption. Saw I the tree of glory  
 honoured with clothing, shining with joys,  
 wound round with gold; gems had  
 covered \_\_\_\_\_ the tree of the ruler. Hint: weorþ adj. = worthy*
- 8) **Hwæðre** ic þurh þæt gold onġytan meahte  
 earmra ærġewin, þæt hit ærest ongan  
 swætān on þā swīðran healfe.
- \_\_\_\_\_ *I through that gold might perceive  
 the ancient strife of wretched ones, that it first began  
 to bleed on the right side.*

9) **Eall** ic wæs mid sorgum gedrēfed; / forht ic wæs for þære fæggran gesyhðe.

\_\_\_\_\_ *I was with sorrows drenched / afraid I as for the fair sight*

10) **Geseah** ic þæt fīse bēacen  
wendan wædum ond blēom; **hwīlum** hit wæs mid wātan bestēmed,  
beswyled mid swātes gange, **hwīlum** mid since gēgyrwed.

*Saw I that eager beacon  
change clothing and colour; \_\_\_\_\_ it was made wet with water  
covered with the tracks of sweat/blood, \_\_\_\_\_ with treasure wound round.*

11) **Hwæðre** ic þær licgende lange hwīle  
behēold hrēowcearig Hælandes trēow,  
**oð ðæt** ic gēhūrde þæt hit hlēoðrode.

\_\_\_\_\_ *I there lying a long while  
beheld penitently-sorrowful the tree of the saviour  
\_\_\_\_\_ I heard that it spoke.*