

Exercise

In the following passage from the *Ormulum*, describe Orm's verse-type and his use of punctuation. Do you think his final *-e* spelling was always pronounced? How many syllables are there before each 'full stop' (period)? What do the full stops mark?

The Ormulum, late twelfth century

þiss boc iss nennned Orrmulum.
Forrþi þatt Orrm itt wrohhte.

this book is called Ormulum.
Because Orm it wrought (= *made*).

Icc hafe wennd inntill
Ennglissh. Goddspelles hall3he
lare. Affterr þatt little witt
þatt me. Min Drrihhtin hafeþþ
lenedd.

I have turned into
English. (*The*) gospel's holy
lore. After that little with
that me. My Lord has
lent (= *granted*).

Annd wha-se wilenn shall þiss
boc. Efft oþerr siþe writenn.
Himm bidde icc þat he't write
rihht. Swa-summ þiss bov himm
tæcheþþ. All þwerrt-ut affterr
þatt itt iss. Uppo þiss firrste
bisne. Wiþþall swillc rime
alls her iss sett. Wiþþall þe
fele wordess. Annd tatt he loke
wel þatt he. An bocstaff write
twi33ess. E33whær þær itt uppo
þiss boc. Iss writenn o þatt
wise. Loke he wel þatt he't
wrote swa. Forr he ne ma33
nohht elless. Onn Ennglissh
writenn rihht te word. Þatt
wite he wel to soþe.

And whoever intend shall this
book. Again another time write.
Him ask I that he it copy
right. In the same way (*that*) this book him
teaches. Entirely after (*the way*)
that it is. According to this first
exemplar. With all such rhyme
as here is set (*down*). With all the
many words. And (*I ask*) that he look
well that he. A letter writes
twice. Everywhere it within
this book. Is written in that
way. Look he well that he it
wrote so. For he must
not else (= *otherwise*). In English
write correctly the word. That
(*should*) know he well for sure