My name is Arthur Bahr. I'm an associate professor of Literature at MIT. I am a medievalist and I am going to read the first twelve lines of "Beowulf" in Old English.

Hwæt! We Gar-Dena   in gear-dagum
þeod-cyninga,   þrym gefrunon,
hu ða æþelingas   ellen fremedon!
Oft Scyld Scefing   sceaþena þreatum
monegum mægþum   meodo-setla ofteah;
egsode eorl[as]   syððan ærest wearð
feasceaft funden;   he þæs frofre gebad,
weox under wolcnum,   weorð-myndum þah,
oðæt him æghwylc   þara ymb-sittendra
ofer hron-rade   hyran scolde,
gomban gyldan.   Þæt wæs god cyning!

And I am going to read the first stanza of "Sir Gawain and the Green Knight" in the original Middle English.

SIÞEN þe sege and þe assaut watz sesed at Troye,
Þe bor3 brittened and brent to bronde3 and askez,
Þe tulk þat þe trammes of tresoun þer wro3t
Watz tried for his tricherie, þe trewest on erþe:
Hit watz Ennias þe athel, and his highe kynde,
Þat siþen depreced prouinces, and patrounes bicome
Welne3e of al þe wele in þe west iles.
Fro riche Romulus to Rome ricchis hym swyþe,
With gret bobbaunce þat bur3e he biges vpon fyrst,
And neuenes hit his aune nome, as hit now hat;
Tirius to Tuskan and teldes bigynnes,
Langaberde in Lumbardie lyftes vp homes,
And fer ouer þe French flod Felix Brutus
On mony bonkkes ful brode Bretayn he settez
wyth wynne,
Where werre and wrake and wonder
Bi syþez hatz wont þerinne,
And oft boþe blysse and blunder
Ful skete hatz skyfted synne.

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