How to search online resources for primary sources relating to Victorian literature

English and Related Literature 1st Year Undergraduates
Spring 2016
# Victorian Literature: Getting started in the Library

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Aims

This workbook follows on from the workbook “Getting started in the Library”. The first workbook introduces you to the Library catalogue, and to LION and the MLA Bibliography – databases where you can search for references to journal articles. This workbook introduces further resources which you can use to find secondary material such as journal articles, but concentrates in particular on resources which provide primary material to support your research into specific periods and genres of literature.

By the end of this workbook you will be able to:

- Think about the topic you have been given and how to search for information on it.
- Select and use some of the different types of Library resources available to find primary material.
- Explore the relevant database(s) for your subject area to find references on a particular topic
- Perform searches of the database(s) using simple and advanced search techniques.

About this workbook

Each section of this workbook consists of explanatory notes and instructions. Some sections include tasks for you to complete. Keep the workbook for future reference and go over any sections you are unsure of in your own time.

- Things that you need to type are displayed in courier font.
- Instructions assume that you are using the Internet Explorer browser (the IT Services supported Web browser). However, you can use another Web browser.
1 Creating an effective search strategy

Creating an effective search strategy will help to ensure that you find the key material for your research. A strategy can be applied to any searchable information resource, and is particularly helpful when searching large bibliographic databases, or resources like the Web.

Exercise 1

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is the title of your essay?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are the main keywords that you could use to sum this up?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What synonyms (alternative words) could you use instead of these keywords?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using the techniques described in the presentation (AND, OR, brackets, * etc), try to pull your keywords together into a search statement</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
2 Accessing bibliographic databases for English: a reminder

Bibliographic databases index journal articles by author, title, subject etc. They can also be searched by keyword. Some provide direct links to the full-text of the article, but for some you will have to see if the Library has the journal you need in stock by searching for the title of the JOURNAL (i.e. not the article title).

Exercise 2

- From the Library homepage http://www.york.ac.uk/library/, look at the Library Essentials section on the right and click on E-Resources Guide
- Once the E-Resources Guide window has opened, change the E-Resources by Subject box on the left to the subject of interest e.g. English & Related Literature
- This will bring up a list of databases relevant to English. If you click on the symbol, this gives a brief explanation of what each database covers. The is a guide to the resource.

3 Searching the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography

An illustrated collection of 50,000 specially written biographies of the men and women who shaped all aspects of Britain's past, from the fourth century BC to the year 2000.

Exercise 3

- Within the English section of the E-Resources Guide, select Oxford Dictionary of National Biography from the list
- In the search box, type in the name of the author you wish to research e.g. Oscar Wilde and then click Go
- Then click on the link to Wilde, Oscar Fingal O’Flahertie Wills to find out more about this author
- Now look at the top and click on Full text.
- Type in your search as below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Find</th>
<th>homosexual Complete text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Match:</td>
<td>Exact</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| AND | OR | WITHOUT | literature Complete text |
|------|-----|----------|
| Match: | Exact | All words | Any words |
Then click on **Search**
From the options on the left, enter **1860** into the **Year** box.
Look down the list of results to see people alive at the same time as Oscar Wilde (including writers) upon whom homosexuality had an impact.

4 Searching Literature Online: a reminder

We looked at this resource in autumn term. It is a searchable, online library of over 300,000 works of English and American poetry, prose and drama.

**Exercise 4**

- Make sure you are still in the **English** section of the **E-Resources Guide**, and click on the link to **LION • Literature Online**
- Enter your **IT Services login and password** if required
- The next page will automatically link to LION
- On the next screen, click on **Search Authors**
- In the author box, type in the name of the author you are interested in e.g. **Bronte, Charlotte** and click on **Look up Author Name**
- Click the link for **Bronte, Charlotte, 1816-1855**
- Click on **Search within texts**
- Enter **Villette** into the **Title Keyword(s) box**
- Select the link for Villette
- Presss Ctrl F and do a search for **French** as one of the themes in the book is Lucy’s isolation through not knowing the language.
- In the main search box, type in **Victorian and women and educat***
  **TIP:** * is the truncation symbol which lets you search for words beginning with the same stem – for example, educat* finds education and educational
- In the **Criticism** section, where there is a icon, this means that a full-text version of the journal article is available electronically.
- Click on **View More results** to show the full range of what you have found.
5 Searching Past Masters: English Letters for Primary Sources

A fully searchable, full text collection of titles from the Cambridge Companions series. They are also good at looking for theoretical concepts.

Exercise 5

- Repeat Exercise 2
- From the list of English databases, click on the link to Past Masters – English Letters
- Click on the link to Dickens: Letters (I-XII)
- In the search box towards the top type in your search e.g. “Poor Law”
- Click on the link to see the words in their original context
- Click on the Titles link at the top, and this time choose Modern Era: 1800-1950, The
- In the search box type Villette. This will then show both letters by Charlotte Bronte on the novel and also how other writers responded to it.
6 Searching the British and Irish Women’s Letters and Diaries for information about women

British and Irish Women’s Letters and Diaries is a major collection of diaries and correspondence spanning more than 400 years and giving access to the personal experiences of nearly 500 women.

Exercise 6

- Repeat Exercise 2
- From the list of English databases, click on the link to British and Irish Women’s Letters and Diaries
- From the Search options, choose Simple
- Then do the search below and click on Search

**Simple Search**

Search word or phrase: communis* (e.g., school house)

Note
The vertical line (|) serves as the OR operator (e.g., instructor|teacher or music|history|lessons).
For pattern matching one may employ wildcard characters (e.g., educat* retrieves educate, educated, education etc.).

Limit your search by the following fields:

- **Author:**
- **Year Written:**
  - 1840-1890
- **Document Type:**
- **Subject Headings:**
  - Terms: (e.g., Racism)

- This shows what women writing at the time knew and thought about communism.
7 Searching JSTOR for journal articles – primary and secondary

JSTOR is a digital archive collection of core scholarly journals starting with the first issues (many of which date from the 1800s).

Exercise 7

- Go back to Exercise 2
- Click on the link to JSTOR
- Look at the Search menu and click on the link to Advanced Search
- In the top box type in one element of your search strategy e.g. educat* or litera*
- In the second box, type in the other element of your search strategy e.g. poor
- Change the drop-down boxes on the right to item title
- In the date range box, put 1830 to 1900
- Then click on search.

This will then bring up primary source material from the period you are studying.

For more up-to-date material, you will need to alter your search and not limit the date range as in the example below.
8 Searching London Low Life

London Low Life contains a wealth of full colour digital images of rare books, ephemera, maps and other materials relating to 18th, 19th and early 20th century London. It also gives access to a range of secondary resources, including a chronology, interactive maps, essays, online galleries and links to other websites.

Exercise 8

- Go back to the E-Resources Guide (see Exercise 2).
- From the list of English databases, choose London Low Life
- Click on Advanced Search and try a search related to your topic e.g.

```
Advanced Search
Keywords Anywhere diet* or food*
Keywords Anywhere pauper* or poor* or workhouse*
Keywords Anywhere

Word Stemming [ ] Proximity Enter value

Restrict search by:
Date: From To
Collection
Document Type

✓ Primary Documents ✓ Entire Site

Search
```
- You should then click on the result that interests you e.g. London: some account of its growth, charitable agencies, and wants
- Look down the list of chapters/sections and identify the one you wish to read.
9  Searching 19th century Parliamentary Papers

Parliamentary Papers for various historical periods are also available

Exercise 9

- Go back to the E-Resources Guide (see Exercise 2).
- Change the subject list of databases by category to Government Publications
- Click on the link to House of Commons Parliamentary Papers 18th – 21st Century
- Click on Advanced Search
- This database does not include the Full text of Parliamentary Acts (although these may be found in the Library), but does include Bills, which are discussed in parliament and are the basis for the eventual act.
- In the Limit to section, click select all twice then click Bills and Acts
- In the date range box, put 1830 to 1835
- In the Paper Title search box, type in the name of the bill you are interested in e.g. Poor Law Amendment
- Alternatively try a Keyword search e.g. working conditions

10  Searching Newspapers in the Victorian Period

A list of newspapers is also available from the E-Resources Guide. Click the Home tab. Select Newspapers from the E-Resources by Category. The following list particularly relates to the Victorian Period:

- 19th Century British Newspapers (mainly regional and tabloid newspapers)
- Guardian (1821-2003) and Observer (1791-2003) (ProQuest)
- Times Digital Archive, 1785 - 1985
- Illustrated London News, 1842-2003

11  Victorian Period resources on the internet

- Newgate calendar: http://tarlton.law.utexas.edu/lpop/etcetext/completenewgate.htm
  Salacious reports of notorious crimes
- Old Bailey Papers: http://www.oldbaileyonline.org
  Factual reports of crimes, witness statements

Help

For further help in using the Library, please ask at the Help and Information desk. For specific information on English resources, email the liaison librarian at lib-english@york.ac.uk