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Digital Cookbooks: Library digital resources for English 125: Accounting for Taste

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English 125: Accounting for Taste: Food Writing, and Rhetoric

Digital Library Resources for Paper 1

English Recipes pre-1800

- Pre-1700: Early English Books Online-Text Creation Partnership (quod.lib.umich.edu/e/eebo)
- 1700-1800: Eighteenth Century Collections Online-Text Creation Partnership (quod.lib.umich.edu/e/ecco)

Suggestions:

- Try finding cookbooks first (rather than just searching for a specific food).
- Try searches for words like “cookery,” “recipe” and “receipt”
- Be prepared for inconsistent spelling and unfamiliar terminology—revise your searches based on what you find
- Search engine will find the exact string that you type into it
- Proximity searching lets you look for two words near each other
- Try moving back and forth between modern-day text and page image
- If you want to learn more about the cultural/historical contexts were for certain kinds of foods, try a broader search and see what comes up. Be prepared to do some digging.

American Recipes 1800-2000

- New York Public Library Menus Project (<http://menus.nypl.org/>)
 - Easiest to do a search or click on the “menu” page to see all the menus
 - “Dishes” page is meant to help you find all instances of a certain dish, but seems too specific to work very well. See what you think.
 - More than 13,000 menus have been transcribed. You can volunteer to help transcribe more!
- Michigan State University Cookbook digitization project (<http://digital.lib.msu.edu/projects/cookbooks/>)
 - 76 American cookbooks from the late 18th-early 20th century
 - Can view page images and search transcriptions
 - Can browse alphabetically, by date, or by “interest” (e.g. regions, ethnic groups)
 - There is also introductory information for each book to place it in context

Other digital (cook)book archives

- Hathi Trust Digital Library (<http://www.hathitrust.org/>)
- Google Books (<http://books.google.com/>)
- Internet Archive (<http://archive.org/index.php>)

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Hathi Trust and Google Books have a mix of books that are freely available to view and those that are closed for copyright reasons. You can choose to search and display only books in the public domain if you wish. The Internet Archive only has open access book.

Secondary Resources

Don't forget about Mirlyn, your friendly library catalog: <http://mirlyn.lib.umich.edu/>

Hathi Trust, Google Books, and Internet Archive will also have books about food and eating—not just cookbooks.

A cookbook can tell you more than how to make a dish:

- How are foods organized?
 - Is an omelet for breakfast or for dinner?
 - Are eggs meat or vegetarian fare?
 - Do soups, salads, or appetizers come first?
- What else is in the book?
 - Health remedies?
 - Housekeeping tips?
 - Schedule or travelogue?
- Is there an introduction? Who is it for?
 - Women? Men? Children?