

Women Writers Online (WWO) Research Worksheet

How to Use the WWO:

In WWO, the search tool will search all of the WWO texts and will give you all the search results that match your word exactly. There are also several ways to get more targeted results, as specified below.

Narrow the search: You can narrow your search to specific authors, titles, or time periods by choosing the “Advanced” search option in the search pane. Another way to narrow your search is by using the “Date” and “Genre” filters in the search pane. To select a facet and see possible subsets, simply click on it. A range of dates can also be selected using the interactive timeline feature which separates the results and full text panes. Select a subset of dates using the timeline by clicking and dragging with your mouse to highlight the desired range.

Think about spelling: It’s also important to remember that spelling practices changed a great deal during the 400 years covered in WWO. If you want to include alternate spellings (like “maryage”, “mariage”, and “marriages”), you need to include a wildcard in your search. For example, if you type “mar*age*” in the search box, it will find marriage, mariage, maryage, mariages, marriages, and so forth.

1. Track Your Findings:

Look for works where the author (always female) is identified, or where she is given descriptions, such as “A Lady,” or “a virtuous woman.” Sometimes this information will appear on the title page, but it may also appear in the editor’s introduction and/or the author’s preface.

Title	Author’s name	Date of Publication	Place of Publication	Description of Author/her work

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2. **Analyze your findings.** In the space below, jot down observations or conclusions of your data. What kinds of work did early women write? How did the subject of the work (e.g., religious or political) affect how the author was described or how she described

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herself? What did the words used to describe female authors suggest about how women writers were viewed in the pre-modern period?