# BRITISH LITERATURE RESEARCH GUIDE

**Find Books**     **Find Articles**     **Suggested Websites**     **Citing Sources**     **Research Process Guide**

**Library Assistance**

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## Find Books

IN THIS SECTION:
Library Catalog
Featured Titles
Reference Books
Browse the Shelves

**LIBRARY CATALOG:**  Print and E-books

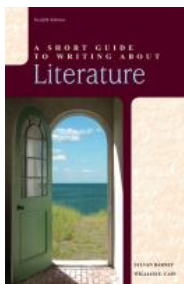 Students can search the library's online catalog for print and e-books available within the VC library system.

> **E-Books:**
> The library's e-books can be checked-out and downloaded to an iPad, PC, or other personal device. To download e-books, install an e-reader such as Adobe Digital Editions, select a book from the library catalog, and then check-out and download the book to your device.
>
> View **instructions** for downloading e-books.
>
> E-books are loaned for a period of 1 to 7 days. At the end of the check-out period, the book is no longer accessible and automatically returned for use by other patrons. If a book you are wanting is in use, you can place a hold on the book and receive an email notification when the book is available.
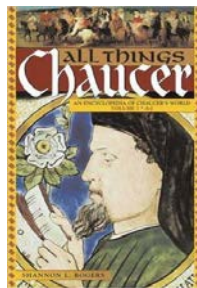
## FEATURED TITLES

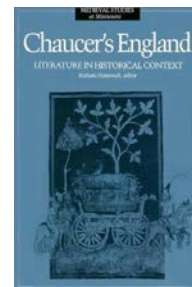*Short Guide to Writing about Literature*

Sylvan Barnet

Century City Center
PE1479.C7 B3

*All Things Chaucer: An Encyclopedia of Chaucer's World*
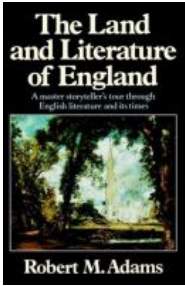
Shannon L. Rogers

Vernon
PR1903.R55
2007

*Chaucer's England: Literature in Historical Context*

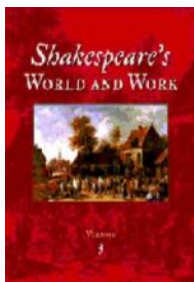Barbara A. Hanawalt

Vernon
PR1906.5 .C48

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*The Land and Literature of England*

Robert M. Adams

PR83.A3 1986
Vernon

## REFERENCE BOOKS Encyclopedias, Dictionaries, etc.

Reference materials offer background information and broad overviews of topics. This information is often helpful in narrowing and selecting a specific area of the topic to explore further. Reference materials on literature may provide literary timelines, author biographies, and/or overviews of specific literary works.
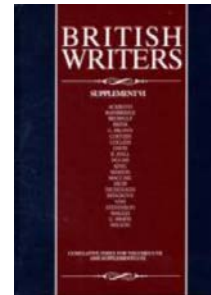
*Shakespeare's World and Work: An Encyclopedia for Students*
John F. Andrews

REF PR2892 .S56 2001
Vernon

*All Things Shakespeare: An Encyclopedia of Shakespeare's World*
Kirstin Olsen
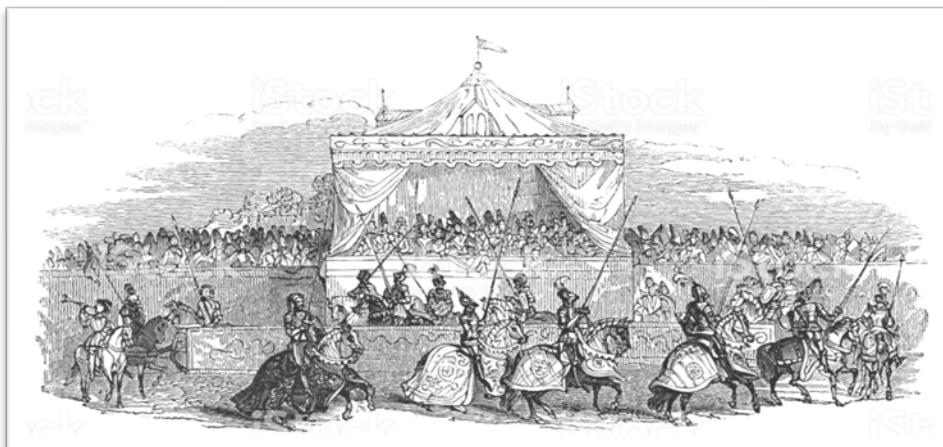
REF PR2892 .O56 2002
Century City Center

*British Writers*

Ian Scott-Kilvert, General Editor

REF PR85 .B688
Vols. I-VII

Medieval Knights Tournament

## BROWSE THE SHELVES

Books are arranged according to the Library of Congress Classification System.  This system organizes materials into 21 main classes labeled A-Z (except I, O, W, X, and Y).  Materials on British literature are found under the subclass PR.  Physically browse the titles on British literature shelved by call number in the following Library of Congress classification ranges.

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| PR1-9680 | English literature | | PR 1490-1799 | Anglo-Saxon, Old English (450-1066) |
| PR1-56 | Literary history and criticism | | PR 1803-2165 | Medieval, Middle English (1066-1500) |
| PR111-116 | Women authors | | PR 2199-3195 | The Renaissance (1500-1660) |
| PR171-236 | Anglo-Saxon (Beginning through 1066) | | PR 3291-3785 | 17th and 18th Centuries, The Neoclassical (1660-1785) |
| PR251-369 | Medieval, Middle English (1066-1500) | | PR 3991-5990 | 19th Century |
| PR401-488 | Modern | | PR 6000-6049 | 1900-1960 |
| PR500-614 | Poetry | | PR 6050-6076 | 1961-2000 |
| PR621-744 | Drama | | PR 6100-6126 | 2001- |
| PR750-890 | Prose | | | |
| PR1098-1369 | Collections of English literature | | | |

## Find Articles

Scholarly, peer reviewed articles are available online through the library's databases.  All databases are accessible off-campus from any Internet connection.  The following databases are good sources to consult for literary criticism and other topics related to British literature.

OFF-CAMPUS ACCESS TO DATABASES:
To search databases off-campus:

- Select **Articles** from the Library Homepage.
- Click on the **Literature and Arts** category.
- Select a database such as **JSTOR**.
-  Log-in with your VC student ID number and PIN (without Chaps#).

JSTOR:  JSTOR offers considerable journal coverage in literature and is a good resource to consult for literary criticism.

## Literature Resource Center

The Literature Resource Center offers convenient, online access to full-text literary criticism, topic and work overviews, and author biographies from all time periods and regions of the world.  Features include a citation generator in the formatting style of your choice, the ability to highlight text and insert notes, and the option to download your markups into your Google Drive or OneDrive.

The Knight
*Canterbury Tales*

Gale Academic OneFile is the library's multidisciplinary database that offers full-text journal coverage in many subject areas including literature.

Twentieth Century English Poetry:
Twentieth-Century English Poetry contains the poetry of over 280 poets from 1900 to the present day, including W.B. Yeats, Rudyard Kipling, Wilfred Owen, Robert Graves, A.E. Housman, John Betjeman, and others.

The Prioress
*Canterbury Tales*

## Suggested Websites

English Literature Timeline
http://www.bl.uk/learning/langlit/evolvingenglish/accessvers/index.html
This interactive timeline allows you to explore the evolution of English language and literature, from the 11th century to the present day.  Scroll through decade-to-decade to investigate the richness of English poetry and prose as well as the many social, cultural, and political strands from which the English language has been woven.

British Literature Survey
http://people.umass.edu/eng2/index.html
The website provides background information for an introduction to British literature.  Information includes guides to authors, genres, and particular poems.

A Web Companion to the *Norton Anthology of English Literature* 8th Edition
https://www.wwnorton.com/college/english/nael/welcome.htm
The site includes topics of discussion for each literary period.

British History Online
https://www.british-history.ac.uk/using-bho
British History Online is the digital library containing some of the core printed primary and secondary sources for the medieval and modern history of the British Isles. Created by the Institute of Historical Research and the History of Parliament Trust.

Geoffrey Chaucer
https://chaucer.fas.harvard.edu/
Provides a wealth of information on Chaucer's life, The Canterbury Tales, Middle English, and various topics related to life and culture in the Middle Ages.

Luminarium: Anthology of English Literature
http://www.luminarium.org/
A comprehensive anthology and guide to English literature of the Middle Ages, Renaissance, Seventeenth Century, Restoration and Eighteenth Century.

Romantic Circles
https://romantic-circles.org/
-A refereed scholarly Website devoted to the study of Romantic-period literature and culture-

Poetry Foundation
https://www.poetryfoundation.org/
The site includes an archive of poems and poet biographies from all time periods.

Discovering Literature:  Romantics and Victorians
https://www.bl.uk/romantics-and-victorians
A project of the British Library, Discovering Literature explores the historical, political, and cultural contexts in which key literary works were written.   Content includes high-resolution digitized images; articles written by scholars, poets, novelists and journalists; short documentary films; and teachers' notes. Students can explore authors and their works, literary themes, and video documentaries presented by scholars and professors in British literature.

Great Writers Inspire
http://writersinspire.org/
A project of the University of Oxford, the website features a wealth of content on the writers and key literary themes from all time periods.  Information includes audio and video lectures, major works by each author, essays on the authors and their works, pictures, etc.  Students can also access information on the major themes in literature through academic lectures, primary texts, and contextual material.

OpenLearn
https://www.open.edu/openlearn/history-the-arts/explore-our-english-literature-free-courses
OpenLearn features free courses on various subjects. You can browse subject categories to explore topics and find reference materials.

## Citing Sources

### Citation Style Guides

- OWL: Purdue Online Writing Lab
  OWL MLA Formatting and Style Guide

# The Research Process

## The Research Process

1) Select a topic that you find interesting and appropriate for the assignment.

2) Review reference sources such as encyclopedias for background information to help focus or narrow the search.

   For example, students interested in *The Knight's Tale* may consult the *Encyclopedia of Medieval Literature* for ideas in narrowing the focus of the search to a particular area of interest such as how chivalry is represented in *The Knight's Tale*.

3) Restate the topic as a question. Inquiry is at the heart of the research process, a quest to locate information which answers questions and leads researchers to a greater understanding of the topic.

   Restating the topic as a question will help in:
   - Locating information that is useful and relevant to the primary focus or thesis of your research.
   - Identifying the keywords or phrases to use in the search statement.

     Example: How is **chivalry** represented in *The Knight's Tale*?

4) Develop a search statement by combining keywords or concepts from the research question. For example, **"chivalry"** and **"The Knight's Tale"** are identified as keywords in the question above. By connecting both terms with the Boolean operator **"and"**, the researcher will retrieve only those articles that discuss *both* concepts, thus improving the relevancy of the search.

     Enter in database search fields: **chivalry and *The Knight's Tale***

5) Develop alternate search statements to improve the search results. Authors may use various terms to describe the same concept.

   For example, **chivalry** may be used in the same context as **knightliness**.

   By identifying and connecting alternate terms, researchers may expand the search results. As indicated below, consider brainstorming and listing synonyms or word variations to identify alternate keywords.

| Concept 1 | | Concept 2 |
|---|---|---|
| chivalry | AND | Knight's Tale |
| knightliness | AND | Canterbury Tales |
| gallantry | AND | Chaucer |
| nobility | AND | Duke Theseus |

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6) Evaluate information for objectivity and reliability.  See the Community College of Rhode Island's criteria for evaluating websites.

7) Cite the information borrowed from other authors or informational sources. Careful documentation will ensure that credit is given with no intention to plagiarize or claim ownership of information belonging to other researchers. For explanations and examples, visit Purdue's Online Writing Lab (OWL) for the MLA formatting style guide.

## Library Assistance

Email:  librarian@vernoncollege.edu

Visit the chat room:   Select the chat icon on the homepage.

Phone:  940-552-6291 ext: 2222 in Vernon
                940-696-8752 ext: 3220 at Century City Center

Library Webinars:   View a schedule and register to participate in one of the library's weekly
                                webinars.

Library Handbook

The Squire
*Canterbury Tales*