

## Digital Edition Assignment Sample

### Project Overview

This term, you'll be creating and adding an e-text to the *Literature in Context* project, a database of TEI-formatted XML files, the goal of which is ultimately to make a collection of texts for students, teachers, and scholars to use in a variety of ways. You will be using the template I provide as a model to create your own addition to the database.

The project has several parts, and it requires great attention to detail as well as the ability to locate and incorporate relevant information about the text you're working with. It also requires you to learn *how to learn* to do something you are unfamiliar with.

Each addition to the *Literature in Context* project has three components: page images from the first edition, a TEI-formatted XML file that contains the e-text itself, and explanatory annotations that flesh out the e-text for a college-level audience. To be useful, these page images and texts themselves must be of high calibre in visual quality, transcription, editing, and markup. This means you will be learning a bit about the logic and practice of textual editing, and especially editing in the digital realm, which is done using a digital markup syntax (TEI-formatted XML).

You may also be learning how to take high-quality photographs for use in the project; contacting area libraries for information, access, and even--if possible--page images of the text you're working with (sometimes, if you ask nicely, a library will make digital images for you!). I will provide models, as well as a TEI-XML template, and direction; but it will be your responsibility to ask questions, to do the legwork, and ultimately to complete a valid e-text for inclusion into the project.

### Blog Component

Throughout the process, you will have opportunities to help refine the template as you learn more about the markup syntax. You'll also be preparing for a substantial reflection essay! So, I'm asking you to keep a journal/blog of your experiences--frustrations, successes, attempts, questions, ideas, and more. Each journal/blog entry should be 250-500 words in length. You can use this space to reflect on what you have done, describe/explain what you're doing, ask questions about what you're doing, meditate on ways to improve what you're doing (or the project as a whole, of course!), consider how the various sources and secondary readings/materials intersect with what you're doing, and so on. Your journal entries should be clearly written and detailed.

**There are several steps to creating your e-text** (general steps, which will be fleshed out in class meeting/discussion)

1. First, read about the Novels in Context project, and browse through it as it currently exists. **Journal/blog entry 1.**
2. Second, research the web and read about the Text Encoding Initiative, as well as the Brown Women Writer's project, which is a TEI/XML database similar in some ways to Novels in Context. **Journal/blog entry 2.**
3. Third, read the template I have created for *The Rambler* essay No. 4, by Samuel Johnson, and compare this to what you have learned about TEI-formatted XML to understand the nature of that e-text. **Journal/blog entry 3.**
4. Fourth, identify a text that you want to work with and that has a first edition (or as close to a first edition. This might be a library in the WRLC, the Library of Congress, or a university further afield. You will be responsible for creating or

procuring page high-quality, margin-clear page images of the excerpt you're working with, so knowing where to find a physical copy will be essential! You can use the Internet to do this. **Journal/blog entry 4**

5. Fifth, research the author and the text for basic biographical, critical, and bibliographic information. This information will be used in your e-text in various ways. See if you can find electronic versions of these texts. **Journal/blog entry 5; annotated bibliography.**
6. Sixth, physically go to the library in question and view the object/book. There, you'll generate high-quality images of the pages you're going to be working with (your excerpt). **Or**, write/call the library further afield with a physical copy of the first edition, and request pages (see sample email). Note--if you do the second option, you will be responsible for ensuring the pages are in an appropriate format for the database, and are legal to use! **Journal/blog entry 6.**
7. Seventh, transcribe the textual excerpt, *verbatim*, into a Word or Google Doc file. **Journal/blog entry 7.**
8. Finally, use the template to "mark up" your transcription using the template I provide. You'll start with basic structural markup, then insert page images, then add key references/allusions/explanations. **Journal/blog entries 8-10.** (This is a detail-oriented assignment, and it will take time, so anticipate meeting with me and your group frequently!)