

The Map of Early Modern London Assignment

<http://mapoflondon.uvic.ca/map.htm>

As you know, our class has been invited to publish a scholarly entry on the open access Map of Early Modern London, an online *gazetteer*, or a geographical encyclopedia, which is based on an interactive version of Ralph Agas’s map, *Civitas Londinum*. This is a rare opportunity for undergraduates to engage in serious, knowledge-producing, interdisciplinary research; to collaboratively draft, fact-check, edit, and revise our writing; and to write for a public readership in a digital environment. As such, it will likely be an opportunity to practice the kind of scholarship and writing that many of you will go on to do after graduation.

Together we’ve chosen to narrow our sights on the history and identity of Ludgate, a famous debtor’s prison in early modern England. Learning about Ludgate, and teaching others about Ludgate, has the potential to aid in our understanding of sixteenth-century English history and the cultural practices and ideologies of early modern Londoners. More than serving as a mere backdrop for our literary study this term, the project will—ideally—help us see the ways that writers engaged with their environments and also constructed a sense of place.

There are two basic components to this project, though there are many stages in the research and writing process.

- 1) **The Annotated Bibliography:** Students will begin by working independently on an annotated bibliography that constitutes 5% of their final course grade. Each student will need to locate five sources relevant to their topic of research. At least two of these sources must be primary (from before 1650) and all other secondary sources must be academic (i.e., peer-reviewed). We’ll talk in class today about what types of sources qualify as academic secondary sources and how to find the right “primary texts.” You can also consult the MoEML “Guide for Student Researchers” for more on this:

[<http://mapoflondon.uvic.ca/research_guidelines.htm>](http://mapoflondon.uvic.ca/research_guidelines.htm)

Once you’ve located your best five sources, you’ll need to record accurate MLA citations for each of them, and then draft a detailed, informative paragraph of source explanation. For each of these five required sources, please write 2-3 sentences summarizing the content and 2-3 sentences explaining how you intend to use the source in your section of the entry on Ludgate. Due date: 10/21 (see “Project Deadlines” below).

- 2) **The Entry Section:** Today in class we’ll form pairs to cover the six “sections” of our entry. These sections include:

- Group One: History (before, during, and after 1650).
- Group Two: Architecture/Design/Neighborhood
- Group Three: Daily Practices at Ludgate
- Group Four: Debt and Imprisonment in Early Modern England
- Group Five: Literary References to Ludgate
- Group Six: Famous (or little known) Prisoners

Of course, as we research and compose, we might find that we share sources, write across sections, and even add new ones, but for now, this breakdown seems like a functional point of entry into our research and composition.

Once annotated bibliographies have been posted to Sakai, students will be required to independently draft and submit their assigned section of the entry. Then, in the following week, student groups will compare and consolidate their entries, fact-checking each other's information, and revising the organization and prose of their section. The whole class will also consult with one another about the best format for the page. I will then offer pairs feedback for revision on their entries, and together, students will once again revise, polish, finalize their section of the entry. Groups will be graded on the quality of their contribution, as well as their collaborative efforts. The entry section is worth 10% of the final course grade. Finalized sections due: 11/11.

A few other points:

- You've probably noticed by now that I have not assigned a page-length or word count. I don't want to do so arbitrarily or prematurely before the entire class has conversed about our findings and our sense of what constitutes the most important and interesting information to relay to readers. My sense, though, is that sections will likely be at least 500 words long. This is not lengthy, but keep in mind, this work will likely be published and therefore needs to be compact and pristine.
- At some time in the writing stage, don't forget to consult the MoEML's "Guide to Editorial Style" <http://mapoflondon.uvic.ca/editorial_style.htm> and their "Tips for Writing on the Web" <http://mapoflondon.uvic.ca/web_writing_tips.htm>.
- After the project has been completed, I'll ask all students to write a 10-minute in-class reflection on their project and the collaborative process.
- I will also likely edit the entry (hopefully in very minor ways) before submitting it to the MoEML in December.

Project Deadlines: (See our syllabus for a more complete breakdown of tasks)

Tuesday, 10/21: Annotated bibliographies must be completed. Remember: you need at least 5 sources, and 2 of these have to be primary (from the 16th or early 17th centuries). Post to our Sakai forum and bring a print hardcopy for submission.

Tuesday, 10/28: A draft of your section of the Ludgate entry (composed independently of your co-writer) will need to be posted to the Sakai forum by class meeting time. Please also bring a print copy to class.

Monday, 11/3: Pairs need to submit their collaboratively combined, fact-checked sections of the entry by 8pm. Please email the section to me as a Word document.

Tuesday, 11/11: Pairs need to submit their revised, polished, and FINAL section of the entry by class time. Post to Sakai and bring a print hardcopy for submission.