

How to use JSTOR: transcript

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Hello. My name is Joanna Cooksey and this is a quick video introduction for students in English Literature and Creative Writing covering the database JSTOR.

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Library databases are usually collections of online resources such as journal articles. JSTOR is one such database and it covers many literary journals, so it's a useful resource for students in English Literature and Creative Writing. You can use it when you have to write an essay or other assignment and you want to find journal articles about the text, author or theme you're studying.

You can access JSTOR through the Library website. I recommend going to the Course resource help page for English Literature and Creative Writing and we're going to take a look at that now.

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You need to go to the library home page - you've got the url on the screen – and scroll down to see the 'Course resources and support' section on the right, next to LibrarySearch. Use the subject list to look for either English Literature or Creative Writing

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This is the course resource help page for English Literature and Creative Writing. There are some Quick access links at the top and you can see one is for JSTOR.

You'll also notice my contact details on the right, so if you need help with using JSTOR or any other e-resource, drop me an email.

We're going to follow the Quick access link to JSTOR to go to the database.

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When you follow the link to JSTOR you'll see this login screen which asks for your Brookes username – that's your student number – and your password. Type in these details to proceed.

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This is the JSTOR home page and you can see that there is a search box in the middle of the screen. JSTOR is easy to search but you can get lots of results, so we're going to look at the Advanced Search which gives options to do a more focused search. Follow the link to Advanced search underneath the search box or from the tabs at the top of the screen.

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This is the Advanced search screen and instead of a single search box we now have two with the option of adding more. This allows you to build up your search step by step and tailor it to exactly what you want. Put different search terms in different boxes, for example you could put the name of a literary text in one search box and the author in the second. I've done that in this

example, putting winter's tale in the first box and Shakespeare in the second. When you're ready, click on the button 'Submit Advanced Search'.

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JSTOR will list your search results, giving the total number at the top. We've found over 7,000 items listed which mention winter's tale and Shakespeare. Helpfully JSTOR lists the results by what it calls 'Relevance' so the articles where the play is the main focus will come first and towards the end of the list there may be articles which include just a passing mention. Rather than looking through these results, I can focus my search by adding additional search terms. To do this, just click on the 'Modify search' option at the top right.

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You'll be taken back to the Advanced Search screen. Click on the option to 'Add a search box' and add a further keyword to focus your search. In this example I've added the keyword 'statue' to find articles which discuss the famous statue scene in the play. When you're ready, click on 'Submit Advanced search' as before.

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Adding in another keyword has reduced my search results from over 7,000 to over 1,000. I may want to start looking at my results, or use modify search again to limit them further.

In the left hand column JSTOR tells me what sort of results I've found. Most of them are journal articles and there are also some book chapters.

Looking through the search results, I've picked out one article which is written by Andrew Gurr. He's written several books on Shakespeare which appear on the first year Shakespeare module reading list. The title of the article is The Bear, the Statue, and Hysteria in The Winter's Tale and I can click on this title link to read more.

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This is the first page of the article by Andrew Gurr. I could read it online or use the option at the top right of the screen to download the PDF.

JSTOR gives me the bibliographic details about the article; that is the author, article title, journal title and publication details. If you want to mention an article from JSTOR in an essay you'll need to make a note of these details so that you can include it in your footnotes and bibliography.

That's the end of this video. Take a look at the course resource page for English Literature and Creative Writing to connect to JSTOR, to contact me or to find other resources and guides including help with MHRA referencing.

[JC how to use JSTOR transcript 09/2020]