

Heidi Craig with Katayoun Torabi and Laura Estill and additional help from Kris May  
World Shakespeare Bibliography, Texas A&M University  
[www.worldshakesbib.org](http://www.worldshakesbib.org), [wsb@tamu.edu](mailto:wsb@tamu.edu)

### **Teaching Resource: Submitting Annotations to *World Shakespeare Bibliography***

The *World Shakespeare Bibliography* ([www.worldshakesbib.org](http://www.worldshakesbib.org)) is the leading resource for discovering Shakespeare scholarship, and the most comprehensive database of translations, adaptations, and professional performances of Shakespeare's works. The *WSB* currently has over 129,000 annotated and cross-referenced entries and over a million reviews; it grows by thousands of entries a year. The *WSB* is international and multilingual: an International Committee of Correspondents review and annotate materials from around the world, in over one hundred languages. The *World Shakespeare Bibliography* began in print in 1950, and was launched online in 2001. The digital resource was relaunched in 2016 in its current version.

We are sharing a teaching exercise carried out at Texas A&M University, home of the *WSB*'s editorial team. We've adapted it for instructors at other institutions with subscriptions to the *WSB*.<sup>1</sup>

This exercise has two parts:

1. In-class group annotation for the *WSB*
2. *WSB* annotation assignment for individual students

By completing this exercise, students will achieve several goals:

- Familiarize themselves with an important digital research tool in Shakespeare studies
- Engage closely with recent works of Shakespeare scholarship
- Improve their abilities to read/scan/skim an article and distill its arguments
- Learn to craft concise and clear bibliographic annotations
- Obtain experience using a digital tool, both navigation and submission of material
- Potentially contribute directly to Shakespeare scholarship
- Identify research skills and incorporate them into their own work

We recommend this exercise early in the semester, as an introduction to secondary research and effective reading. The exercise can be integrated with work for final writing assignments, as students can locate articles and create annotated bibliographies for their own essays. This exercise can be adapted for different levels; we imagine it would be useful both for advanced undergraduate courses on Shakespeare and/or early modern literature, as well as graduate courses on Shakespeare, early modern studies, or bibliography/research methods.

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<sup>1</sup> If you are interested in this teaching exercise and teach at an institution which does not currently subscribe to the *WSB*, please email [wsb@tamu.edu](mailto:wsb@tamu.edu)

## 1. IN-CLASS GROUP ANNOTATION FOR WSB

**Pre-class work (for student):** Prior to the in-class exercise, students should spend 1 hour browsing the WSB site:

- Carefully read the WSB's [scope](#) and [search help](#) pages
- On the [advanced search page](#), read an example of every document included in WSB (articles, monographs, dissertations, etc.)
- On the [browse page](#), go over the tags, expanding each one. Students will learn what tags are available for their use
- Familiarize themselves with the WSB house style:
  - Written in subjectless third person: e.g. "Examines interiority in *Hamlet*"
  - Drops definite and indefinite articles "an" and "the," including in play titles (*Tempest* not *The Tempest*)

Students should also read [articles](#) on [efficient reading strategies](#).

**Pre-class work (for instructor):** Instructors can request a WSB contributor account; their students can then submit their entries directly to the site, and instructors can evaluate student entries. For contributor access, please email [hcraig@tamu.edu](mailto:hcraig@tamu.edu) or [wsb@tamu.edu](mailto:wsb@tamu.edu) well in advance.

### **In class (75 minutes total):**<sup>2</sup>

**Introduction (15 minutes):** Overview of WSB site (front and back-end), answering questions. Instructor demonstrates how to locate article's metadata (title, author, journal, volume, year, and page range, etc) and how to enter meta-data into the WSB. Instructor distributes the same article to each student.

**Reading article (20 minutes):** Students read article during class time. They are not given prior access to article, since efficient reading and understanding of scholarly works is a key element of this exercise.

**Annotation (20 minutes):** Students write a 1-3 line annotation summarizing the article's topic, main arguments, and conclusion. Annotations can be handwritten or typed.

**Discussion (20 minutes):** Students share their annotations with the rest of the class; discussion ensues about strategies about how to craft the most effective annotation.

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<sup>2</sup> Ideally, classroom should have A/V and web access; student access to the internet is not required in class.

## 2. WSB ANNOTATION ASSIGNMENT:<sup>3</sup>

Each student is assigned a different recently-published journal article. Their assignment is to read the article and submit an annotation to the WSB, consisting of metadata and 1-3 line entry.

### Submitting a Journal Article

Type = Journal Entry

Title = in quotation marks, no period

Author = Lastname, Firstname

- If author is not already listed, click "add author" and add the author to the database
- Choose "add author" again to add another author for co-authored articles

Author Role = leave blank

Year

Journal

- most journals will be listed; if yours isn't, please add it
- if there is more than one journal name that you think might suit, choose the best one, and in the notes field explain this

Volume, Issue

Date (autofills from year, please give year only)

Pages (see instructions: 3-10, 71-72, 321-8)

Hyperlink (if you were given a hyperlink as a comment on your pdf)

DOI: if listed (might not be)

Annotation

- subjectless third person: "Argues x, y, and z"
- Do not use articles for play titles (just *Tempest*, not *The Tempest*) – only for the annotation
- If there is an abstract, end your annotation with "English summary, x" (x = page number), or for instance, "English and Spanish summaries, 101."
- 1-3 sentences

Language = English

Cross-References (ignore, please)

Persons = any person mentioned in the annotation who isn't the author (actors, directors, etc.)

Keywords = leave blank, please

Tags = play title(s) AND "Scholarship, Criticism, History of Criticism"

- for articles that deal with more than five plays, don't list titles, please.

WSB Update = Please choose from drop-down

Notes = student puts their name and "for [Instructor name's] class"

Staff URL = leave blank

Revision log message = leave blank

To submit: please choose "Create & Submit"; then take a screenshot of your submission (it will say "unpublished").

Students should submit a screenshot of their annotation with a **short reflection (1 page)** about the skills they learned, any assumptions that were overturned during the exercise, and challenges they overcame while completing it. Instructors can also access annotations on WSB site itself.

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<sup>3</sup> To be completed outside of class; students will need access to web-enabled device.