

Text Analysis Project

1. Choose a work(s)
 - [provide a list of potential corpuses here or direct students to databases and resources for locating texts]
 - At least one work you choose must be a text that you have not previously read.
2. Ideally, you will download the text(s) and save them as .txt files (plain text files will generate the best results and the least amount of headache in “cleaning” the text; Voyant will read just about any file format, but .txt is the easiest format to edit and upload quickly).
3. Open the text and remove any extraneous information. This will include any licensing information, copyright statements, footnotes, editor’s introductions, and anything else that was not part of the original text.
4. Determine whether or not you want to split up your work(s) into multiple files (this can be helpful if you want to analyze distinct sections of a novel or document against each other, or if you are analyzing many works across a single author).
5. Make predictions about what you will find in your analysis. List what themes, narrative elements, characters, and/or plot points you believe will pop up. Do this before you run your analysis in Voyant, and make sure to save your predictions somewhere. [This could be skipped, but could be useful for developing metacognition/reflection exercises or blog posts in the future].
 - For example, if I’ve never read *Animal Farm*, I might still be able to make some assumptions about what it contains and how it will relate to *1984* even before I run an analysis. I might conclude that *Animal Farm* will most likely contain realistic, yet somehow surreal environments and settings. There will be characters representing political movements and/or ideologies. The general mood will be hopeless and bleak. I imagine words like “revolt,” “escape,” “master,” and “unite” will be common. These texts will most likely overlap in political themes, didactic lessons, and engagement with current events (for the author at time of writing).
6. Upload your corpus into Voyant and start digging!
 - The expectation is to play with many different tools within the program. By regarding the text in as many iterations as possible, we hope to learn something new. You should explore at minimum 3 tools outside of the default Voyant Tools view. Make sure to screenshot each visualization/iteration you create. [The screenshots can become part of a larger project or proof of interaction/participation for a “one-shot” assignment].
 - o Remember that there is no right “answer” in this project. What’s important is methodology and your willingness to uncover meaning in the text through this tool! You will hit dead ends and feel as though you have exhausted the project’s potential. Take that time to look again, compare, and try new things!
7. Final projects should include the following:
 - A full citation of your chosen work(s)

- The predictions you made prior to the analysis [optional]
- A link to your “overall view” in Voyant
- Screenshots of at least 3 tools used beyond defaults
- Screenshots of most common word and most common phrases analysis
- Write at least two paragraphs describing how the analysis surprised you based on your original expectations/predictions, and your thoughts on how this tool helped or didn’t help you analyze a text you had never read. How does this experience of reading and analyzing compare to how you have analyzed or thought about texts in the past?

[You might consider pairing this exercise/assignment with other readings grounded in general digital humanities theory, such as Natalie Houston’s chapter on “Distant Reading” <https://www.cambridge.org/core/books/abs/technology-and-literature/distant-reading/6EE7C7F2257902D895E32004CF0AC7DB>]

[It would also be perfectly reasonable to focus this assignment on the “Dreamscape” tool to create connections between points on a map. Instructors should take care to make sure students are selecting works that would benefit from a spatial analysis]

Rubric:

“A” work: Provides thorough and insightful commentary on discoveries and analysis. Clearly connects prior experience to the experience of digital analysis. Methodology in utilizing Voyant explores analysis through many tools within the program. Work is submitted on time.

“B” work: Provides commentary on discoveries and analysis. Makes connections between prior experience and digital analysis. Methodology of the analysis includes exploring tools within Voyant. Work is submitted on time.

“C” work: Commentary is sufficient and connections between prior experience and digital analysis are explored. Voyant’s default visualization is used as the main methodological component of the analysis, but does not explore additional visualization tools. Work is submitted on time.

“D” work: Commentary is incomplete, and connections between digital analysis and past experience are insufficient. Voyant is utilized, but not all aspects of the analysis are complete. Does not explore additional tools within Voyant. Work is submitted on time.

“F” work: Lacks commentary and makes no connections. Voyant may be utilized, but analysis is incomplete. Does not explore additional tools within Voyant. Work is submitted on time.