

Textual Investigation Assignment I: Comparing Early Modern Recipe Books

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Note: Textual Investigation Assignment I and Textual Investigation Assignment II can be assigned together or as alternative assignments. They can help students gain confidence locating, exploring, and interpreting archival materials. They can also help students think more about print culture and manuscript culture as they make connections to their own emerging media tools and food landscapes.

Using *The Court and Kitchin of Elizabeth*, choose one recipe that also appears in another recipe book, such [May's *The accomplisht cook* \(1660\)](#), [Rabisha's *The whole body of cookery dissected* \(1661\)](#), or one of the editions of Woolley's *The Accomplish'd lady's delight* ([1675a](#), [1675b](#), [1677](#), [1686](#)). In a short 2-page paper, compare the two versions of your chosen recipe. What changes have been made from one version to the next? Do you think these changes were due to editorial decisions? Revisions to the recipe? Clarifications? Printing errors? A desire to stake a claim to the recipe? What can looking at two versions of the same recipe tell us about the culture that was circulating and recreating these variations from year to year?

Connection to the present: Do you see similar overlaps and similarities in recipes that are circulating today? Does this pose "copyright" issues for recipes?