English Drama

English Drama is a database containing a unique collection of more than 3,900 plays in verse and prose tracing the development of drama in English from the medieval mystery cycles to the comedies of Oscar Wilde. **English Drama** contains plays in verse and prose from the late thirteenth century - the likely date of the *Shrewsbury Fragments* - to the early twentieth. It offers exhaustive coverage of the prodigious dramatic literature of the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods, as well as Restoration plays, medieval morality plays and mystery cycles, and nineteenth-century closet dramas. In addition to works by major dramatists such as Ben Jonson, William Wycherley, Oliver Goldsmith, Richard Sheridan, and J. M. Synge, **English Drama** includes the dramatic writings of many more neglected writers long inaccessible in print form.

   A single edition of each play has been included in the database. Generally, it is the first authorised edition. Each text is reproduced in full, as is accompanying text written by the playwright and forming an integral part of the play, such as epigraphs, cast lists, and notes.

Accessing English Drama database:

1. Access **English Drama database** in different ways. Start at the library home page - http://www.dit.ie/library - Click "*Databases*"; Scroll to **English Drama** and click to open. Or, starting again at the library home page, click "*Subject Guides*"; Select "*Drama*"; Click "*Subject Databases*"; click **English Drama**.

2. A PIN (personal identification number) is required to access **English Drama** database content off-campus.

Help - Click on the *Help* icon, located at the top right hand corner of the screen, for search tips etc. You can use Help to get more information about any of the features in English Drama.

Browsing and Searching English Drama database:

Browsing:

   Browse for a play by looking in the "Complete Contents" as listed on the left of the home page. Here all the works available in the database are listed alphabetically by author first, then by the title of the author's work. An "Author's Page", often including a biography, and all texts listed can be accessed via this page. All Blue text links to text of plays, author's page or other information.

As browsing can be time consuming, using the "Search" function is another, quicker way to search for a specific work:

To Search for a specific work, click "*Search*" at the left on the webpage and a search screen like this will appear:

Search is done in 3 ways: 1. Searching for keywords; 2. Combining search terms using Boolean and proximity operators; and 3. Using wildcards (* and ? E.g. For example, v?rtue, hono?r or sensibil?it*). Keyword searches are, by default, *exact phrase* searches. This means that **English Drama** looks for exact matches for **all** of the words you typed into the search box. If you do not want **English Drama** to treat your search words as an exact phrase you should use Boolean (And, Or, Not) or proximity operators (Near, FBY [Followed BY].

More complex searches are possible using the additional search boxes as shown above. These allow you to specify details about the work (e.g. Person speaking in play, genre etc.), the playwright (e.g. what period did they write in), and where the keywords you are searching should be (e.g. in the whole play, in the stage directions, or in poems only).

As an example, shown above, a search was carried out for the keyword "house" in the "stage directions only", in a play where a "carpenter" is the speaker. One play was retrieved - Garrick, David, 1717-1779: *A peep behind the curtain* (1767) as performed at the Theatre Royal in Drury-Lane. Click directly to the scene where the word "house" is found in the stage directions - *[Looking round the* ■ *house.* - in act II, scene I of the play, or click to open the entire text of the play. Red squares ■ highlight the keyword.

Results retrieved are given in alphabetical order. View the entire text or selected sections. An "*Author's Page*" summarizing essential points about the writer as well as listing of all the texts available by that writer is also accessible here. The playwright's biography may be included in this page.