

The aim is to use EEBO-tcp from earliest printed books in England to look into “fools” in early modern England in terms of intellectual disability from about 1486 to 1600. The goal is to combine search terms in order to find where fool would be linked to another term (directly or more loosely). If so, mapping where and when the term 'fool' is linked with the words 'natural' or 'idiot' would be even better, because then it would clearly be about intellectual disability (rather than just silliness of normal people or court jesters and such).

While I did find some relationships to “fool” and “natural” and “born,” the size of the results were too unwieldy to discover just when and how they are used in any coherent or predictable manner.

In the

<http://quod.lib.umich.edu/e/eebogroup/> site I was able to see the words actually used in legal context.

More time and actual reading of texts are necessary to delve into how, when and in which genres they appear.

Personally, I believe I require more training to successfully attempt a proper use of these tools.

I used the following resources to search for the terms.

Early English Books Online (EEBO) on CQPweb

<http://cass.lancs.ac.uk/?p=861> Lancaster University's CQPweb server

Lancaster University's CQPweb server i

Your query “fool <<3>> natural” returned 344 matches in 227 different texts (in 1,202,214,511 words [44,422 texts]; frequency: 0.29 instances per million words), distribution over Century Status : CERTAIN (340 hits) [0.044 seconds - retrieved from cache]

The above query was not helpful given the broad range

Frequency Breakdown

Your query "fool <<3>> natural" returned 344 matches in 227 different texts (in 1,202,214,511 words [44,422 texts]; frequency: 0.29 instances per million words), distribution over Century Status : CERTAIN (340 hits)			
Showing frequency breakdown of words in this query, at the query node; there is 1 different type and 340 tokens at this concordance position.			
< << >> > Breakdown position: Node Frequency breakdown of words only Go			
No.	Search result	No. of occurrences	Percent
1	fool	340	100%

Distribution Breakdown however permitted the overview of when the words fool was coupled with natural in various aspects, time and type of literature.

Safari File Edit View History Bookmarks Window Help

ogweb.lensis.ac.uk

Dis Friends...verse | Gog... Benefits | IS... Student Card | The Meanings...man People | d...es | W...-bach-Deutsch | Harb...Far De...kin Problems | GAMB... Bead Ma...Thoms | Sh...s Apple | Yahoo | Music

herington p...plots | Microsoft Office... | Mail - Rodgers... | METHUEN MET... | Early Print | Collections | UNOL Help Us... | (V)B -- distribut... | (V)B -- CQWeb...

Distribution breakdown for query "fool": this query returned 41,266 matches in 9,471 different texts

Categories: Decade Show as: Distribution table

Category for crosstabs: Decade Status Show distribution: 0 001

Decade Status / where Decade is 1470_1479

Category	Words in category	Hits in category	Dispersion (no. files with 1+ hits)	Frequency per million words in category
CERTAIN	686107	40	7 out of 11	58.3
UNCERTAIN	80639	25	3 out of 9	310.02
Total:	766746	65	10 out of 20	84.77

Decade Status / where Decade is 1480_1489

Category	Words in category	Hits in category	Dispersion (no. files with 1+ hits)	Frequency per million words in category
CERTAIN	3434081	174	21 out of 38	50.67
UNCERTAIN	65583	0	0 out of 9	0
Total:	3499664	174	21 out of 47	49.72

Decade Status / where Decade is 1490_1499

Category	Words in category	Hits in category	Dispersion (no. files with 1+ hits)	Frequency per million words in category
CERTAIN	2424473	61	16 out of 39	25.16
UNCERTAIN	301290	3	2 out of 20	9.96
Total:	2725763	64	18 out of 59	23.48

Decade Status / where Decade is 1500_1509

Category	Words in category	Hits in category	Dispersion (no. files with 1+ hits)	Frequency per million words in category
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Based on classification: Rough-draft genre (experimental, incomplete)

Category [i]	Words in category	Hits in category	Dispersion (no. files with 1+ hits)	Frequency [i] per million words in category
ADMONITION	1835037	1	1 out of 127	0.54
ALMANACKS	397212	0	0 out of 24	0
ANALYSIS_AND_INSTRUCTION	12851248	3	3 out of 357	0.23
APOLOGA	8916795	1	1 out of 138	0.11
ARTICLES	6999970	2	2 out of 301	0.29
ASTROLOGY_AND_PREDICTIONS	4766877	4	3 out of 168	0.84
BALLAD	370944	0	0 out of 99	0
BIOGRAPHY	8219290	3	3 out of 119	0.36
CHRONOLOGY	18743200	2	2 out of 93	0.11
CHURCH_OF_SCOTLAND	878749	0	0 out of 27	0
COLONIAL	3961103	1	1 out of 141	0.25
COMMENTARY_ON_PEOPLE_AND_PLACES	2141010	1	1 out of 124	0.47
DEATH_OBITUARIES_AND_EPIGRAPHS	4956954	0	0 out of 314	0
DECLARATIONS	16172847	3	3 out of 796	0.19
DEVOTIONAL	3665631	2	1 out of 88	0.55
DIRECTORIES_AND_LISTS	2941396	1	1 out of 197	0.34
DUTCH	5913	0	0 out of 3	0
ESSAY_ADVISORY	2521906	2	2 out of 122	0.79

Distribution breakdown for query "fool <<3>> natural": this query returned 344 matches in 227 different texts, distribution over Century Status : CERTAIN (340 hits)

Categories:	General information	Show as:	Distribution table
Category for crosstabs:	No crosstabs	Show distribution	Go

Based on classification: Century

Category [1]	Words in category	Hits in category	Dispersion (no. files with 1+ hits)	Frequency [1] per million words in category
1400_1499	6595156	1	1 out of 89	0.15
1500_1599	165491828	53	40 out of 3525	0.32
1600_1699	986473573	233	179 out of 36982	0.26
1700_1799	16258968	33	4 out of 587	2.03
XXXX	0	0	0 out of 0	0
Total:	1174819525	340	224 out of 41183	0.29

Based on classification: Century Status

Category [1]	Words in category	Hits in category	Dispersion (no. files with 1+ hits)	Frequency [1] per million words in category
AMBIGUOUS	0	0	0 out of 0	0
CERTAIN	1174819525	340	224 out of 41183	0.29
UNCERTAIN	0	0	0 out of 0	0
UNKNOWN	0	0	0 out of 0	0
Total:	1174819525	340	224 out of 41183	0.29

Based on classification: Decade

Category [1]	Words in category	Hits in category	Dispersion (no. files with 1+ hits)	Frequency [1] per million words in category
1470_1479	686107	0	0 out of 11	0
1480_1489	3434081	0	0 out of 38	0
1490_1499	2424473	1	1 out of 39	0.41
1500_1509	1131331	4	2 out of 36	3.54
1510_1519	1217381	0	0 out of 32	0
1520_1529	2360280	1	1 out of 41	0.42
1530_1539	8157377	3	2 out of 157	0.37
1540_1549	9537659	5	4 out of 249	0.52
1550_1559	8682324	6	3 out of 309	0.69
1560_1569	20658809	6	4 out of 402	0.29
1570_1579	33827325	5	5 out of 535	0.15
1580_1589	40898577	9	9 out of 781	0.22
1590_1599	38952296	16	10 out of 990	0.36

<http://earlyprint.wustl.edu>

<http://quod.lib.umich.edu/e/eebogroup/>

Results by collection:

All Selected Collections

282 matches in 179 records [view results »](#)



Early English Books Online

175 matches in 101 records

Early English Books Online 2

107 matches in 78 records [view results »](#)

You searched: **Early English Books Online** for "fool" within full text, near within 40 characters "natural", not sorted

Results: 175 matches in 101 records

All Selected Collections

282 matches in 179 records

Early English Books Online

175 matches in 101 records [view results »](#)

Early English Books Online 2

107 matches in 78 records [view results »](#)

Using one selection, I was able to identify the use of natural born with fool and idiot. This would presume an intellectual handicap.

you searched: **All Selected Collections** for works including "fool", and including "idiot", sorted by date descending

Results: matching works in 400 records

<https://quod.lib.umich.edu/t/text/help/xcsearch-boolean.html>

English Books Online

Title: Non compos mentis, or, The law relating to **natural fools**, mad-folks, and lunatick persons inquisited and explained for common benefit

Author: Brydall, John, b. 1635?

Publication info: London : Printed by the assigns of Richard and Edward Atkins, Esquires, for Isaac Cleave ..., 1700.

Collection: Early English Books Online

→ Search Results: 1 matching work of 1 total work

[Refine this search](#)

1 to 25 of 202 matching terms **in this item**

1 | [26](#) | [76](#) | [176](#) | [178](#) | [Next>>](#)

[< Return to search results list](#)

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Title: Non compos mentis, or, The law relating to natural fools, mad-folks, and lunatick persons inquisited and explained for common benefit

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- ... it, under the hard Sentence, of our old English Proverb, Let him be begg'd for a **Fool**. / ...

[A TABLE OF THE QUERIES, RELATING,](#)

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Google Books shows that the terms Fool and Idiot did not appear in English books until 1570 and 1595 respectively.

Google Books Ngram Viewer

Graph these comma-separated phrases: ☐ case-insensitive

between and from the corpus with smoothing of [Search lots of books](#)

