A writing mod for Vintage Story

Writing Expansion | working title

This mod will bring more depth to the writing and literature systems available. It will modify the ability to write on parchment and in books to look and feel more authentic, as well as adding a system and tools for text formatting and ‘scribing’.

The mod will also change the process by which books and parchment are made for better balance and more immersive gameplay.

# The current system

There are three types of written media:

* Read-only lore books, scrolls and pages
* Player made books
* Parchment

They use the same GUI elements to interact with the player and the same item classes to store their data. Lore books are read-only while player made books and parchment are both editable when holding an *ink and quill* in the off-hand and can be signed by a player to make them read-only as well. The only difference major difference in functionality between a book and parchment is that parchment can only hold one page of writing, but a book can hold 90.

With any piece of writing, if the player holds an *ink and quill* in the off-hand and has a spare piece of parchment in their inventory they can transcribe the current page on to the parchment.

Books and parchment can only be read in-hand. They can be placed in-world on the ground or in their respective holders (bookshelves, scroll racks) but can’t be interacted with by either means.

The implementation of lore items is incomplete and their presence in the game is somewhat sporadic in its current state, from what I can gather in the creative menu.

## Production

Lore books can only be found in ruins and other structures as loot.

Books are made with 8 parchment and 2 pieces of leather, the colour of which decides the cover style of the book (there are 17 combinations to choose from).

Parchment is made by soaking linen-adjacent items in a barrel of water to create linen pulp which can be crafted with a sieve to produce a sheet at a rate of 4 to 1. This means one parchment costs 4 flax twine or 16 flax fibre. The sieve takes 4 boards and 5 flax twine, and it doesn’t lose durability during crafting.

## Writing & formatting

When a player opens the book GUI, they are met with a default-VS style brown window with text fields for the book’s title and content. There are buttons to close, change page (if available), sign (if available), transcribe and save & close (if available) as well as a page number indicator.

The player can format text normally through this interface. There are no rich text options such as font size, colour or style and one page can hold any length of text, regardless of whether it can be displayed correctly.

# Proposed additions and changes

## Loose & stacked parchment

In vanilla VS, parchment that has been written on is not stackable and if you wanted to write over multiple sheets you would have to *close the Gui*, *switch to the new sheet* and *open it*. While this isn’t necessarily an issue and a player is unlikely to want to do this, for future mods I want to make it could be problematic and personally it breaks immersion and is less equivalent what you might do in real life.

In the mod, loose sheets of parchment will be stackable with one another, creating a new item called a *stack of parchment* that has much the same functionality as a book, but also has an inventory slot for each separate item. As the player goes through the sheets in the stack, only the slot for the currently viewed page will be available and the player can take the item out of the stack and into their hot bar. Parchment stacks will have a limited number of pages (currently 24).

Parchment itself will hold two pages of writing, the front and back, and both parchment and parchment stacks will be title-able and signable by the player. The sheets in a signed stack of parchment will be inaccessible as individual items anymore.

### Display & model

The model for parchment stacks will change depending on the number of pages it’s holding, and the texture of parchment will reflect whether it has been written on, rather than just staying a blank sheet as it does in vanilla. The model will also change based on the [wear state of the stack](#_Wear_&_damage).

### Stack hierarchy

When a stack of parchment is titled or signed or when the player continues writing over the page from a titled sheet to an untitled one, the sheets involved will become a stack on their own. If only part of the original stack is included, or the created stack is added to another, it will enter the inventory of the other stack as a single item rather than individual parchment sheets. This will allow sheets that should stay stacked together remain together, regardless of whether they are also stacked with others.

Signed stacks will not be open to the addition or removal of parchment, but unsigned linked stacks will be able to. Because of the way the items are displayed, this will only be available when the stack of parchment in question is not a member of another.

## Scribing tools

### In Gui

### As blocks & items

## Wear & water damage

## Parchment & book production

# Integration into Vintage Story