



# Chronicling America Search Strategy Video Transcript

## Proximity Searching – Recipes & Cooking Tips

### Background

In collaboration with the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Library of Congress, the National Digital Newspaper Program in Ohio developed and produced a series of video tutorials to teach users advanced search strategies and highlight interesting topics in Chronicling America. These build on the search skills demonstrated in the Using Chronicling America Podcast Series.

### Proximity Searching – Recipes & Cooking Tips

Description	Watch this video about how to find recipes and cooking tips in Chronicling America to learn why it is useful to use the <b>proximity</b> search option available through the website's <b>Advanced Search</b> feature.
Hosts	Jenni Salamon
Duration	4:27
URL	<a href="http://www.ohiohistoryhost.org/ohiomemory/resources/tutorials">http://www.ohiohistoryhost.org/ohiomemory/resources/tutorials</a>

0:00	Hello, my name is Jenni Salamon and I work on the National Digital Newspaper Program in Ohio at the Ohio Historical Society. In this video, I am going to show you an advanced search technique for the Library of Congress's Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers website. This is a great resource for historical research because newspapers covered a wide range of subjects, including topics related to life in the home. I'll demonstrate how you can find information about one of these topics: recipes and cooking tips.
0:28	Newspapers were once people's primary form of communication. Not only did they turn to them for news on local and national happenings, but they looked to them as a source of entertainment and for advice on various topics, including how to cook meals. For years, people have been coming up with new ways to make chicken less bland, to trick their children into eating vegetables and to create a "wow" dessert for a party.
0:49	With over six million newspaper pages, Chronicling America can be overwhelming to search so it is important to use search strategies that will eliminate irrelevant results from the beginning. One way to do this is by doing a <b>proximity</b> search. This type of search will allow you to find your search terms close together on the same page. In other words, it will help you find your search terms in the same article. Let's try it out—and who knows, maybe you'll find a new recipe to try for dinner tonight.
1:17	First, we'll search <i>recipe</i> using the <b>Basic Search</b> option on Chronicling America's home page. We're only using one word for this search to show why it's useful to use the <b>proximity</b> search.



1:27	As you can see, we received over 170,000 results! I performed these searches ahead of time and know that fewer than half of the results on the first page are accurate. Although the word <i>recipe</i> does appear on these pages, in addition to finding actual recipes, we also found advertisements for baking products and recipe books.
1:45	A better way to search for recipes is to combine the word <i>recipe</i> or <i>dish</i> with an ingredient or food type like <i>chicken</i> or <i>pie</i> . Although we can combine our search terms in the <b>Basic Search</b> box, let's open up the <b>Advanced Search</b> tab by clicking on the gray tab here so we can determine the best way to combine our words. If you watched our video about the S.S Sultana Disaster, you'll have learned about the differences between an <b>any</b> , <b>all</b> and <b>phrase</b> search.
2:10	To refresh your memory, here is a quick chart that illustrates how these search options work. While you could use any of these for a search for recipes, there are a couple reasons why a <b>proximity</b> search will work better: an <b>any</b> word search would provide us with too many results, an <b>all</b> word search would provide us with fewer results, but may have our words in separate articles on the same page, and a <b>phrase</b> search will limit our results too much—if we searched for <i>cake recipe</i> , we might miss results that say " <i>recipe for chocolate cake</i> " since the search engine is looking for words in the exact order we typed them.
2:42	A <b>proximity</b> search, the fourth search box option that reads <b>...with the words: within 5 words of each other</b> will allow us to find results for a cake recipe regardless of the word order but close enough together that they are likely in the same article. Let's see what happens when we search for <i>cake recipe</i> within ten words of each other.
3:08	We retrieved just over 6,000 results. You can also choose to do a <b>proximity</b> search within 5, 50 or 100 words. You can experiment with those options to see which works best for your particular search terms.
3:21	Most of the results on the first page are relevant, and as you can see from the examples that the words <i>cake</i> and <i>recipe</i> are in various orders and distances from each other on the page. By doing a <b>proximity</b> search, we were able to call up all these results without having to worry about how the author of that article chose to describe his or her dish. If you were to replicate this search at home, I recommend adding another search term such as <i>chocolate</i> or <i>white</i> so you can get fewer results.
3:47	Want to find more recipes of yesteryear? Try your own searches—Chronicling America is freely available, and more newspaper pages are added on a regular basis. Visit the Ohio Digital Newspaper Portal to view a Subject Guide about Recipes for more information and search tips.
4:02	But don't stop there—see what other information Chronicling America contains about the domestic life, like gardening tips, fashion, sheet music and much more. Explore other topics as well! For more information about Chronicling America, and additional tutorials for using the website, please view the Ohio Historical Society's Using Chronicling America Podcast Series, available through the Ohio Digital Newspaper Portal. Thank you for viewing my screencast!