

Sensational sources

What does it say?

Reading history

You can visit the National Archives in Kew and have a look at original historical documents from the time of the Civil War (or you can look at some on this website). However, a lot of the documents are hard to read. They are hundreds of years old and the writing has faded. Plus the way people wrote then was a bit different to now. They had different ways of expressing ideas and they had different ways of spelling words too.

Help

We've given you some help to get to grips with these sources.

- You can **listen** to the words being read out.
- You can read the words in a **transcript**. These are exactly the same words as in the original document but typed out so they are easier to read.
- You can read the **simplified transcript**, which has the same meaning as the original document but uses simpler and more modern English words.

Firstly though, why not try and read some of the original document itself **before** you click on the help features?



What does this document say?

To the Kings moste. Excellency. Ma^{tie}.

The humble petition of John Ruffey a sorrowfull pore. prisoner in yo^r Ma^{ties} gaol of White Lion, in Southwarke. /

Moste humbly Sheweth

That, after that yo^r Highnesses petitione, was presented, by due order of yo^r Ma^{ties} Council, at the assise last holden in Southwarke, for yo^r Ma^{ties} Countie of Surrey, for the felonie of stealing in yo^r 3 horses, His: upon humbles supplication, unto yo^r Ma^{ty} by yo^r Highnesses yratione, and Royall favour, was respited, and soe spared from execution, and deferred death. for which his: yo^r Ma^{ty} penitent suppliant hath not beene unmyndfull, to praye for God, and praye for yo^r yratione Ma^{ty}.

His: yo^r Highnesses petitioner, in all hartly contrition for his heinous offence, was the first that ever he committed, in case of felonie, doth moste humbly (with bended knee, at yo^r Ma^{ties} feete) supplicate yo^r moste sacred Ma^{ty} to vouchsafe yo^r yratione pardon unto him, for his said offence. And that his: maye bee sent to serve in yo^r Ma^{ties} warre, be mye ready & willinge to expose that deservable life, as forfeited and to him restored in the moste dangerous service, for yo^r Royall Ma^{ty}, and his Country.

And his: with his pore wife and children shall ever praye for yo^r yratione Highnesses long and prosperous raigne over us. &c.

At the Court at Whitehall: 20: March: 1639:

Mr Attorney Generall is forthwith to give a Pardon for the Pet^r aforesaid. for wch this shalbe his warrant.

John: Widdowes

