

Getting oriented with the TEI Guidelines

What we've learned so far

- We learned about a few elements for metadata that occur within `<teiHeader>`. We'll talk more about these after lunch.
- We used a few tags for encoding parts of the text of a journal article:
 - `<front>`, `<body>`, and `<back>`
 - `<p>` and `<q rend="block">`
 - `<note n="___" place="bottom">`

If the exercise hadn't told you, how would you know what tags to use?

As you know, there are a few ways to have `<oxygen/>` tell you what's allowed at a given point in the text.

I keep scaring you about the TEI Guidelines, but of course you will have to dive in at some point.

TEI Lite

- The encoding exercise used TEI Lite. This is a customization provided by the TEI Consortium (which maintains the TEI Guidelines).
- It's a good place to start to get an overview of the TEI.

Where to begin

The Guidelines are organized like a giant book (with front matter, a body containing chapters, and back matter) and could be read straight through.

Better to start by reading these sections in this order:

1. About These Guidelines
 2. A Gentle Introduction to XML
 3. The TEI Infrastructure
 4. The TEI Header
 5. Elements Available in All TEI Documents
 6. Default Text Structure
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- only skim
- will be familiar from TEI Lite

The structure of the TEI Guidelines

The Guidelines are filled with:

- cross-references to other chapters of the Guidelines
- hyperlinks to documentation in the appendices on specific elements and to *classes* of elements and attributes

Those appendices tell you the same things that <Oxygen/> and the TEI Lite schema does: which elements and attributes are allowed where.

But the appendices also provide some explanation and examples not found in any of the particular chapters. They also refer to chapters where a particular element or attribute is discussed. Sometimes it's in more than one chapter!

Temptation

It's very tempting to skim the list of elements and attributes for terms that describe the feature you're trying to encode rather than reading the prose. But here's why you should resist the temptation:

- Lots of elements and attributes have misleading names and aren't used for what you would assume.
- The chapters give context on how to encode certain phenomena; this can't be gleaned from the appendices alone.

Questions?