



Portrait of George Eliot by Samuel Laurence in 1860, [Wikimedia Commons](#).

## GEORGE ELIOT (1812-1870)

*Author of Daniel Deronda (1876), The Mill on the Floss (1860), Middlemarch (1871) and Silas Marner: The Weaver of Raveloe (1861).*

Mary Ann Evans, known by her pen name George Eliot, was an English novelist born in Warwickshire. Renowned for her impressive intellect, incisive social observations, and empathetic narrative style, Eliot left an indelible mark on the literary landscape of the nineteenth century.

Serving as a mirror to Victorian society, her novels are peopled by individuals searching for meaning in a rapidly changing world.

Eliot's hyper-realistic approach to writing allowed her to shed light on the inequalities, injustices, hierarchies, and societal norms of her time. Through this level of detail, Eliot encouraged her readers to practice empathy, question their beliefs and attitudes, appreciate the nuances of daily life, and overall acknowledge the complexity of human psychology.

Her writing traverses a wide range of themes, including – provincial life, the role of women in society, questions of faith and morality and the transformative power of education. These themes are reflected in her lexical choices.

Showing 1 to 4 of 4 entries, 907,442 total words, 307,804 in Quotes, 599,638 in Non-quotes, 1,858 in Short Suspensions, 10,070 in Long suspensions

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Book	Chapters	Total Words	In Quotes	In Non-quotes	In Short Suspensions	In Long suspensions	
1 <a href="#">Daniel Deronda</a>	70	310,979	103,802	207,177	366	2,291	
2 <a href="#">The Mill on the Floss</a>	58	207,004	69,814	137,190	737	3,832	
3 <a href="#">Middlemarch</a>	88	318,047	111,430	206,617	524	2,777	
4 <a href="#">Silas Marner: The Weaver of Raveloe</a>	23	71,412	22,758	48,654	231	1,170	

Works by George Eliot currently available at clic.bham.ac.uk. Under the 'count' tab you can access a numerical overview of your selected texts.

SEARCH GEORGE ELIOT CORPUS





## GEORGE ELIOT KEYWORDS GUIDE

The keywords tool finds words (and phrases) that are used significantly more often in one corpus compared to another. You can find the full list of keywords in our George Eliot corpus (generated using our 19thC reference corpus, excluding Eliot's texts) [here](#). If you want to learn how to run keywords yourself, please see the [keywords section of our CLiC user guide](#).

The following pages provide a hyperlinked sample of these keywords, grouped according to theme. If you click on one of these keywords, you can run a concordance search for it across George Eliot's works.

Once you have selected a keyword you can use the 'filter rows' option or the 'KWICGrouper' to tease out or highlight any patterns you come across. Why not print-screen your findings and send them to us on Twitter under the hashtag [#CLiCCreative](#), or by tagging us [@CLiC\\_fiction](#)?

**KEYWORDS RELATED TO INTERNAL THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS OR SUBJECTIVITY VS OBJECTIVITY:**

feeling, sense, felt, inward, consciousness, tone, looking,  
mind, vision, fact, speech, seemed, something, reasons,  
if, resolve, conscious, life, repulsion, imagination,  
ardor, inwardly, susceptibility, notion, self, egoism,  
memories, yearning, wishing, disgust, notions.

**OVER TO YOU:**

Much of Eliot's works explore the tension between subjectivity and objectivity – the interplay between personal emotions, perceptions, and biases, and the objective reality of the external world. This theme is intricately woven throughout her novels in various ways.

Collectively, these keywords reflect a range of psychological, emotional, and cognitive elements that contribute to the complexity of human thought and behaviour. What does running a concordance search on them tell you about how to present the subjective experience of alternating characters? How does Eliot use these words to highlight the interpretive nature of human experience? See, for example, 'seemed', 'something', 'reasons', 'if' and 'resolve'.

What surprises do you run into along the way? Take the word '[ardor](#)', for example. In *Middlemarch* this word is frequently used by Lydgate, not to refer to his romantic inclinations but in reference to his medical career.

6	ction of mind which belonged to his intellectual	ardor,	did not penetrate his feeling and judgment abc	<a href="#">middlemarch</a>
7	ns. He was an ardent fellow, but at present his	ardor	was absorbed in love of his work and in the	<a href="#">middlemarch</a>
8	d of late become more frequent, the increasing	ardor	of his affection for Mary inclining him the more	<a href="#">middlemarch</a>
9	on and justice, on which he would carry all his	ardor.	Why should he not one day be lifted above the	<a href="#">middlemarch</a>
10	unreflecting surface her mind presented to his	ardor	for the more impersonal ends of his profession	<a href="#">middlemarch</a>
11	ds of his profession and his scientific study, an	ardor	which he had fancied that the ideal wife must	<a href="#">middlemarch</a>

What does running a concordance search for words like ‘self’, ‘egoism,’ ‘memories’, ‘life,’ ‘inwardly,’ and ‘notion’ tell you about how the concept of selfhood and identity may have differed from its modern equivalent?

See, for example, the words that preface ‘self’: collocates like *the* and *that* indicate existential concern; others introduce a temporal dimension (*past*, *earlier*, *former*); emphasise a sense of authenticity (*specific*, *real*); introduce a comparative element (*better*, *worse*, *worst*); or bring a character’s emotions to the fore (*passionate*, *ardent*).

Most noticeable in Eliot’s works are collocates of self that differentiate between an internal and external self (*inward*, *inner*, *persistent*); imply a holistic or definitive view of the self (*whole*, *complete*); or emphasise moral evolution (*another*, *new*, *different*).

What can you glean from these concordance searches regarding how individuals in the past many have conceptualised their own identities?

You can [group these words together](#) using the **KWICGrouper**.

Showing 1 to 50 of 111 entries, Rel. freq. 122.32 pm, from 4 books, 28 lines / 4 books with 1 KWIC match

Left	Node	Right	Book	In bk.
1 es not really determine the hunger of the <b>inner</b> self,	self	for supremacy: it only makes a difference som	Deronda	
2 e aroused to the consciousness of her <b>physical</b> self,	self,	took off her gloves and then her hat, that the	Deronda	
3 as going to make his bow, Gwendolen's <b>better</b> self,	self,	conscious of an ingratitude which the clear-se	Deronda	
4 putting down his hat and becoming his <b>former</b> self.	self.	"And you've been punctual. Nothing like a little	Deronda	
5 f at once recalled Mordecai to his <b>usual</b> gentle self:	self:	he was not able to speak again at present, bu	Deronda	
6 bly reappeared--reappeared in a more <b>specific</b> self-	self-	asserting form than ever. Deronda had that so	Deronda	
7 at last it brought me my <b>new</b> life--my <b>new</b> self--	self--	who will live when this breath is all breathed c	Deronda	
8 conviction that he had found a <b>new</b> executive self,	self,	it might be preparing for him the worst of dise	Deronda	
9 that he too for some reason was not his <b>usual</b> self.	self.	She could not have defined the change except	Deronda	
10 I am at ease it all fades away; my <b>whole</b> self	self	comes quite back; but I know it will sink away	Deronda	
11 n--it is subjection. It takes <b>another</b> for a larger self,	self,	enclosing this one," --she pointed to her own	Deronda	
12 d to diminish that sacred aversion to her <b>worst</b> self--	self--	that thorn--pressure which must come with the	Deronda	
13 intimeliness that made it repulsive to his <b>better</b> self.	self.	Excuse poor Rex; it was not much more than e	Deronda	
14 hopeful dreams, admiring trust, and <b>passionate</b> self	self	devotion which that learned gentleman had se	middlemarch	

Filter rows: e.g. 'hands'

KWICGrouper

Search in span: [Slider]

Search for types: another x, better x, earlier x, former x, inner x, inward x, new x, passionate x, past x, persistent x, physical x, real x, specific x, usual x, whole x, worst x

Tags: kwic-terms

Selected rows are part of: Manage tag columns...

Subsets



**KEYWORDS RELATED TO RELIGION VS SCIENCE AND / OR TRADITION VS MODERNITY:**

*new, fact, hospital, spiritual, knowledge, medical, judgment, vicar, belief, ideas, rector, religion, clergyman.*

**OVER TO YOU:**

In her works, Eliot often delved into the tension between tradition and modernity, as well as the clash between religion and science, most notably in *Middlemarch* which explores the changing economic landscape of England during the Industrial Revolution.

How does Eliot present a nuanced exploration of the interplay between tradition and modernity, and religion and science?

What can you learn about how individuals may have grappled with these issues in the past?

Think about the ways in which certain words are used – how do they reflect the complexity of the societal changes occurring?

Take note, for example, of [what different collocates of the word 'religion' imply](#).

*Your, my, his, and her* indicate a sense of ownership or individual relationship with one's faith; *father's* points to the generational nature of religious identity; while *national, our* and *people's* link religion to a sense of communal or cultural identity.

Words like, *no, other, Jew's, Hebrew, and high*, on the other hand emphasise the distinctions and tensions between different religious beliefs, while adjectives like *fundamental, purified, spiritual, true, and vital* can give us insight into the perceived qualities of religion itself during this time.

You can [group these words together](#) using the **KWICGrouper**.





**KEYWORDS RELATED TO PATTERNS OF SPEECH:**

*allays*, *rather*, *bit*, *might*, *hinder*, *beforehand*, *seemed*,  
*something*, *should*, *niver*, *chiefly*, *eh*, *lest*.

**OVER TO YOU:**

What can you learn from running a concordance search on the above terms and examining the context in which they were used? Does this inform how you might use the term yourself?

Words such as ‘rather,’ ‘bit,’ and ‘might’, for example, *introduce a level of uncertainty or reservation to a conversation*, indicating that the speaker is not expressing something definitively. Likewise, words like ‘might,’ ‘should’ and ‘lest’ introduce a conditional aspect in which one’s opinions or statements are contingent on certain conditions or possibilities.

You can use the **CLiC Web App** to run a concordance search to trace how these keywords are used in conversation by selecting the subset ‘*quotes*’. In CLiC, quotes represent the passages of text enclosed within quotation marks, indicating direct speech by fictional characters. Can you detect differing patterns of speech according to a character’s gender, age, marital status, occupation or social class?

Note for example, which characters tend to use qualifiers like ‘rather’, ‘bit’ and ‘might’ or how Eliot makes use of regional or colloquial expressions like ‘*niver*’ and ‘*eh*’. How might you go about making such linguistic differentiations in your own writing?

1	her." ¶ "I suppose it was she who led you on,	eh?"	said Mr. Gascoigne, laying down his pen, leaning bac	<a href="#">Deronda</a>	
2	said Mr. Featherstone, "let the next be who she will.	Eh,	Fred? Speak up for your sister." ¶ "I'm afraid I'm out	<a href="#">middlesmarch</a>	
3	I believe a thing because Bulstrode writes it out fine,	eh?"	¶ Fred colored. "You wished to have the letter, sir. I	<a href="#">middlesmarch</a>	
4	What! you are going to get lashed to the mast,	eh,	and are stopping your ears?" said the Vicar. "Well, if	<a href="#">middlesmarch</a>	
5	suppose he meant Dorothea to publish his researches,	eh?"	and she'll do it, you know; she has gone into	<a href="#">middlesmarch</a>	
6	can't abide new victual nor new faces, _I_ can't,--you	niver	know but what they'll gripe you." ¶ The walk was fini:	<a href="#">mill</a>	
7	gure, I saw; but rather dangerous and unmanageable,	eh?"	¶ "She's very tender and affectionate, and so simple,	<a href="#">mill</a>	
8	to follow suit wi' mine, I can tell you. She'd	niver	the taste, not if she'd spend the money. Big checks	<a href="#">mill</a>	



**GEORGE ELIOT KEYWORDS GUIDE | RESEARCH NOTES**

If you found this resource useful, why not share some of your findings using the hashtag #CLiCCreative, or tag us @CLiC\_fiction on Twitter?

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