**Reading Recipes**

*Language and format:*

* Are recipes separated into lists of ingredients and instructions, or are the two combined? (The latter is more common in premodern recipes)
* What weights and measures are used, if any? Are they different from measures you are familiar with?
* How do the recipes instruct or guide the reader?
* What verbs, verb tenses and pronouns are used?
* How much knowledge do they assume?
* Do the recipes have introductions or context or presented without?
* What is the tone (formal, casual, humorous, professional)?
* Are precise amounts and timeframes given or does the recipe leave those things to the discretion or knowledge of the reader?
* What kinds of portions are these recipes for, and do they indicate how long they take to prepare?
* What is the medium of the recipe –– is it from a book, a blog, a handwritten collection?

*Ingredients:*

* List the ingredients mentioned in the recipe. What kinds of categories might they be organized into? (for example, fresh/preserved, animal product/plant product, fats/carbohydrates/proteins, etc.)
* Where were the plant-based ingredients first cultivated (New World vs Old World)? (For the animal-based ingredients, where was the animal first domesticated?)
* Were the ingredients cultivated locally to the place & time the recipe is from, or would it have been imported?
* Given the place and time this recipe was written, can you speculate about where a cook would have purchased these items, and how far they traveled or how they were processed before they arrived in the market or the kitchen?
* Do you have a sense of how expensive or accessible the ingredients would have been at the time of its writing?
* Does the author give options or choices when it comes to recipes? Why do you think that is?
* What does this group of recipes say about the world of the recipe and its author?

*Equipment:*

* What kind of kitchen is this recipe written for?
* How and where is food stored, prepared, heated, and served?
* Make a list of equipment listed or implied in the recipe.
* What is required to prepare and cook the meal? Would you need a refrigerator? Heat source? Running water?

*Cooking as reading:*

* If you were to try to cook this recipe, what equipment would you need? Could you make it in a typical present-day kitchen?
* Where would you buy the ingredients, and what substitutes might you need?
* What knowledge or skills would you need that you may not already have to follow this recipe today, and how would you go about getting them?