



Centre for
Teaching
and Learning



Brainard the Fox

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Interactive Bibliography: Early British History paper (HBI 1)

[Hi! I'm Brainard the Fox](#)



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Hi! I'm Brainard The Fox. I'm here to suggest some reading sources for your history essay question. What is your assignment about?



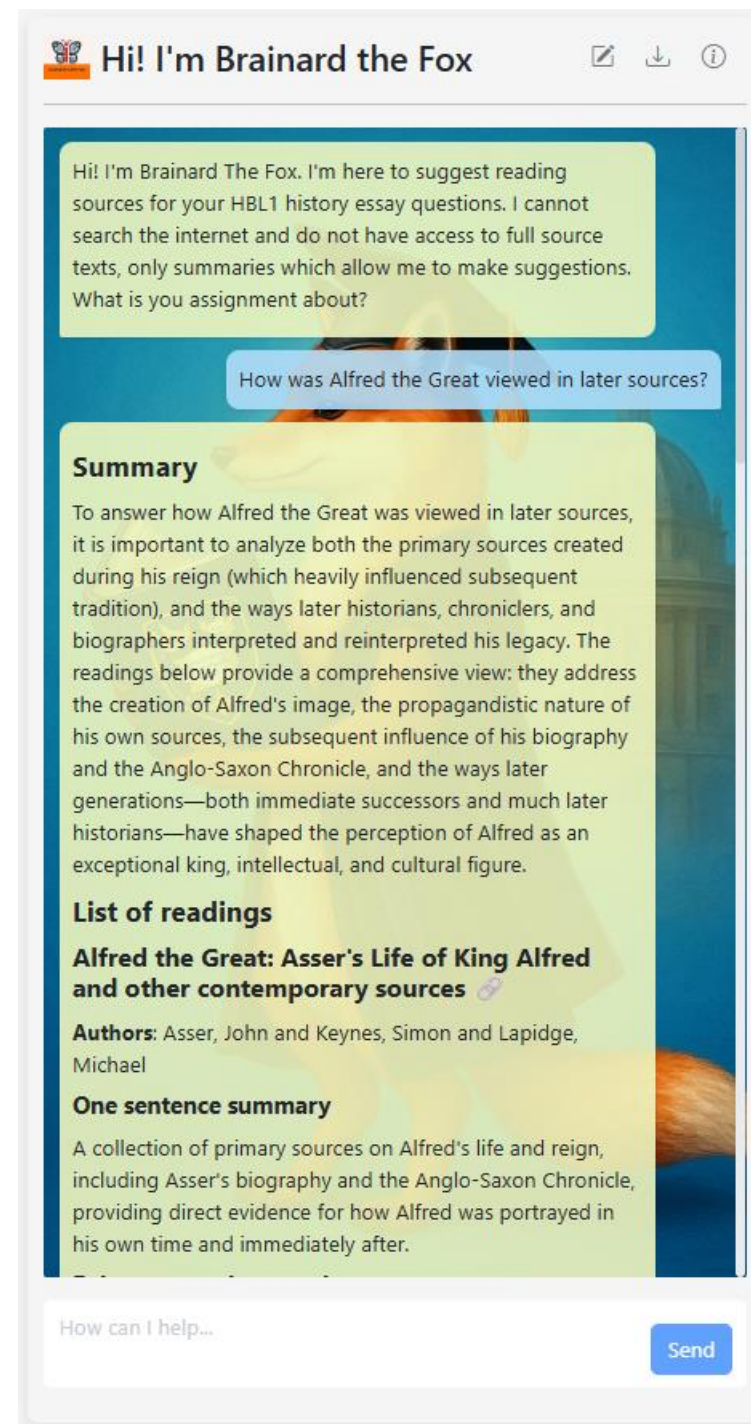
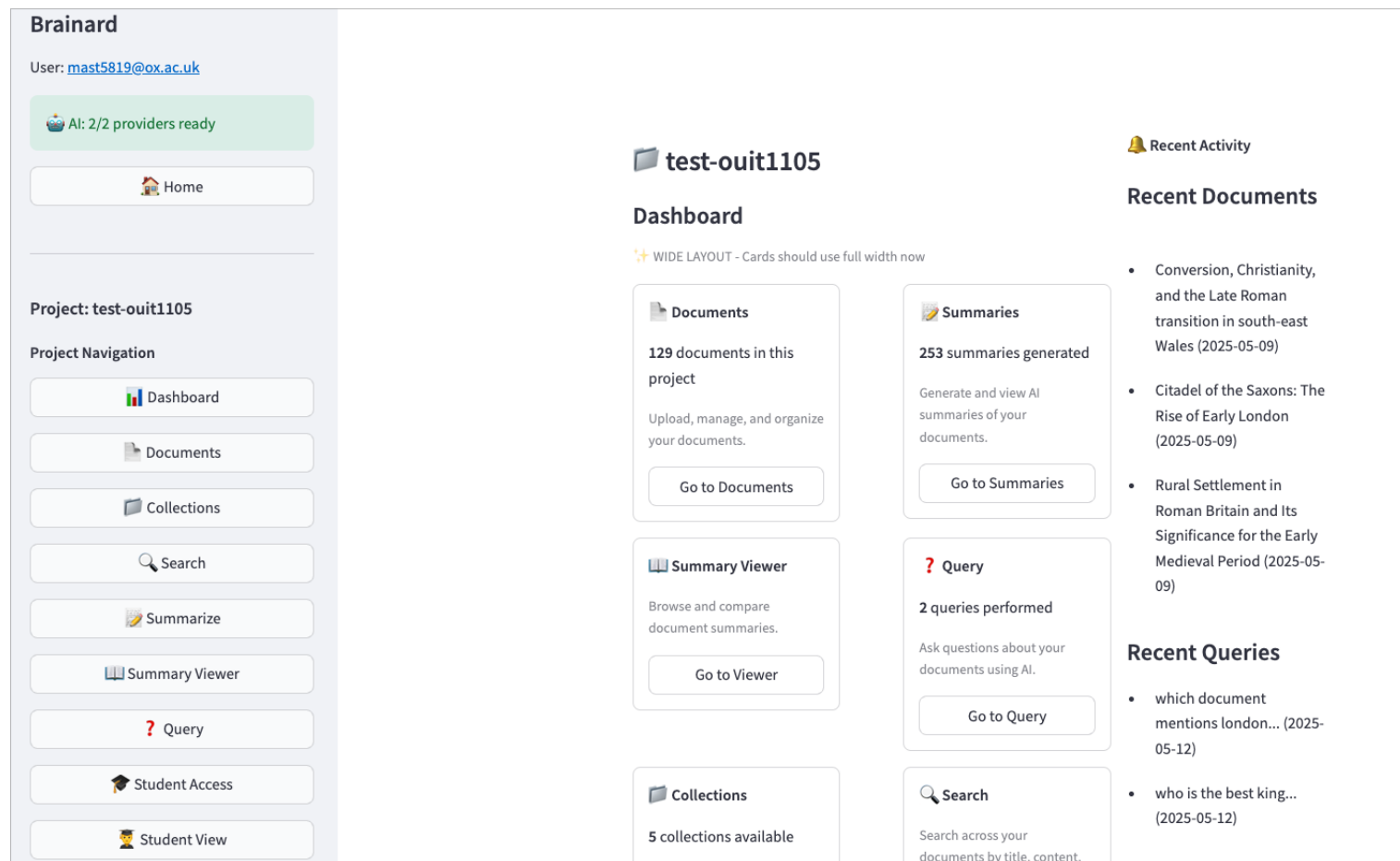
What was the problem we were solving?

Medieval History papers, especially History of the British Isles 1 (HBI 1; c.300 – 1086), span hundreds of years and come with overwhelming bibliographies, making it hard for UGs, especially fresh out of school.

What were our goals?

- Help UG students (History and JS) navigate the course material by making an interactive bibliography based on HF's recommended reading lists;
- **Increase** accessibility, efficiency, and student engagement through generative AI-based interactions with scholarly texts;
- Research and test how to produce consistent summaries of 100+ scholarly items and how to introduce guardrails to prevent the bot from producing an essay and from hallucinating.

Our solution design



Findings

"Within the constraints of what it's designed to do, and asking it to do the things it is designed for, it can provide really helpful answers. I asked it some questions about medieval masculinity, and it was able to produce a helpful, succinct summary of texts with indicative quotes."

"It's amazing! I only asked 4 questions, and it seemed to me that it is a really useful tool and will save students loads of time. The length of the summaries and key quotes are helpful but in no way sufficient to mean that students can just rely on this to write an essay."

"I found the answers surprisingly rounded and well expressed, including definitions of the limits of the Brainard's remit and terms of reference - there was an engaging modesty there! I liked the fact that you could download your chat history and thought the references seemed useful and relevant."

Next Steps

- Use in teaching next term

- Explore uses for other subjects

- Explore uses in archival research

- Improve back end for end users

- Explore Canvas integration