

Annotated Bibliographies

What is an Annotated Bibliography?

- A list of articles, books and other works, usually on a particular topic.
- Includes both citation information and an annotation describing and evaluating the source.
- May be organized in alphabetical order or group items into categories such as subject, type of resource (i.e. books, articles), or time period.

What are Annotated Bibliographies used for?

- Personal use: keep track of sources of interest, often as a precursor to writing an article or book.
- Public use: published annotated bibliographies are a way of gathering the most relevant sources about an issue in one place for quick reference.

Information to Include in Annotations

Annotations are usually short and extremely informative, including most of the following categories:

1. **Author Information and Purpose** - Include a brief mention of the author's expertise in the area or their credentials. Also consider why the author conducted the research or wrote the article and make note of any particular message or intent of the author.
2. **Methods Used or Source of the Information** - Mention in broad terms the methods used to obtain the information in the article. This is particularly important with scientific sources but also applies to works in the humanities and arts. (For example, the information may be based on personal opinion, interviews, library or archival research, laboratory experiments, empirical observation, or standardized personality tests.)
3. **Author's Conclusion** - State the main conclusion drawn by the author and make special note of conclusions that are implied rather than specifically stated.
4. **Justification for the Conclusion**
Address whether or not the author's conclusion is supported by his or her data and make special note of shaky reasoning or biases present in the conclusion drawn.
5. **Relationship to Other Works** - Briefly state how this work relates to other works in the bibliography or the field as a whole.

In addition to these 5 main points, annotations may also include the following components, as needed:

1. **Author Bias** - If you notice any particular bias, mention it in the annotation and explain how it impacts the information in the article (for example, the methods used or conclusion drawn).
2. **Time Frame** - You may want to address the publication date or time period covered if this impacts the value of the information in the source.
3. **Audience Information** - The way information is shared in works can be impacted by the intended audience of the work, so you may want to mention this in your annotation. In addition, you may want to address if the author's style makes the work easier or harder for potential readers to understand. (For example, if you're writing an annotated bibliography intended for high school students, you should make note of works that are particularly dense reads.)
4. **Potential Use** - Particularly when writing an annotated bibliography for an assignment, you may wish to include a brief statement of how you intend to use the information in this source in your final paper or project.

Keyword search "annotated bibliography" in the library catalog for examples