

Annotated Bibliography

Note: These reference guides do not take the place of assignment guidelines



An annotated bibliography is a formatted reference list (MLA, APA, Chicago, etc.) that contains annotations, or descriptions, of each of the cited works. Annotations are typically in the form of a standard paragraph, but may be longer or shorter depending on the requirements of your assignment. It is common for an annotation to give a brief description of the material's creator (author, organization, etc.) and an overview of the material. Some annotation assignments may also ask you to provide commentary on the source, either in terms of its credibility or its relevance to your overall essay or claim. The two most common annotation styles, Descriptive and Evaluative, are described below.

Descriptive Annotations

Descriptive annotations offer an objective, concise description of the source. When writing a descriptive annotation, you might attempt to answer questions such as "What are the main arguments?" "What is the point of this book or article?" and "What topics are covered within the article?"

Example descriptive annotation (APA format):

Ayala, A. (2015). An analysis of *Star Wars* as cultural commentary. *Obsessive Nerd Quarterly* 10, 1, 81-89. Alexandria Ayala, the Dean of Science Fiction Comparative Literature Studies and author of several books and articles, explains in this article the ways in which the *Star Wars* films reflect the decades in which they were produced. She uses specific examples of conflicts within the films and compares them to social and political conflicts taking place at the times the films were produced. Throughout the article, Ayala focuses on conflicts relating to Presidential elections and space exploration. Within my essay, I plan to use Ayala's work to support my claims that *Romeo and Juliet* is, in fact, a story about early exploration and political intrigue.

Evaluative Annotations

Evaluative annotations describe and offer opinions on a source, as well as assesses how useful a source will be for your writing. When writing an evaluative annotation, you might attempt to answer questions such as "How does the source compare with other sources in your bibliography?" "Is this source biased and/or objective?" and "What is the goal of this source?"

Example evaluative annotation (MLA format):

Ayala, Alexandria. "An Analysis of *Star Wars* as Cultural Commentary." *Obsessive Nerd Quarterly* 10 (2015): 81-89. Alexandria Ayala, the Dean of Science Fiction Comparative Literature Studies and author of several books and articles, explains in this article the ways in which the *Star Wars* films reflect the decades in which they were produced. The article seems to avoid bias on the subject by not addressing whether or not the author thought the films were good or bad, only what claims they made based on the evidence the author found in the films themselves. This article explored some aspects of the film that other articles I found did not, so I will be able to use it to fill in some of the gaps in my current research.

Final Tips:

- Be certain that your sources are relevant to your topic and that they are credible.
- Visit the reference desk at the FGCU Library for help finding sources or for help with the FGCU databases.
- Use the worksheet on the back of this handout to help guide you and to take notes on as you read through your articles
- Visit the Writing Center for any writing-related questions or help you may need!

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Annotated Bibliography Worksheet

Full citation of source

Brief summary of the article [Qualifications of author(s); purpose/scope; audience; standpoint of author; relationship to other works in the field; findings, results, and conclusions (if available); format/special features; useful to your claim?]:

Full citation of source

Brief summary of the article [Qualifications of author(s); purpose/scope; audience; standpoint of author; relationship to other works in the field; findings, results, and conclusions (if available); format/special features; useful to your claim?]:

Full citation of source

Brief summary of the article [Qualifications of author(s); purpose/scope; audience; standpoint of author; relationship to other works in the field; findings, results, and conclusions (if available); format/special features; useful to your claim?]:
