



Writing the MLA Annotated Bibliography

What is a bibliography?

A bibliography is a list of sources read. It captures research gathered at the time of reading, but that does not necessarily end up being utilized in the final essay. A bibliography contains:

- A list of the works consulted in research and related to a given topic. It can include [articles, books, websites...]

What is an annotation?

- An annotation includes descriptive and evaluative comments on a particular source.
- Annotation is the act or process of adding commentary or notes.

An **annotated bibliography**, therefore, is a listing of sources consulted which contains both the citation information and a critical description of each source. *A sample annotated bibliography is listed on the back.*

What is the difference between an annotated bibliography and a Works Cited page?

- An annotated bibliography lists all sources read and consulted for the assignment. Whether or not they were cited in the essay.
- An annotated bibliography includes annotations – brief descriptive and evaluative paragraphs at the end of each citation.
- A Works Cited page only includes the sources that were directly cited in the essay.
- A Works Cited page only includes a list of citations. No descriptive or evaluative paragraphs.

What is the difference between an annotation and an abstract?

- An abstract is a brief factual description of a specific article or book, often written by the author.
- An annotation, however, will reflect the personal judgment and opinion of the person compiling the bibliography.
- An annotation may include a summary of the source, an evaluation of the source, and/or commentary on how this source may fit into the research paper or assignment.
- Be sure to follow your instructor's instructions for the annotation content.

How long are annotations?

This depends on your assignment. Your instructor will specify the required length of the annotations. Typically, annotations are around 150 words.

To get started:

- Select a topic.
- Read the books, articles, or other resources you will write about.
- Read or view the selected items. Take notes on your readings as these will help in writing the annotation. Be careful to avoid plagiarizing an annotation or summary provided with the source citation.
- Arrange the list in alphabetical order by the main entry (usually authors). Alphabetize titles letter by letter, ignoring any initial *A*, *An*, or *The* or the equivalent in other languages. If the title begins with a numeral, alphabetize the title as if the numeral were spelled out.

For more information on how to create citations in MLA format, check the TCC Library website:

<http://tcc.fl.libguides.com/MLA>

Sample Annotated Bibliography

Bain, Jenn. "Celebrate Graceland's 70th Anniversary." *Travel + Leisure*, June 2009,

www.travelandleisure.com/articles/celebrate-graceland-70-anniversary. Journalist Bain describes the cultural and historical significance of Elvis Presley's private residence, a Tennessee landmark named Graceland. Bain provides details about the property, explaining what about the architecture drew audiences to emphasize its cultural appeal. The article illustrates the lasting impact of Presley's celebrity on his current fans through vividly descriptive direct quotations from visitors to Graceland. This article is particularly useful for its statistics on the number of visitors who arrive at Graceland each year. These statistics can also be used as a surprising fact to draw the reader's attention in the introduction, and to provide evidence and demonstrate the extent of Presley's popularity. The article uses logic (logos) with its facts and details about the home and its tourism, to persuade its readers of Presley's lasting legacy. Overall, this short, but detailed article will provide enough supporting evidence to set the background and tone for this essay.

Markowitz, Robin. "Graceland." *St. James Encyclopedia of Popular Culture*, edited by Thomas Riggs, 2nd ed., vol. 2, St. James Press, 2013, p. 520. *Gale Virtual Reference Library*, db28.linccweb.org/login?url=http://go.galegroup.com/ps/i.do?id=GALE%7CCX2735801123&v=2.1&u=lincclin_tcc&it=r&p=GVRL&sw=w&asid=090cc3242f27ec90970bac2a0b2360ce. Author Markowitz, a sociologist who has taught at California State University, describes the Graceland mansion in the context of the American Dream. This encyclopedia entry frames the mansion as a status symbol in the rags-to-riches trajectory of Presley's life. In addition to providing significant dates and facts from the history of the building, information included within the article can be used for understanding the continuing appeal of the mansion for visitors. This article elaborates visually on the layout of the interior of the mansion: a dark staircase, carpeted walls, and mirrored ceilings to Presley's pleasure. This can help provide sensory imagery and persuasion of what made Graceland so enticing, and therefore appeal

to pathos or the emotions of the reader. The article also provides helpful history on prior ownership of the property and its cost at the time of purchase that can be used to provide further background on the topic.

“The 100 Most Influential Figures in American History.” *The Atlantic*, Dec. 2006,

www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2006/12/the-100-most-influential-figures-in-american-history/305384/. Developed by a panel of ten American historians, including Doris Kearns Goodwin, Ellen Fitzpatrick, and David M. Kennedy, this slideshow from the popular *American magazine* provides a ranked list of men and women who have impacted American history. Ringing in at number 66 on the list, Elvis Presley is described as the “king of rock and roll.” Presley’s presence on this list offers evidence of his lasting influence on American culture and demonstrates his well-known notoriety and long-lasting legacy. The article elaborates on the criteria for ranking, criteria such as: achievements, pop culture, value, identity, and politics that helped influence placement on the listing. The article made the point to state that the list only contained three musicians with Elvis ranking the highest against Louis Armstrong at 79 and Stephen Foster at 97. These facts will help bolster an argument, using logos, to persuade a reader of Presley’s popularity and significance in culture.