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APSU Writing Center
Annotated Bibliography

Annotated Bibliography

Resource: *The OWL at Purdue* website

- **Note:** The format of an annotated bibliography can vary; therefore, check the professor's specific guidelines for the course.
- An **annotated bibliography** includes a summary and/or evaluation of each source, which appears as a citation. This form shapes the research and supports an argument (thesis)
- **Bibliography/Citation:** Sometimes called *references* or *works cited*, the bibliography is a list of sources one has used for researching a topic.
 - The citation (bibliographic information) appears in the format for the course, such as MLA, APA, or Chicago styles.
- **Annotation:** An annotation is a summary and/or evaluation.
 - The purpose of the annotation is to inform the reader of the relevance, accuracy, and quality of the sources cited usually for **preparing to write a subsequent research paper**.
 - The annotation will come immediately after the citation. An additional reference list is not needed at the end of an annotated bibliography.
 - Generally, the *annotations* are written in a descriptive and evaluative paragraph (usually about 150-250 words).
 - **Summarize:** Some annotations merely summarize the source. What are the main arguments and topics covered in the article/book?
 - **Assess:** After summarizing a source, the student must evaluate it. Is it a useful source? Is the information reliable? What bias is present? What is the goal of the source? How does it compare with the other sources?
 - **Reflect:** The student must state how the source fits into the research. How does the source help shape the student's argument? How can it be applied to the research project? Has the perspective of the argument changed?
 - Professors can require the summary paragraph to be followed by another brief paragraph in which the student will describe how he or she intends to use that source as it relates to the student's research paper topic.



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- **Tips:**

- Creating an annotated bibliography calls for the application of a variety of intellectual skills: concise exposition, succinct analysis, and informed library research.
 - Locate and record citations for books, periodicals, and documents that may contain useful information and ideas on your topic.
 - Examine and review the sources.
 - Choose only the works that provide a variety of perspectives on your topic.
 - Write an annotation that summarizes the central theme of the source. Include one or more of the following sentences that:
 - evaluate the authority or background of the author,
 - comment on the intended audience,
 - compare or contrast this work with another source that has already been cited,
 - explain how this work illuminates the bibliography topic.