



Annotated Bibliography

The annotated bibliography is an alphabetical listing of sources. Each bibliographic entry includes a brief description of the source's content. Preparing an annotated bibliography as you search for sources helps with organization and planning in longer projects. Sometimes instructors assign an annotated bibliography as a separate document you submit along with a research paper assignment.

Bibliographic entries

Consult your style manual (APA, MLA, etc.) for help formatting the entry for each source type (book, journal, Web site, etc.) and then arrange the list as you would when preparing a bibliography at the end of a research paper or article.

Annotations

Immediately following each bibliographic entry, write a brief summary, also called an annotation.

Annotate each entry to include the following:

- a brief summary of the source
- an evaluation of the source's credibility, of the source's argument or stance, and of the source's relevance to your project.

Some assignments require that you provide only summary and not any evaluation, so read your assignment sheet carefully. In addition, you may focus your summary and evaluation on the particular chapter or section of a book, journal, or web source that is relevant to your project. Your evaluation may note any graphs, photos, or charts that you find useful to your project.

Format

Although the major style manuals provide help with formatting the bibliographic entries, most do not have explicit guidelines for annotations and the overall document.¹ If your instructor does not provide detailed requirements, the following example should help:

Example entry (MLA)

Lauer, Janice M. "Writing as Inquiry: Some Questions for Teachers." *College Composition and Communication* 33.1 (1982): 89-93. Print.

Janice Lauer is an English rhetoric and composition professor emerita at Purdue University who has written numerous articles and books on pedagogical theory. She argues composition teachers should help their students understand that writing is essentially a problem-solving process, a pursuit of discovery and insight. She synthesizes literature that addresses educational inquiry and the historical precedent established by scholars who espouse inquiry as vital to the writing process. This article is particularly useful for discussing the advantages of writing education that cultivates the ability to inquire and reason over writing education that privileges rote learning and "canned" lessons.

¹ *The Chicago Manual of Style* (16th ed.) presents an image of annotated bib entry on page 689.

Works Consulted

The Chicago Manual of Style. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2010. Print.

Lunsford, Andrea A. *The St. Martin's Handbook*. 8th ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martins, 2015. Print.

MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. 7th ed. New York: MLA, 2009. Print.

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association. 6th ed. Washington, DC: APA, 2009. Print.