



Annotated Bibliography

Definition:

An annotated bibliography is a research tool used to summarize, evaluate, and reflect upon sources. An annotated bibliography is more or less a list. This list is made up of bibliographic entries followed by short paragraphs that comment upon the source in question.

Why Write an Annotated Bibliography?

- Excellent preparation for a research project
- Encourages critical thinking and critical reading
- Gain a better perspective on your topic
- Figure out where your research will fit into the existing field of study
- Quick and easy access to your materials and their contents

The Basic Equation

$$\begin{array}{ccc} \textbf{Bibliography} & + & \textbf{Annotation} \\ \text{(A list of sources)} & & \text{(A summary and/or evaluation)} \end{array}$$

The Format

- **The bibliographic information:** For every source, you will create a bibliography entry. This will include such information as author, title, date, publisher, etc. Typically, this will either be in MLA, APA, or Chicago format.
- **The annotation:** For every source, you will create an annotation in paragraph form. This will typically include a *summary* of your source, an *evaluation* of its importance, and a personal *reflection* on its information/argument/message.
 - * Questions to ask in a **summary**:
 - ⇒ What is the main idea of this text?
 - ⇒ What evidence does the author use to support this main idea?
 - ⇒ What kind of text is this (novel, article, ad...)?
 - * Questions to ask in an **evaluation**:
 - ⇒ Is the author of this source credible and unbiased?
 - ⇒ Is his or her argument valid?
 - ⇒ Is this text's topic or thesis relevant to my paper or project?
 - * Questions to ask in a **reflection**:
 - ⇒ What did I enjoy about reading this text?
 - ⇒ Did anything in this text confuse me?
 - ⇒ How can I relate this text to others I have read?



Example

Rowling, J. K. *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*. New York, NY: Scholastic Inc., 1999 . (MLA)

Rowling, J. K. (1999). *Harry potter and the sorcerer's stone*. New York, NY: Scholastic Inc. (APA)

Rowling, J. K., *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*. New York. NY: Scholastic Inc., 1999. (Chicago)

Summary = Green; Evaluation = Blue; Reflection = Red

Harry Potter is perhaps one of the most famous tales of a boy wizard in Western culture. This is the first book in the series and chronicles Harry's introduction to the wizarding world. Harry Potter gets accepted to wizarding school and must defeat the evil Lord Voldermort. I consider *Harry Potter* to be one of the most influential fictional works included in the children's literature canon. Not only did it spearhead the young adult fantasy trend, but it made readers out of an entire generation of young adults. I remember reading *Harry Potter* in middle school and becoming instantly obsessed. I would spend the rest of my high school years waiting for the latest series installments. *Harry Potter* has definitely changed my life.

Further Assistance: For more detailed help or if you have questions, visit the Writing Center located in the Lewis University Library, or call 815-836-5427.