Annotated Bibliography

What is an annotated bibliography?

An annotated bibliography includes a summary/evaluation after each citation in the reference page or works cited page. The annotation (the paragraph following the citation) may be specific to your instructor, department, or assignment, and should be limited to 3-7 sentences in length. This guide will provide a general idea of an annotation and an example. Annotated bibliographies are good preparation for a research project.

What information is found in an annotation?

The annotation should focus on three points: summary, analysis, and reflection. Below are some suggestions to get you started on your annotation. However, not all of the questions in each category will be included in the annotation.

Summary:

- What is the source about?
- What are the main arguments or points of the source?
- What is the author’s purpose?

Analysis:

- Is this source useful to your research project?
- Is this information reliable?
- Is this information objective, or is there bias?
- What is the goal: to persuade, to inform, or something else?

Reflection:

- Did this source help you in your research?
- Will you include it in your work?
- To whom would you recommend this source? Why?

What is the format of an annotated bibliography?

The works cited or reference page will still be in alphabetical order and look like a typical citation page. The only difference is that after the citation, there will be a line break and then the annotation. After the annotation is written, the next citation will follow as usual.
Examples of annotations (in APA style):


*The Yo Momma Vocabulary Builder* provides many options in case one is placed in the epic battle of a “yo momma” fight while building vocabulary words. The source offers difficult words used in the typical “yo momma” joke style with the definitions below. The definition allows a small amount of brain activity to occur. The purpose of this source is to inform the reader on adequate and successful uses of “yo momma” jokes, so the reader will never be without a good stinging joke. This source is incredibly useful for anyone in a street battle or turf war because the high level of vocabulary will be sure to stun any opponent. The information found in this source is very reliable. It offers a wide variety of jokes to use without being harsh to anyone but someone’s mother.

Examples of an annotation (in MLA style):


This source provides plenty of facts about Chuck Norris and his interactions with the world. The point of this source is to entertain the reader through statements of what Chuck Norris thinks and does. The information found in this source is not reliable because as one piece states, “Chuck Norris drives Optimus Prime to work,” and there is no way Norris can really drive Optimus Prime to work because everyone knows that Norris is allied with the Decepticons. This source is very useful for entertainment purposes, but it is not useful for a paper on business ethics. I would recommend this source to students writing a paper on Chuck Norris and how he is better than everyone else.