

Annotated Bibliography

The Assignment: Choose a topic for a 5-6 page research paper. Write a working thesis statement for your topic. You will be creating an annotated bibliography of **6 sources—3 must be MOREnet sources**. You will be using the Modern Language Association (MLA) format for your bibliography. You must use this format consistently for each citation. Use the guidelines below to write your bibliography and include your thesis statement above the bibliography.

IMPORTANT: Credit will not be given for descriptive/evaluative information copied from another source. This is plagiarism.

What is an Annotated Bibliography? An annotated bibliography is a list of citations to books, articles, and other resources. Each citation is followed by a brief **descriptive** and **evaluative** paragraph: the annotation. The purpose of the annotation is to inform the reader of the relevance, accuracy, and quality of the sources cited. Annotations are **usually about 150 words**.

Annotations vs. Abstracts

Abstracts are the descriptive summaries often found at the beginning of scholarly journal articles or in subscription databases. Annotations, on the other hand, are descriptive **and** critical; they discuss the author's point of view, clarity, appropriateness of expression, authority, etc.

The Process

Creating an annotated bibliography calls for the application of a variety of intellectual skills: concise writing, succinct analysis, and informed library research. You will be retrieving sources relevant to a selected topic, and you will be writing concise annotations that summarize the central theme and scope of the websites, articles, and books.

Anatomy of the Annotated Bibliography

In general, each citation should be roughly 150 words in length and should contain the following components. See the example for clarification.

- **Source citation:** Follow the MLA format and your sources should be listed alphabetically by each author's last name or the first letter of the article or page title. **Double space the citation and single space the annotation.**
- **Author background:** Briefly state the author's level of expertise with the topic.
- **Content:** provide a short outline of the topic covered by your source.
- **Thesis:** Identify the author's position/central argument as well as any perceived biases.
- **Method / Arguments:** Describe how the author arrived at her/his conclusions.
- **Evaluation / Criticism:** Evaluate strengths and weaknesses in the thesis, arguments and/or approach. Why is this a good source?
- **Contribution to research question:** How is the source relevant to your topic? Did the source redirect your arguments or add to your conclusions?

Example of a Citation and Annotation

Holle, Meg. *Zombieproof! Undead Disaster Planning for Academic Libraries*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008. Print.

Meg Holle, a New York City librarian and zombie scholar with degrees from both Harvard and Princeton, serves both fields in this treatise on zombie attack disaster planning for libraries. Though targeting academic libraries, her surveys of how building design affects strategic positioning (for zombie prevention, horde dispersal, and quarantine activities) could easily be applied to public libraries or other university and civic buildings. Unlike many zombie survival guides, Holle makes the crucial distinction between "fast" and "slow" zombies, structuring the book and her arguments accordingly. This is especially useful for point-of-need quick lookup. She also includes several instructive diagrams, example floor plan repurposing and readiness checklists. Despite otherwise inclusiveness, Holle disparages the theory of zombie infection or inhabitation by extraterrestrial beings. As a result *Zombieproof!* does not address the issues of zombie-alien warfare and associated complications (e.g., limb regeneration or mind-controlled "smart" zombies).

There are several examples of annotated bibliographies available online.
One example: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/614/02/>