



## Annotated Bibliography

### WHAT IS AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY?

An annotated bibliography is a list of materials focused on a particular topic. Each citation is followed by a brief annotation, or paragraph that describes or evaluates the source.

### WHY AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY?

- To keep track of existing research and how those materials interact with each other
- To start thinking critically about how you might use each source in your paper
- To show your professor the progress of your research

### TYPES OF ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHIES AND WHAT TO INCLUDE

There are two main types of annotated bibliographies: (1) descriptive/informative and (2) analytical/critical.

The first resembles an abstract in that it summarizes the author's main arguments without an evaluation of their conclusions. It may include whether the source is useful to your research topic and how the source is distinctive from others that explore the same topic.

An analytical bibliography, on the other hand, not only summarizes the source, but it examines to what extent the source will be used in your paper. Most analytical annotations will include the following:

- A complete citation
- A brief summary including the purpose of the source
- An explanation of what makes the source unique or notable (if applicable)
- A brief discussion of the strengths, weaknesses, and biases within the source
- A statement about how you will use the source to support your thesis

### DESCRIPTIVE EXAMPLE

Murray, Donald M. "All Writing is Autobiography." *College Composition and Communication*, vol. 42, no. 1, 1991, pp. 66-74.

This Pulitzer Prize-winning author argues that writing is an individualistic process, built from our own experiences and the unique ways that those experiences have shaped and influenced our personal worldview. His use of the term "autobiography" refers to two main ideas: first, the ways in which our distinct perspectives appear in our writing in how we read and interpret ideas and information; and second, the ways in which our use of language in writing reflects our own unique relationship with language. Murray effectively demonstrates his argument by giving several examples of his own personal

writing and by discussing how these pieces are autobiographical. Though this article supports my main claim about writing, it seems to ignore the fact that writing is a social activity and that individual experiences are often mitigated by social circumstances.

#### ANALYTICAL EXAMPLE

Queen, Oliver. "Breeding Evil." *Economist*, vol. 376, no. 9, 2017, pp. 56-57.

This editorial describes the controversy surrounding video games and the effect they have on people who play them. The article points out that most critics of gaming are people over 40, a population that doesn't generally play or attempt to understand games. Therefore, the issue is one of age and not of the games themselves. He adds that gaming has actually had a positive impact on those who play them. He cites players' abilities to problem solve, build relationships with players from other countries and backgrounds, develop hand-eye coordination and empathy, and hone creative skills and imagination. While the author briefly mentions studies done around the issue of violence and gaming, he does not adequately summarize the research that has been done in the field. This article is a good resource for those wanting to begin to explore the controversy surrounding video games; however, I will need to pair this with the James Gee article to fully address the benefits and drawbacks of gaming.