

Annotated Bibliography

An annotated bibliography is a list of works on a subject which gives a brief explanation about the contents of each source on that list. The sources are listed in alphabetical order, just as they are in a regular bibliography. The annotation, or brief explanation, is written in sentence form immediately after the source which it describes. It is rarely more than one paragraph.

An annotated bibliography should be written using these steps:

1. Explain the main purpose of the work.
2. Briefly explain the contents.
3. Indicate the possible audience for the work.
4. Note any special features.
5. Warn of any defect, weakness, or suspected bias.
6. Follow the bibliographic style of the paper style used for the paper (APA, MLA, Chicago Style).

The following are examples of annotated bibliography entries:

Chicago Style:

Thompson, Oscar, ed. *International Cyclopaedia of Music and Musicians*. New York: Dodd, Mead, 1936.

An admirable work that brings Grove up to date and deals adequately with contemporary music and composers.

(Example taken from *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 6th Edition, 1996, by Kate L. Turabian.)

MLA Style:

Steele, Janet. "TV's Talking Headaches." *Columbia Journalism Review* 31.2 (1992): 49-52. This writer examines the networks' use of experts to comment on national and international events. She finds, however, that persons with real expertise in the history of a country, its language, and its customs are bypassed for experts who have contacts, can telephone the right people, and explain what is happening, whether it is true or not.

(Example taken from *Writing Research Papers*, 9th Edition, 1999, by James D. Lester.)

Note: The *APA Publication Manual*, 5th Edition offers no instructions on annotated bibliographies. Check with your instructor for the desired format if annotation is required with an APA paper.