An annotated bibliography is a list of available research pertaining to a specific topic. Entries are arranged in alphabetical order by author and include a commentary/evaluation.

One reason for creating an annotated bibliography is that it helps to situate the student within the discussion taking place in a specific discipline. It also provides other researchers with information on the existing research. From your annotation, they can decide whether or not to pursue a source further. The work can stand on its own but is often part of a larger project.

You can narrow your search for relevant articles or books by clearly defining your research question. Being clear about the purpose of your research helps you decide what to include and what to exclude in your bibliography.

There are two parts:

1) a full bibliographical entry in the style appropriate to your discipline.
2) an annotation: a summary and critical evaluation of the content of the article or book.

- There are several variations on how to approach the annotation section. Check with your professor to be certain of the specifics for your assignment.
- The annotation should not contain only a summary but also include the author’s argument. (See example below.)
- To grasp the purpose of the annotation, imagine you are speaking with a colleague or classmate who is interested in a similar area of research. You are telling him/her what the work is about and why (or why not) it will be useful to his/her research.

Example one only lists the contents.

Example two identifies the argument. It begins with the research question and continues with the method and main conclusions.


Tips:
• To identify the author’s thesis, carefully examine both the introduction and the conclusion. The purpose or central claim of the work should be apparent in both.
• State whether the author is using a specific theory in his/her investigation.
• If you decide the work has value, specify how you will use it in your own research.
• Provide the author’s background to verify the credibility of the source.

Material quoted from:
Writing an Annotated Bibliography | Writing Advice [utoronto.ca]

Material adapted from:
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill: Writing Centre
Annotated Bibliographies – The Writing Center • University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (unc.edu)
University of British Columbia: Writing Centre
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