

Writing An Annotated Bibliography Library Resource Guide

What is an Annotated Bibliography

An **annotated bibliography** is a brief description and critical summary of a particular work. It enables the writer to review their resources before incorporating them into their research. Annotations may be descriptive, critical, or both. A descriptive annotation "describes" what is discussed in the book or article, while a critical annotation attempts to evaluate or criticize the work from an informed point of view.

Elements of an Annotation Include

- 1. a bibliographic citation.
- 2. qualifications of the author(s).
- 3. overview of the thesis, theories, and major ideas.
- 4. identifies the **intended audience** (i.e. who the article is intended for).
- 5. identifies **bias or point of view** of author.
- 6. comments on the relationship to other relevant and or current sources
- 7. reports on the findings, results, and conclusions (if available)

8. notes special features (e.g. charts, glossary, illustrations, maps, survey instruments, etc.).

Length, Language, and Format of an Annotation

Length: Annotations vary in length. While some are only a few sentences, others can be very lengthy. Typically annotations do not exceed 150 to 200 words.

Language and Use of Vocabulary: Use the vocabulary of the author as much as possible to convey the ideas and conclusions of the author. In these cases where you decide to include a quotation from the source, place it within quotation marks. Avoid introducing annotations with unnecessary and/or redundant phrases like "The author states," "This article concerns," etc.

Format - Paragraphs: Annotations should be one single paragraph. Avoid writing a paragraph that is nothing more than a series of unconnected sentences summarizing separate ideas, arguments, and conclusions.

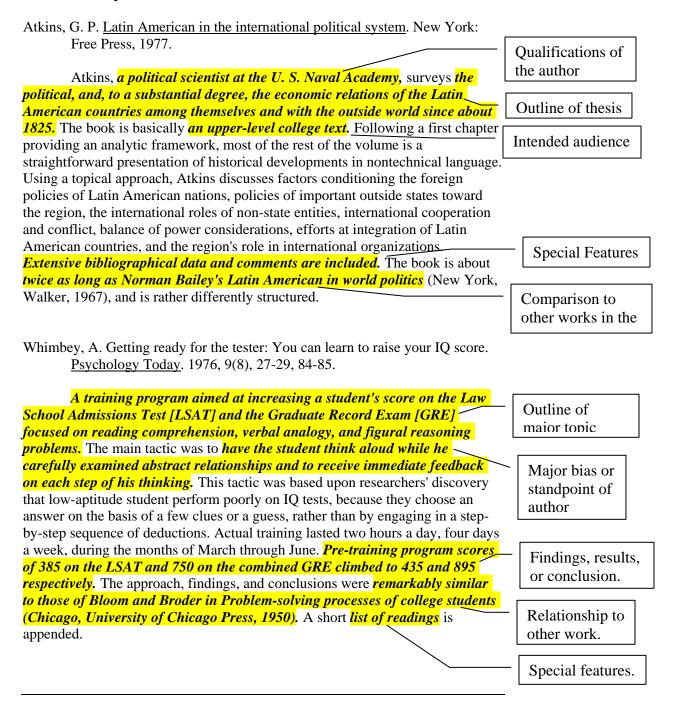
A Step-by-Step Approach to Writing Annotations

The following approach to annotating will help you to use your reading time to best advantage:

1. Familiarize yourself with the contents of the book or article. Examining the table of contents, the foreword, and the introduction can be helpful.

- 2. Read as much of the book or article as is necessary to understand its content.
- 3. Outline or make notes of the information you think should be incorporated in the annotation.
- 4. Write a paragraph that covers the contents of the book or article.

Some Examples of Annotations



Adapted from: Katz, W.A., "Annotations," in <u>Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science</u> (Vol. 1; New York: Marcel Dekker, 1968), pp. 427-428, and <u>ERIC Processing Manual: Section</u> <u>VI. Abstracting/ Annotating</u>. (Bethesda, MD: U.S. Educational Resources Information Center, ERIC Processing and Reference Facility, ED 219 087).