

Writing and Tutorial Center

Understanding Annotated Bibliographies

An annotated bibliography is a list of citations to books, articles, films, interviews and other sources for a piece of research writing. Each citation is followed by an annotation, a short descriptive and evaluative paragraph typically around 150 words. Annotations are definitive and critical, while conveying to the reader the relevance, accuracy and quality of cited sources.

Creating an annotated bibliography demands intellectual skills including succinct summarization, concise analysis, and informed library research. By reading carefully and critically evaluating a range of sources, you will have a deeper understanding of the issues surrounding your research topic and be better able to formulate your own point of view.

The first part of each annotation is a brief summary of the content and scope of the source. Then try a few sentences that may:

- Evaluate the authority and background of the author
- Comment on the intended audience
- Compare or contrast this work with other works cited
- Explain how this work relates to your research question

TIPS

The CRAP method is often used to assess the quality and appropriateness of information sources:

C	currency	Is the date of publication suitable for your project?
R	relevance	How applicable is the information?
A	authority	Is the author/creator/publisher the most knowledgeable?
P	purpose	Why was this source created (to inform, entertain, persuade)?

Follow the guidelines for required citation style (APA, Chicago or MLA). Here's an example annotated bibliography entry in MLA format:

Kenny, Anthony. *A New History of Western Philosophy: In Four Parts*. Oxford University Press, 2012.

Kenny presents a broad history of Western philosophy from the ancient Greeks to the present day. The book is divided into four periods: ancient, medieval, early modern, and modern. Each section begins with a chronological overview of the key thinkers, followed by chapters dedicated to each significant subfield in the period: metaphysics, political philosophy, God, and the natural world. Kenny generally provides thorough and fair assessments of the major philosophers' work, but is pointedly dismissive of Derrida and other critical theorists, significantly weakening the book's coverage of "postmodern" philosophy.

SOURCES

"[What is an Annotated Bibliography?](#)" from Scribbr.

For more information, see the Pratt Library Research Guide "[Annotated Bibliographies](#)".