

So, what is an annotated bibliography?

Let's break it down. "Bibliography" is Greek for "book writing", which is a very funny way of describing a list of made up of books. "Annotate" is Latin for "to add notes to", which isn't really funny at all. So, to put it back together, annotated bibliographies are lists of books with notes.

Nowadays, bibliographies can contain things other than just books, such as articles, or anything that else that contains information.

Annotated bibliographies consist of three major parts: A citation, a summary, and an annotation. The citation occupies one or two lines, and conforms to whatever style your teacher assigns. The summary should be no longer than one or two sentences, and gives the reader an idea what your source is all about. The annotation is the rest, the meat of the assignment.

This is where you give your source a big sloppy word kiss. You heard me. I said word kiss. Say why the source is great, and how it ties into your final project.

Nobody has ever enjoyed writing an annotated bibliography. Ever. They are tedious, detail-oriented, time-consuming, and less interesting than some other things. They also make you think really hard, which can be painful.

If annotated bibliographies aren't any fun, then why do we need to write them?

For the same reason everyone else has ever had to write one. Because your teacher said so, and you want to get a good grade. Your teacher is making you do this because writing an annotated bibliography forces you to do your research early. It also encourages you to be selective, to think about each source you choose, and to help you complete your final project on time. As if all of those reasons weren't enough, this assignment is also a sneaky way of getting you to learn about research.

Sure, we could just tell you the things you'll learn while making an annotated bibliography, but we think it's much better to learn by doing instead of listening to some jerk drone on and on, like we are in this video.