The Annotated Bibliography

Annotated bibliographies help researchers organize the information they are gathering about their research topic. The annotated bibliography tasks you to do three things: summarize the article’s main points, evaluate the credibility of the author, and explain how the source will benefit the research paper. The Writing Center Mentors are happy to help you navigate your way through MLA or APA and to answer any questions you have about creating your Annotated Bibliography.

What it Looks Like (APA example)

Thesis: Research suggests that childhood obesity rates can be lowered by improving school lunches, increasing physical activity, and teaching better eating habits.

Annotated Bibliography


In this article, Anthony Okely describes the health consequences of childhood obesity and discusses several programs aimed at helping prevent unhealthy weight gain in children. He sees parents as the primary source of power over a child’s unhealthy weight gain. This article is an editorial in a peer-reviewed journal. Although this article is an editorial, it is still a good source of research-based information, as the author uses 16 detailed references from several countries. The author has a Doctorate in Education and serves as the Director of the Child Obesity Research Centre at Australia’s University of Wollongong; he is also a Senior Lecturer at the same university. The number of references he provides in the article also boosts the credibility of the opinions he offers. This article will be used in the research paper for its basic statistics on childhood obesity. Also, the reference list at the end of the article is a valuable source of credible articles on this topic. The fact that the article is from Australia limits its effectiveness as a major source for the paper (Okely, 2007).

The text in blue is where the writer has summarized the article.
The text in green details the credibility of the author and source.
The text in red explains how the source will be useful in the writing of the main research paper.
Note the in-text citation at the end of the annotation.

Things to Remember:
Your thesis statement should guide your search for sources.
Your sources should be listed in alphabetical order.
Pay attention to the way you capitalize and italicize words in your sources.

Revision Checklist

✓ Did you review your course resources?
✓ Did you collaborate with your instructor or a Writing Center Mentor on your thesis statement?
✓ Are all reference citations in MLA, APA, or other appropriate citation format? (Is there a hanging indent?)
✓ Is the source summarized sufficiently?
✓ Is there an explanation about what makes the author/source credible?
✓ Has the quality of the information been discussed? (Is the information clear, precise, accurate, etc.)?
✓ Is there a sentence (or two) on how the article will be used in the final paper?
✓ Does the annotation end with an in-text citation in the proper format?

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We’re available to assist you on Monday-Friday and on Sundays. Please contact us for an appointment.