

Assignment: The Annotated Bibliography

This assignment will help you narrow your source selection, become better acquainted with your sources, and develop a resource that you will consult as you write your research essay and related assignments over the course of the term. We will begin, as a class, by spending some time in the computer lab, learning about, gathering and evaluating sources, and you will continue your research independently to complete the assignment.

Technical Details:

- MLA or APA style
 - Please refer to our course blog for sample annotated bibliographic entries and consult the MLA or APA section of our “Links” page for specific formatting instructions and guidelines for your works cited entries.
- Eight to Ten Pages Double-spaced
- 12 point, Times New Roman font
- 1 inch margins all around
- Name and page number heading on the right margin (header is half inch from the top)
- Full name, course, instructor name, due date on the left margin, first page only
- Title of the assignment, centered above the body of the assignment

Detailed Instructions:

Step One: Look over the results of your initial research and choose ten to twelve sources to include in your annotated bibliography: As you look over your potential sources, consider your topic, your tentative thesis (if you have decided on one), and your probable audience. For the sources that you choose, do your best to meet the following requirements:

- In general, try to find **sources that are four to five pages or more in length**. If you submit an annotated bibliography full of short sources, I will ask you to go do more research.
- **If your essay will take a particular position on an issue, find at least two or three sources in opposition** to the position that you plan to take on your topic and a couple of sources that are somewhat neutral.
- Include **at least one or two books**. While I recommend searching the CCC library stacks to start, you may also find a book on your own or use an e-book (like those found on NetLibrary). *You do not need to read the entire book; just read the information that is relevant to your topic.*
- Try to include at least **three or four periodicals found on EBSCO (at least one that is peer reviewed)**. Try, for the most part, to stick to articles that are 4-5 pages or more.
- Include **two or three from Newsbank**. . Try to stick to news articles that are around 800-1000 words or more.
- Other sources that you might use include are documentaries, news programs, or interviews.
- When searching for web sources, try to find them through LII (Librarian’s Internet Index) or IPL (Internet Public Library) before moving on to Google. Be sure to evaluate all of your sources carefully. If I find that some of your sources are not credible, I will ask you to do some more research.

Note: if you can't meet all of these requirements right away, it's okay. This assignment is about finding the four best sources at this point in your research process. You are not limited to these sources. You can add or take away from your list of sources as you continue to research your topic and begin drafting your essay.

Step Two: Create an MLA or APA style bibliographic entry for each source: Refer the MLA or APA section on the “Links” page of our course blog for instructions on creating “works cited” entries.

Step Three: Survey, skim, and read selected parts of each source: The main thing to keep in mind here is that this is not the time for a close reading of your sources (there will be plenty of time for that during the note-taking process). Remember what you have learned about summarizing—identify the important points, pay attention to the organization of ideas, and distill the meaning into a briefer form.

Step Four: Write a summary, a response, and an indication of how you might use each source in your paper that follows each “works cited” entry:

- **Summary:** Write a brief paragraph (**about one-half page**) that summarizes the main ideas expressed in the source.
- **Response:** Your response (**a couple of sentences**) should include your initial thoughts after previewing the source. Again, the handout on reading critically might be particularly useful here (especially the sections on “implied meaning” and “making connections and judgments”). Remember, this response is based on your initial impressions of the text. You will have plenty of time to respond in detail during the note-taking process.
- **How you might use the source:** This should only be **a sentence or two** that considers how this source will support the development of your researched position essay. Does the source supply you with plenty of statistics or examples that will support the position that you plan to make? Is it an informational source that will help you provide background or explore multiple positions on the issue? Is it a source that offers an opposing view that will challenge you to strengthen the support for your own position? These are just some possible questions about how you will use your sources. I'm sure you can come up with some more ideas about how your sources will support your research and writing.
- **Each complete entry in your annotated bibliography (works cited entry plus summary, response and statement of how you will use the source) should be about three-fourths of a page.**

PLEASE VISIT OUR CLASS BLOG TO SEE SOME EXAMPLES OF COMPLETE ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHIC ENTRIES FOR THIS ASSIGNMENT.

Final note: *The end product should be about eight to ten pages. This assignment is worth a significant number of points and constitutes a significant percentage of your total grade for the course. You should give this assignment just as much attention as you would a final draft of a major essay, so spelling and grammar are particularly important. Finding the best sources on your topic, reading enough of each to understand the author's main ideas, and writing an effective summary takes time. You will want to begin right away.*