

Quick Guide :: WRITING AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Definition

Bibliography: An alphabetical list of citations to works (books, articles, documents, etc.) to which an author referred to during the writing process OR a list of citations to works on a particular subject.

Annotated Bibliography: A bibliography where each citation is followed by a brief (150 words) descriptive and evaluative paragraph.

Process

1. The process of compiling an annotated bibliography begins with:

- Locating and recording citations to works that may contain useful information and ideas on your topic
- Evaluating each work by reading it and noting your findings and impressions
- Choosing the works that best represent different perspectives on your topic
- Citing each work in the appropriate style (e.g. *MLA*, *APA*, etc.)

2. Once you have your list, write a concise annotation that summarizes the central theme and scope of the work. Annotations should include most of the following:

- Explanation of the main purpose of work
- Brief description of the work
- Intended audience
- Currency of the author's argument
- Author's credentials
- Value of the work
- Author's bias
- Your own impression of the work

Purpose

The purpose of an annotated bibliography is to provide descriptive and critical information about the resources used in a writer's research process or to serve as a review of the literature published on a specific topic. It also places original research in a historical context.

Examples

Journal article using MLA:

Crowley, T. "Causes of Climate Change Over the Past 1000 Years." *Science* 289.5477 (2000):270.

Humans are the dominant force behind the sharp global warming trend seen in the 20th century, according to this analysis of the climate over the last 1,000 years. The report found that natural factors like volcanic eruptions and fluctuations in sunshine, which were powerful influences on temperatures in past centuries, can account for only 25 percent of the warming since 1900. The rest of the warming was caused by human activity, particularly rising levels of carbon dioxide and other heat-trapping gases, according to the study's author, Texas A&M geologist Thomas J. Crowley. The study presents the most direct link to date between people and the 1.1 degree Fahrenheit rise in average global temperatures over the last 100 years.

Journal article using APA:

Thomas, CD. (2004). Extinction risk from climate change. *Nature*, 427(6970), 145-148.

This study found that more than 1 million species could be committed to extinction by 2050 if global warming pollution is not curtailed. This ranks global warming alongside direct habitat destruction as the greatest threats to global biodiversity. The 19-member research team featured expertise on ecosystems in five diverse regions. The scientists used information on the climate tolerances of species and the well-known relationship between species diversity and habitat area to project the effects of global warming under various assumptions. Their mid-range estimates indicated that 24 percent of existing species would eventually become extinct due to climate change projected to occur by 2050. Fortunately this risk could be significantly reduced by acting soon to reduce emissions of carbon dioxide and other heat-trapping gases, according to the study.