



# ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

**Annotate: To make critical or explanatory notes. An annotation is:**

- a brief descriptive and evaluative paragraph (50-150 words)

**An annotated bibliography:**

- lists entries in alphabetical order
- provides a detailed account of the works you have read
- includes the full bibliographic reference for your readings (in your field's specific reference style)
- summarises main arguments, methods, findings and conclusions of each reading
- assesses each article's value or relevance to your research topic
- often provides critical evaluation of the relevance, authority or quality of each reading.

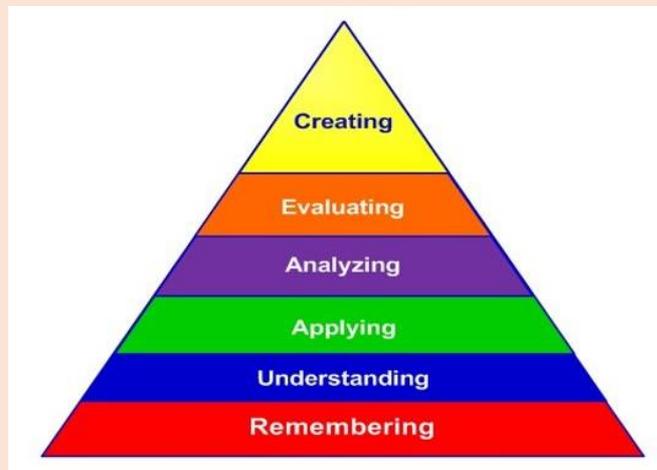
**Why annotate?**

- An annotated bibliography is a resource for your writing and a great way to record your reading.

**How to critically annotate your reading**

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You can use the revised Bloom's taxonomy\* to structure your annotation.



- Remember:** Who wrote the work? What is the work about? (If relevant - where, when, and how was the research conducted?)
- Understand:** What is the author's argument?
- Apply:** What examples does the author give? What examples can you apply this argument to?
- Analyse:** What are the strengths/weaknesses of argument? Are there any gaps in the argument or the conclusion? Any evidence of bias? How does it compare/contrast with other literature?
- Evaluate:** What is your overall evaluation of the article?
- Create:** How does it relate to your interest? How would it be relevant to your research topic?

\*Anderson, L. W., & Bloom, B. S. (2001). A taxonomy for learning, teaching, and assessing: A revision of Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives. Longman.

## Stages in writing an annotated bibliography

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### 1. Define your scope: *why am I including these works?*

- What **problem** am I investigating?
- What **questions** am I trying to answer?
- What kinds of **material** am I looking for (academic books & journal articles, government & policy documents, articles from the popular press, primary sources)?
- Am I finding **essential** studies? (Use database searches and the reference lists of each work you read, to identify sources referred to by others.)

### 2. Read with a purpose: *what point is the author trying to make?*

- Identify the **thesis**, hypothesis or research question stated in the **introduction** and **conclusion**.
- Look for repeated **key terms** and concepts in the **topic sentences** and **summaries** at the beginning and end of sections.
- Examine the **theory** or **method/s** used to interpret the issues addressed in the text.

### 3. Evaluate the work's contribution to your research.

- Why is it of value?
- What is the argument?
- How well defined is the research problem?
- How effective is the method of investigation?
- How good is the evidence?
- What are the limitations?
- Would I draw the same conclusions?

### 4. Present your commentary.

- *The author claims...*
- *This study challenges...*

The following words may be useful to summarise the argument and express your response:

<i>account for</i>	<i>clarify</i>	<i>describe</i>	<i>exemplify</i>	<i>indicate</i>	<i>question</i>
<i>analyse</i>	<i>compare</i>	<i>depict</i>	<i>exhibit</i>	<i>investigate</i>	<i>recognise</i>
<i>argue</i>	<i>conclude</i>	<i>determine</i>	<i>explain</i>	<i>judge</i>	<i>reflect</i>
<i>assess</i>	<i>criticise</i>	<i>distinguish</i>	<i>frame</i>	<i>justify</i>	<i>refer to</i>
<i>assert</i>	<i>defend</i>	<i>evaluate</i>	<i>identify</i>	<i>narrate</i>	<i>report</i>
<i>assume</i>	<i>define</i>	<i>emphasise</i>	<i>illustrate</i>	<i>persuade</i>	<i>review</i>
<i>claim</i>	<i>demonstrate</i>	<i>examine</i>	<i>imply</i>	<i>propose</i>	<i>suggest</i>

## Sample annotated bibliography entries (in APA style)

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Hobsbawm, E. (1992). *Nations and nationalism since 1780: Programme, myth, reality* (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi:10.1017/CCOL0521439612>

Hobsbawm, a Marxist historian, examines the nature of nations and nationalism. Argues that the modern concept of nation dates to the eighteenth century and that the first major attempt to analyse the concept was undertaken by the Marxists of the Second International (1889-1916). Hobsbawm largely dismisses the work of K. Deutsch, C.B. Hayes and H. Kohn. He considers the work done between 1968-1988 as the next lot of 'genuinely illuminating' work and gives a list of 12 of these works which he finds particularly useful. He identifies three phases of development of the concept of 'nation' and focuses on the third stage (C) – when nationalist programmes gain mass support. This is the second edition, published in 1992 to take into account issues of national identity arising from the fall of the Soviet Union.

Waite, L.J., Goldschneider, F.K., & Witsberger, C. (1986). Nonfamily living and the erosion of traditional family orientations among young adults. *American Sociological Review*, 51(4), 541-554.

Researchers from the Rand Corporation and Brown University used data from the national Longitudinal Surveys of Young Women and Young Men to test their hypothesis that nonfamily living alters young adults' attitudes, values, plans, and expectations, moving them away from their belief in traditional sex roles. They maintain that the more time away from parents before marrying, especially for females, the greater the individualism, self-sufficiency, and changes in attitudes about families. In contrast, an earlier study by Williams (1980), cited below, claimed nonfamily living had little impact on gender role attitudes.

(N.B. author names not in alphabetical order because L.J. Waite is the principal author)

## Points to consider

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**Author information:** What is the author's background? Are they qualified to write this document?

**Author's purpose:** Why is the author writing this article or doing this research? Is the purpose stated or implied? Does the author have a particular message?

**Audience information:** For whom is the piece written (scholars, teachers, general public, etc.)? How is this reflected in the author's style of writing or presentation?

**Author bias:** Does the author make assumptions upon which the rationale of the article rests? If so, what are they?

**Information source:** How did the author obtain the data? Is the evidence based on personal opinion, experience, interviews, library research, questionnaires, laboratory experiments, or some other source?

**Author conclusion:** What conclusions does the author draw? Are they specifically stated, or implied?

**Conclusion justification:** Are the conclusions relevant to the original purpose of the research? Are they supported by the research? Do they appear to be biased?

**Relationship to other works:** Does this study specifically agree or disagree with other cited works? Is the evidence balanced or is it weighted in favour of a particular perspective? How does this work compare with others you have read?

**Time frame:** Is the work current? Is this important? How does the time in which it was written influence the work?

**Significant attachments:** Are there appendices, graphs, bibliographies, etc? Are they valuable or not? If there are none, should there be?



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