

Creating an Annotated Bibliography Entry: Quick Sheet

Annotated Bibliographies are used to describe the contents of a source, while giving publication information on the source and, at times, evaluating the source. Oftentimes, Annotated Bibliographies are assigned in order to allow students to spend quality time researching, reading, and evaluating possible source material for an upcoming research assignment.

There are 2 types of Annotated Bibliographies:

1. Descriptive Annotations: these annotations summarize the content of each source without offering evaluation or comment on the source.
2. Evaluative Annotations: these annotations evaluate each source by considering how the sources will be helpful to meet the needs of an upcoming research assignment.

The Basics of an Annotated Bibliography:

- A statement of scope: this statement comes at the beginning of the document and offers a brief introduction on what the annotated bibliography is focused on and why you are compiling it. Oftentimes, this statement gives insight into the topic you will be discussing in the research project and the ways in which you have researched it to produce the sources you will be annotating in the document.
- Complete bibliographic information: provide all documentation information for each source following one of the documentation styles (APA, MLA, Chicago, etc.). This information allows your reader to easily locate the full source.
- A concise description of the work: a good annotation describes the source thoroughly and as objectively as possible by presenting the key points of the source and discussing any pertinent information that is needed to understand the source. It also clearly shows how the source is relative to your research topic.
- Relevant commentary: If you are writing an evaluative annotated bibliography, focus your commentary of the source on how it specifically relates to your research topic and the ways in which you want your audience to view the source information. Always consider what questions your reader may have about the source and address that information within your commentary.
- Consistent presentation: all annotations should be consistent in format and content to allow easy reading and structure for your audience.

An Example Annotation Using MLA Documentation Style

Dowell, Bob. "The Moment of Grace in the Fiction of Flannery O'Connor". *College English* 27.3 (1965): 235–239. *JSTOR*. Web. 22 Feb. 2016.

In "The Moment of Grace in the Fiction of Flannery O'Connor", Bob Dowell explains that Flannery O'Connor disliked that many of her readers and critics considered her to be a writer of the "Southern Gothic School" (235). Dowell specifically discusses a lecture O'Connor gave entitled "Some Aspects of the Grotesque in Southern Literature" in which she pointed out what she was actually intending to accomplish as a writer. In short, O'Connor insisted that she was being misrepresented by her readers and critics, and that she was, in fact, not a Southern Gothic writer...[Here is where you would complete the summary of the source.]

In order to write a solid essay in which I argue that Flannery O'Connor's "A Good Man is Hard to Find" is a gothic representation of the south, it is important for me to consider what being "gothic" really entails for southern literature and how O'Connor considers both her writing and the idea of being a "gothic" writer. It's interesting that she believes she is being misrepresented. I have to wonder, though, if I should really allow O'Connor's own opinions about her writing influence how I interpret her writings. I think I would use this source as a counterargument for me to argue against. I don't agree with O'Connor's opinion and would use the literature itself to prove her wrong.