Naperville Central High School

Style Manual for Research Papers

This manual follows Modern Language Association (MLA). Use this standard for all drafts unless otherwise directed by your teacher.

2012 Edition
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Definitions

**Annotated Bibliography** or **Annotated List of Works Cited**: a list of sources, with each source containing not only bibliographic information but also a description or evaluation of the source

**Parenthetical (In-Text) Documentation**: a method of documenting sources in the text that provides source information in parentheses

**Primary Research**: the investigation of a topic through the researcher’s analysis of texts and films and through interviews, surveys, and experiments

**Secondary Research**: the investigation of a topic through the study of what other researchers have concluded about the subject

**Works Cited**: a list of all sources the writer cites in the essay

**Works Consulted**: a list of all sources the writer consulted when conducting research

Plagiarism
Academic Integrity

Naperville Central students are challenged to address the academic process enthusiastically, diligently, and most importantly, honestly. The Naperville Central community expects that students do their work honestly, without cheating or plagiarizing. The integrity of the academic program depends upon an honest approach by our students. It is the responsibility of our students, teachers, and administration to protect the integrity of our academic program.

Cheating or plagiarizing at any level, at any time, will not be tolerated. Consequently, when evidence of cheating or plagiarism exists, the assignment’s grade will be impacted significantly or it will receive no credit, the student has no opportunity to make up that work, and the deans will be notified.

In addition, any student who chooses to share his or her work with another will also lose credit. That credit will be lost even if the student claims to have no knowledge of the other person’s using the original paper.

The Naperville Central Discipline Policy in the student handbook (the Redbook) states that cheating is a Classification #1 violation. Plagiarism is cheating. It is the act of using another person’s ideas or expressions in your work without acknowledging the source. In other words, to plagiarize is to give the impression that you have written or thought something that you have in fact borrowed from someone else. Plagiarism is essentially theft – the stealing of someone else’s intellectual property.

Research assignments require that you read extensively about a topic, gather information from valid and reliable sources, and document information from these sources in your essay to support your thesis statement.

Give credit to your sources. Using the guidelines established by the Modern Language Association (MLA), provide documentation for the following:

- charts, diagrams, graphs
- direct quotations
- examples and anecdotes
- paraphrased information
- statistics
- any information not considered common knowledge (If you find the same information in at least three sources, consider it common knowledge. You need to document common knowledge information only if you include a direct quotation.)

“Recycling a paper,” is a form of plagiarism since it misleads the reader into believing the writer created the paper from scratch. If at least a form of the paper was submitted in a course or for another purpose, a student may not submit the same or essentially the same essay for credit in a different course. If a student informs the teacher of a desire to take to a higher level a piece of writing already submitted in another class or used for another purpose, a teacher may grant permission; however, the student needs to initiate this conversation and receive special permission.
Naperville Community School District #203 subscribes to a web-based software service called Turnitin.com that offers students a learning tool when revising and editing papers for a class. Students submit their draft to the website for analysis and then receive an electronic report which identifies all of the information in the draft which can be found in another source, such as a professional publication and previously submitted student writings. Students then use that information to make certain that they have properly documented their outside sources of information. If they see from the report that they have not done so, then the student writer can take the opportunity to make the needed revisions in his or her draft before submitting it to the teacher for a grade. Using this software can show him or her where the originality of the writing/thought would be questioned during the writing process when the student can still make revisions in the work.

Teachers use the software in the same manner, efficiently requiring students to submit papers that they submit for an assignment. Should a teacher discover that a student has borrowed information without documenting it, the teacher will take the appropriate next steps to ensure the academic integrity of the work. The intent of the use of this software is for students to submit their papers themselves for analysis before any teacher sees the paper. Then the student has the opportunity for revision as needed. In order to receive credit, students must submit writing to Turnitin.com when required by the teacher.

Directions for Submitting a Paper to Turnitin.com

FIRST TIME USERS:
You will need to create a user profile. (If you have a user profile because you have used turnitin.com, log into turnitin.com using your already created user login.)

STEPS:
1. Go to www.turnitin.com
2. Click on “Create Account” and then scroll down to “Create a New Account”
3. Click on “Student”
4. Follow onscreen instructions.
5. When you finish creating your profile, you will see on your home page the class you enrolled in.
6. Each time a teacher provides an enrollment ID and password, you will log in with the username and password you created and select “enroll in a class.”

CREATE YOUR OWN USERNAME AND PASSWORD (WRITE IT DOWN!):
*Username: ______________________________________ (your school email address)
Password:____________________________________ (include at least one letter and one number)

FROM YOUR TEACHERS (WRITE IT DOWN!):

<table>
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<th>CLASS PASSWORD</th>
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**TO SUBMIT A PAPER:**
Log-in with your e-mail address and password.

1. Click on the class
2. Click on the icon with the page and up arrow under the column heading ‘Submit’ for the assignment that is due.
3. Browse for the paper on CD, floppy, or H drive. This step is like an attachment to email.
4. Be certain you have a title filled in the appropriate prompt.
5. Submit paper

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**What Makes a “Good” Source**

Whenever you are looking for a “good” source, how can you recognize it when you see it? Here is a “checklist” to help you determine if what you have in hand is worth the time and effort to read and use. (By the way, this checklist works with Internet web sites, articles and books -- whatever you find that contains “information.”)

**Who wrote it? (Authority)**
Who is responsible for the content of the source? Can you determine the name of the individual, the organization, or entity which produced it? Is there an address or e-mail given to provide communication or feedback? If NOT, then find a better source. You can’t trust a source when the authorship is hidden.

**Why was it written? (Objectivity)**
Purpose of a source is very important to understand its bias. Every creator has a purpose or viewpoint behind what he/she makes. The written word is so potent that we need to identify the reasons behind it. Print sources often state or imply the purpose or intent of the text in the introduction or preface. The purpose of an internet source is sometimes harder to pinpoint. Look at the address for clues, and read the material carefully for language which gives opinion, viewpoint, or perspective. This bias helps us determine how to interpret the information for our own use.

**When was it written? (Currency)**
*Timeliness* is often an important factor in the usefulness of information. Look for copyright dates, updates, and sources used. If the source contains references to other pieces of information, can you discover when those were produced? That will give you a clue as to when your material was written or at least the information on which it was based. You need to look for CURRENT (within the last 3 or 4 years) information. For some topics you will need information even more current than that. This is when databases of periodicals become valuable. Sometimes the documents in databases are posted before the item is actually on the newsstands or in the mail!

**Where has the information been published previously? (Accuracy)**
The more reliable a source the more likely it is that the information contained in it was checked and verified. If the information was published without such checks, you cannot tell if the information is true or not. (That’s how rumors get started!) Look for clues that tell you that the
information was verified in other sources or can be found duplicated in at least two other independent sources. If dates, updates, and sources are presented, these are clues which indicate the author at least attempts to keep the information current. But be cautious. Try to find additional sources that confirm the information.

How is the information organized and presented? (Content & Organization)

Does this source give you the information you need in an organized, well presented manner? Does it flow logically from one point to another? Is it pleasing to the eye and easy to follow? How in depth does the source get on the topic? If what you get is superficial or gives only minimal data – one or two sentences or paragraphs – then the source doesn’t really give you much content. Just a mention of your topic is NOT enough! You should find details and explanations provided which offer substantial information. Guard against those web sites which only give you links to other sites. You can find yourself in a big loop of pages and no real information.

Parenthetical (In-Text) Documentation

To document properly the sources cited in your essay, 1) attach a Works Cited page and 2) indicate in the text itself exactly what was borrowed from each source and where the information was found in a source.

**Print Sources**

The *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* explains that writers can document most easily by providing the author’s name and the page reference in a parenthetical citation:

Because the astronauts throughout their lives willingly took risks, they “all were adventurers long before they became astronauts” (Gibbs 34).

With this acknowledgement, readers know they can find this direct quotation on page 34 in a source written by Gibbs. By turning to the Works Cited page, readers can find the complete documentation:


This simple method of parenthetical documentation has two shortcomings: it does not explain the expertise of the speaker, nor does it indicate the reliability of the publication. If you wish to emphasize the speaker’s expertise and/or the publication’s reliability (many teachers require that you do so), then include more detail when you introduce borrowed information. (See below.)

**Print Sources: Direct Quotations**

The first time a direct quotation is documented, include the author’s full name and expertise as well as the publication in the text itself:

Although unmanned space flights pose fewer risks to humans, Nancy Gibbs, journalist, writes in *Time* that “something would be lost as well, something brave and passionate,” if the government refused to fund manned flights (33).
After using a source once, there is no need to cite the publication again or repeat the author’s full name. Instead, one can document by either using the author’s last name to introduce the information or weaving the quote into one’s own writing:

Gibbs states, “Whatever their specialties, all [the astronauts] were teachers” (33).

Because the astronauts throughout their lives willingly took risks, they “all were adventurers long before they became astronauts” (Gibbs 34).

**Important:** If one includes a direct quotation from someone who is not the author of the source, add “qtd. in” before the author’s name in parentheses:

In honor of the Challenger crew, Columbia commander Rick Husband, unaware of his own fate, said, “They made the ultimate sacrifice, giving their lives to their country and mankind” (qtd. in Gibbs 33).

- **Print Sources: Paraphrase**

If one paraphrases rather than citing a direct quotation, follow the same guidelines with one exception: Do not enclose the borrowed information in quotation marks. The first time one introduces a source from which one paraphrases borrowed information, include the author, the author’s expertise, and the publication:

Nancy Gibbs, journalist and writer for *Time*, believes that manned space travel, despite its many risks, offers intangible benefits that unmanned space travel cannot provide (33).

After the first reference to a source from which one paraphrases borrowed information, place the author’s name in the text itself or in parentheses:

Though each astronaut fulfilled a specific role during the Columbia mission, Gibbs believes that all expanded human knowledge of disease, the environment, and human endurance (33).

or

Though each astronaut fulfilled a specific role during the Columbia mission, all expanded human knowledge of disease, the environment, and human endurance (Gibbs 33).

- **Electronic Sources**

Introduce the quoted or paraphrased information in the same way if it was found in a print source. However, do **not** include any page references for electronic sources.
Example: Although unmanned space flights pose fewer risks to humans, Nancy Gibbs, journalist, writes in *Time* that “something would be lost as well, something brave and passionate,” if the government refused to fund manned flights.

Example: Though each astronaut fulfilled a specific role during the Columbia mission, all expanded human knowledge of disease, the environment, and human endurance (Gibbs).

Example: In honor of the Challenger crew, Columbia commander Rick Husband, unaware of his own fate, said, “They made the ultimate sacrifice, giving their lives to their country and mankind” (qtd. in Gibbs).

Unsigned/Anonymous Articles

If quoting information from an article without an author, one cites the publication in text and places the title of the article (shortened) in parentheses. (In the following example the information comes from an online article entitled “Report: Photos Show Columbia Wing Damage,” but in parentheses you can shorten the title to “Report.”)

Example: Although most experts believe flaws in the shuttle itself explain the disaster, others believe, as *CNN.com* reveals, “a calamitous impact with a tiny meteorite” may be the cause (“Report”).

When paraphrasing what the unnamed author(s) wrote, then follow the example above: Cite the publication in text, and place a shortened title in parentheses.

Example: According to *CNN.com*, NASA engineers cannot gain crucial information about the shuttle’s condition during the launch because the cameras did not provide clear pictures (“Report”).

When quoting someone the article quotes, introduce the speaker and his or her expertise in the text itself; place “qtd. in” plus the title of the article (shortened) in parentheses.

Example: According to *CNN.com*, even without clear pictures during the launch, NASA believes it will, in the words of NASA administrator Sean O’Keefe, “find the cause of the accident, correct the problems and return to safe flight” (qtd. in “Report”).

Special Situations

✓ If one makes reference to an entire work, one does not need to provide any parenthetical information:

Example: Susan Faludi’s *Backlash: The Undeclared War against Women* blames society for the alarming increase in eating disorders among the young.

✓ When citing several pages from one source, include all the relevant page numbers:
**Example:** Patricia Hersch, author of *A Tribe Apart: A Journey into the Heart of American Adolescence*, believes that disinterested, distant parents trigger adolescent depression (311-324).

- When citing two or more works by the same author, include the title in the parenthetical citation:

  **Example:** When Mark Mathabane, who lived in one of South Africa’s most notorious ghettos, decided to accept a tennis scholarship in America, he realized he “owed the duty to [his] race and country to use [his] life in a meaningful way” (*Kaffir Boy* 348).

- When citing more than one work in a parenthetical citation, separate the references with semicolons:

  **Example:** While some experts believe the modeling industry bears blame for the alarming increase in eating disorders, others target doctors for society’s obsession with weight, contending they prescribe diet pills indiscriminately (*Faludi* 203; *Will* 2F).

- Although one does not have to provide page references for electronic sources, some of these sources provide screen numbers, line numbers, or paragraph numbers instead of page references. One may include this information in parentheses. Following the author’s name, add a comma and then “screen,” “screens,” “line,” “lines,” “par.” or “pars.” and the relevant number(s).

  **Examples:** (Griffin, screens 3-4); (Griffin, lines 61-68); (Griffin, par. 5)

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**Works Cited Page**

- List all the sources you cite on a separate page, and place this page at the end of your essay. Type your last name and the page number in the upper right-hand corner, one half inch from the top of the page. Continue the page numbers from the text of your essay.

- Center the heading Works Cited (unpunctuated) on the page one inch down from the top. Double space between the heading and the first entry.

- Begin the first line of each entry at the left-hand margin, and indent subsequent lines one-half inch.

- Double space both within and between entries.
• List entries in alphabetical order according to author. Place unsigned articles according to the first word of the title, excluding “a,” “an,” and “the.”

• Capitalize the first letter of all key words even if a magazine or newspaper does not follow the rule.

• Words (including titles) that would be italicized in print or on-line are also italicized in research papers.

• Medium of Publication refers to the format of the original publication or performance. Common terms include Print, Web, Film, Radio, Television, Videocassette, Audiocassette, CD, LP, TS (typescript), E-mail and Performance.

Print Sources

[The information appearing in the bracketed area next to each category indicates the information required for each type of resource, if available.]

• An Anonymous Book – [Title, Place of Publication, Publisher, Copyright Date, Medium of Publication]


• A Book with One Author - [Author, Title, Place of Publication, Publisher, Copyright Date, Medium of Publication]


• A Second Book by the Same Author - [---. Title, Place of Publication, Publisher, Copyright Date, Medium of Publication]


Do not use three hyphens for an author who has two or more works listed on the Works Cited page when one work is written in collaboration with someone else. The three hyphens always stand for exactly the same name(s) in the directly preceding entry.

• A Book by Two or More Authors – [Authors (follow format below), Title, Place of Publication, Publisher, Copyright Date, Medium of Publication]

• **A Book by a Corporate Author** – [Corporate Author, Title, Place of Publication, Publisher, Copyright Date, Medium of Publication]


• **An Anthology** – [Editor, Title, Place of Publication, Publisher, Copyright Date, Medium of Publication]


• **A Work in an Anthology** – [Author of Work in Anthology, Title of Work, Title of Anthology, Editor of Anthology, Place of Publication, Publisher, Copyright Date, Page(s), Medium of Publication]


• **A Multivolume Work** – [Author, Title, Editor, Number of Volumes, Place of Publication, Publisher, Copyright Date(s), Medium of Publication]


  **Note:** All nine volumes were published in the same year.


  **Note:** These ten volumes were published over a period of years.

• **An Edition** – [Author, Title, Editor, Place of Publication, Publisher, Copyright Date, Medium of Publication]


• **A Translation** – [Author, Title, Translator, Editor, Place of Publication, Publisher, Copyright Date, Medium of Publication]

With more than three authors, list only the first author’s name and add *et al.*, which means “and others” (Mathabane, Mark, *et al.*), or list all names in the order they appear on the title page.

- **A Book Published in a Second or Subsequent Edition** – [Author, Title, Edition (e.g. 5th Edition), Place of Publication, Publisher, Copyright Date, Medium of Publication]


- **An Illustrated Book or a Graphic Narrative** – [Illustrator’s Name (followed by *illus.*), Title, Author (preceded by the word *By*), Place of Publication, Publisher, Copyright Date, Medium of Publication]


- **A Brochure or Pamphlet** – [Author (if available), Title of Pamphlet, Place of Publication, Publisher, Copyright Date, Medium of Publication]


- **An Article in a Scholarly Journal** – [Author or Authors, Title of Article, Title of Journal or Periodical, Volume, Issue Number, and/or Date, Page(s), Medium of Publication]


- **An Article in a Magazine** - [Author or Authors, Title of Article, Title of Journal or Periodical, Volume, Issue Number, and/or Date, Page(s), Medium of Publication]


- **An Anonymous Article** - [Title of Article, Title of Journal or Periodical, Volume, Issue Number, and/or Date, Page(s), Medium of Publication]

- **An Article in a Newspaper** – [Author or Authors, Title of Article, Title of Newspaper, Date of Newspaper, Section of Newspaper, Page(s), Medium of Publication]


- **An Article in a Reference Book** – [Author (if available), Title of Article, Title of Reference Book, Edition, Date, Medium of Publication]


- **A Review** – [Reviewer’s Name, Title of Review, Rev. of +Title of Work Reviewed, add the word *by* Author of Work being Reviewed, Title of Journal or Periodical, Volume, Issue Number, and/or Date, Page(s), Medium of Publication]


- **An Editorial** – [Author, Title of Editorial, add the word *Editorial,* Title of Newspaper, Journal or Periodical, Volume, Issue Number, and/or Date, Page(s), Medium of Publication]


- **A Letter to the Editor** – [Author, add the word *Letter,* Title of Newspaper, Journal or Periodical, Volume, Issue Number, and/or Date, Edition (morning, late edition, etc.), Section, Page(s), Medium of Publication]


- **An Interview** – [Name of the Person Interviewed, Title of Interview, or if untitled add the word *Interview,* Interviewer’s Name preceded by *Interview with,* Title of Newspaper, Journal or Periodical, Volume, Issue Number, and/or Date, Edition (morning, late edition, etc.), Section, Page(s), Medium of Publication]

Nonprint Sources

- **A Music Video or Television Program** – [Performer, Title of the Music Cut, Title of the Video or DVD, Music Company Creating Video/DVD, Year, Format, Director, Date of Access, replacement of Medium of Publication with Performance]

  

- **Television or Radio Broadcast** – [Title of Episode or Segment, Narrator, Title of Program, Television Station, Location of Television Station, Date of Airing of Program, Medium of Reception]


- **A Film or Video Recording** – [Title of Film, Screenplay Author, Director, Major Performers, Film Company, Date of Film, Medium Consulted]


- **A Sound Recording** – [Composer or Performer, Title of the Recording, Artist(s), Manufacturer, Year of Issue, Date of Publication, Medium of Publication (CD, LP, Audiotape)]


- **An Interview** – [Person Being Interviewed, Title of Interview, Interviewer, Name of TV Show Sponsoring Interview, Television Station, Location of Television Station, Date of Airing of Program, Medium Consulted]

• An Interview That You Conducted – [Name of Person Interviewed, Kind of Interview (Personal Interview, Telephone Interview), Date ]


• A Digital File – [Author or Author(s), Title, Place of Publication, Publisher, Copyright Date, Digital File format (PDF, Microsoft Word, JPEG, MP3, XML) followed by file]


**Electronic or Web Sources**

The following information is to be included for electronic sources.

• Last and first name of author(s)
• Title of article, in quotation marks
• Print information for the article (name of journal, italicized ; date and pages, if the full range of pages is given online), or the starting page followed by a hyphen, space, and period (for example, 32–.)
• Title of the database (italicized)
• Medium of the publication consulted (Web)
• Date of access (day, month, and year)

• A Work from a Library or Database Subscription Service (e.g., Electric Library, Opposing Viewpoints, ProQuest) – [Author, Title of Article, Title of Newspaper, Journal or Periodical, Volume, Issue Number, and/or Date, Page(s), Name of Database, Medium of Publication, Date of Access]


• A Work from an Online Encyclopedia – [Title of Article, Name of the Online Encyclopedia, Year of the Online Encyclopedia, Publisher, Medium of Publication, Date of Access]


• Image from a Database or Web Site: [Author (Artist/Image Creator’s Name if available), Title of Image or Assigned Number for the Image, Date Image was Created (if year is unknown, write N.d.), Medium of Composition, Title of Database or Web site, Medium of Publication, Date of Access]

- **An Article from an Online Newswire or Newspaper** – [Author of the Article, Title of Article, Name of the Online Newspaper, Publisher, Date of the Online Newspaper, Medium of Publication, Date of Access]


- **An Article in an Online Magazine** – [Author of the Article, Title of the Article, Name of the Online Magazine, Publisher, Date of the Online Magazine, Medium of Publication, Date of Access]


- **Information from a Professional Site** – [Name of the author (if available), Title of the Article/Page, Title of the Website, Publisher of Website, Date of Publication (if available), Medium of Publication, Date of Access]


- **Information from a Personal Web Page** – [Author of Web Page, Title of Web Page (or use designation “Home page.”), Date Page was Last Updated, Medium of Publication, Date of Access]


- **A Letter, a Memo or an E-Mail Communication** – [Originator of Letter, Memo or E-Mail, Topic/Subject of E-Mail, Recipient of E-Mail, Date of Document, Medium of Delivery (TS typescript for letter or memo, or E-mail)]


Harnr, James L. Message to the author. 20 Aug. 2002. E-mail.
Format of the Research Paper

ALERT: Double space lines in the heading, between the heading and the title, between the title and the first line, and in the body of the essay.

 Manipulative Media

During a live telecast of ABC News Chicago, the producers scrambled to cut, add, and change stories; in some cases they did so only three minutes before the

✓ Leave only one space after periods or other punctuation marks (unless otherwise instructed).

✓ Indent the first line of a paragraph one-half inch (five spaces or press tab once) from the left margin.

✓ For subsequent pages maintain the one-inch margin, but repeat your last name and the page number (without a comma separating the two) one-half inch from the top of the page.

✓ When you omit words from a direct quotation, provide ellipsis points, or three spaced periods, to indicate the omission.

✓ Use brackets to mark any changes or additions you make to a direct quotation. For direct quotations over four lines, follow these instructions:
  - Double space between the text and the quotation;
  - Double space within the quotation;
  - Indent one inch from the left margin but do not alter the right margin;
  - Introduce the quotation with a complete sentence followed by a colon;
  - Omit quotation marks;
  - Place the parenthetical (in text) citation after the last punctuation mark of the quote.

Do not justify the right hand margin.
Sample - Works Cited Page

*Reminder: The following should begin on a page separate from the body of the paper.


Literary Analysis Requirements

- Write in **present tense** (unless you refer to events occurring before the story line begins – then use past tense) and in **third person**.

- Identify characters and settings the first time you introduce them; explain relationships between characters.

- Italicize titles of plays, novels, and films; place quotation marks around titles of poems and short stories.

- Prepare the reader for every direct quotation without retelling the plot, and follow a direct quotation with analysis of the quotation.

- Blend/weave a direct quotation into your own writing.

- Mark all changes in direct quotations with ellipses.

John Knowles’ *A Separate Peace*: Gene blames Finny for making him act irresponsibly, thinking, “What was I doing up here anyway?...Was he getting some kind of hold over me?” (17).

- Document direct quotations correctly by placing the page number (or the act, scene, and line numbers) in parentheses at the end of the sentence, after the closing quotation mark (or last word), and before the period.

  ✓ If what you are quoting ends with a question mark or an exclamation point, include this mark of punctuation before the closing quotation mark, but place a period after the closing parenthesis as well.

  ✓ When you weave a direct quotation into your writing (without using any type of tag), punctuate as though the words were your own.

  ✓ Leave a space between the closing quotation mark (or the last word in the sentence) and the opening parenthesis.

  ✓ In classical plays and poems, put a slash mark at the end of line as it appears in the text.

  ➢ Quote from a play:
  Shakespeare’s *Romeo & Juliet*: Tybalt aggressively states, “What drawn and talk of peace? I hate the word/As I hate hell, all Montagues and thee” (1.1.71-72).

  ➢ Quote from a novel -Quote that ends with a question mark.
  John Knowles’ *A Separate Peace*: Gene blames Finny for making him act in ways he doesn’t want to act, thinking, “What was I doing up here anyway? Why did I let Finny talk me into stupid things like this? Was he getting some kind of hold over me?” (17).

  ➢ Quote from a novel -Quote that ends with a period.
  Mark Twain’s *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*: After Huck witnesses how the King and the Duke try to scam Peter Wilks’ relatives, he concludes, “It was enough to make a body ashamed of the human race” (162).
Annotated Bibliography

Definitions

A bibliography is a list of sources (books, journals, websites, periodicals, etc.) one has used for researching a topic. Bibliographies are sometimes called "references" or "works cited" depending on the style format you are using. A bibliography usually just includes the bibliographic information (i.e., the author, title, publisher, etc.).

An annotation is a summary and/or evaluation.

Therefore, an annotated bibliography includes a summary and/or evaluation of each of the sources. Depending on your project or the assignment, your annotations may do one or more of the following:

- **Summarize**: Some annotations merely summarize the source. What are the main arguments? What is the point of this book or article? What topics are covered? If someone asked what this article/book is about, what would you say? The length of your annotations will determine how detailed your summary is.

- **Assess**: After summarizing a source, it may be helpful to evaluate it. Is it a useful source? How does it compare with other sources in your bibliography? Is the information reliable? Is this source biased or objective? What is the goal of this source?

- **Reflect**: Once you've summarized and assessed a source, you need to ask how it fits into your research. Was this source helpful to you? How does it help you shape your argument? How can you use this source in your research project? Has it changed how you think about your topic?

Your annotated bibliography may include some of these, all of these, or even others. **If you're doing this for a class, you should get specific guidelines from your instructor.**

Format

The format of an annotated bibliography can vary depending upon the assignment, so if you're doing one for a class, it's important to ask for specific guidelines.

Please keep in mind that **all of your text**, including the write up beneath the citation, **must be double spaced and indented so that the author's last name is the only text that is flush left.**

The bibliographic information: Generally, though, the bibliographic information of the source (the title, author, publisher, date, etc.) is written in MLA format.

The annotations: The annotations for each source are written in paragraph form. The lengths of the annotations can vary significantly from a couple of sentences to a couple of pages. The length will depend on the purpose. If you're just writing summaries of your sources, the annotations may not be very long. However, if you are writing an extensive analysis of each source, you'll need more space. You can focus your annotations for your own needs.
Sample – Annotated Bibliography


Lamott’s book offers honest advice on the nature of a writing life, complete with its insecurities and failures. Taking a humorous approach to the realities of being a writer, the chapters in Lamott’s book are wry and anecdotal and offer advice on everything from plot development to jealousy, from perfectionism to struggling with one’s own internal critic. In the process, Lamott includes writing exercises designed to be both productive and fun.

Lamott offers sane advice for those struggling with the anxieties of writing, but her main project seems to be offering the reader a reality check regarding writing, publishing, and struggling with one’s own imperfect humanity in the process. Rather than a practical handbook to producing and/or publishing, this text is indispensable because of its honest perspective, its down-to-earth humor, and its encouraging approach.

Chapters in this text could easily be included in the curriculum for a writing class. Several of the chapters in Part 1 address the writing process and would serve to generate discussion on students’ own drafting and revising processes. Some of the writing exercises would also be appropriate for generating classroom writing exercises. Students should find Lamott’s style both engaging and enjoyable.

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