



Annotation Guide

An annotation is a summary or evaluation of that source. So, in an annotated bibliography, below each source, there should be an annotation that does one or more of the following:

1. **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.
2. **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?
3. **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?

Examples of Annotations:

"This source helped me understand what role the Interim Committee (a group of distinguished scientific, industrial, and political figures) played in the decision of the bomb. It helped me understand their reasoning for dropping the atomic bomb. The Interim Committee advised the President on nuclear energy."

"We used this book to learn more about recent events in the Israeli- Palestinian conflict, especially the war. It also contained some maps in it, which we used to get a better picture of the partition."

"This book was a collection of the letters that Joe Kennedy wrote from 1914 until his disabling stroke in 1961. Although there were not letters speaking of Rosemary receiving the lobotomy, Joe did write of his concerns for his daughter and the prospect of getting her the operation."



Annotation Sentence Starters

Try not to use "this source..." to start each annotation. Change it up by trying any one of the following. Remember: If you are working in a group, your annotations should use words like "we" and "our." If you are working alone, your annotations should use words like "I" and "my."

- This *book* helped me / us to understand...
- This *document* was important to my/our topic because...
- After reading this *newspaper article* I / we
- I / We used this *speech* to...
- This *website* was...
- I / We found out that...
- This *memoir* provided me / us with...
- I / We learned that...
- This *manuscript* showed me/us that...
- I / We had a new perspective on the topic after reading this source because...
- This *interview* talked about...
- This *book* helped me / us to understand our topic better because...

Stuck? Feel like you're repeating yourself?

- Pretend that you're describing the book to your teacher. Try describing the author's point of view in the source.
- Did this source surprise or shock you? Tell us more.
- Was this one of your favorite sources? Describe why.
- Be specific. Was there one particularly important part of the source?