Annotated Bibliography| FAQs

**What is an annotated bibliography?**

An annotated bibliography is an analytical summary (or annotation) of the books, scholarly articles, book chapters, or web documents that you consulted during your research. Writing an annotation encourages you to critically read and reflect on the points of view and arguments presented in each of your sources and relate them to your research topic.

**What do I include in my annotation?**

For **each source** that you consulted:

- **RETELL**: Briefly summarize the main points*
  - what are the author’s arguments (thesis)?
  - what research methods were used (survey, questionnaire, interviews, experiments, self-assessments)?
  - what are the findings or conclusion?
- **REFLECT**: Comment on the strengths and weaknesses
- **RELATE**: Assess the relevance of each source

*Note: The length of an annotation can vary (1 paragraph or more). Sometimes you are asked to simply summarize and other times you may have to compare one source to another. **Ask your instructor about their requirements.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If you want to comment on the...</th>
<th>Suggested phrases you can use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>author’s argument or thesis</td>
<td>The researcher argues that....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>According to the author, there are two reasons for...</td>
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<td></td>
<td>This study suggests that...</td>
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<tr>
<td>strengths and weaknesses</td>
<td>The main strength of the article was that....</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>One limitation of the study was that....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>relevance/usefulness</td>
<td>The article was useful since it evaluates ....</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>This book was somewhat relevant to my study because...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conclusions or findings</td>
<td>The author concludes that...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The data indicates that . . .</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A study exploring...... revealed that.....</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**How do I format the document?**

- List your sources in the appropriate referencing style (APA, MLA, AMA, etc.)
- Alphabetize the list by Author’s last name
- Write an annotation below (or sometimes right after) each reference
- Double-space the text
- The second and following lines of each reference entry and the annotation are indented so that only the author’s last names are along the left margin
- In-text citations are not needed in an annotated bibliography
Sample Annotated Bibliography

Question: What are the benefits of school-based fitness programs and the challenges of establishing such programs?

Assignment: Submit an annotated bibliography with 10 scholarly sources in APA format. (Final essay due 3 weeks later).

FITNESS PROGRAMS

Annotated Bibliography


Researchers in this study used a “food frequency” questionnaire to determine the relationship between food intake and school performance. Results from the 932 surveyed students indicate that diet and nutrition had a significant impact on school performance and students’ health. This suggests that……


The authors conducted a 3 year intervention and assessment of a school based physical activity program for students in grades K-12. This report was useful because it gave suggestions on how to set up a school fitness program. Researchers convinced school administrators of the program benefits by using evidence from Cochrane systematic reviews to highlight the health benefits of physical activity as well as the improved focus that students would have on their academics. The study found that there was a 6% increase in the number of students who met the physical fitness standards. One weakness in this study was that it did not take into account the impact of diet….


Note: Writing should be double-spaced.

Describe the research methods and results.

Comment on the usefulness of the report.

Comment on the results and any weaknesses of the study.