



ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

An Annotated Bibliography...

- lists entries in alphabetical order (according to your School's preferred style)
- provides a detailed account of the works you have read
- summarises main arguments, methods, findings and conclusions (50-100 words)
- assesses their value or relevance to your research topic (either as a stand-alone exercise, or the first step of your Literature Review.)

Stages in writing an Annotated Bibliography:

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:

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

4. Present your commentary:

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



Related resources:
Literature Review
Writing an Abstract

Student Learning | Te Taiako
victoria.ac.nz/student-learning
student-learning@vuw.ac.nz
+64 4 463 5999

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>

Points to consider:

Author information: What is the author's background? Is he/she 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 empirical observation?

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

Conclusion justification: Are the conclusions in sync with the original purpose of the research? Are they supported by the research, or are they skewed by bias?

Relationship to other works: Does this study specifically agree or disagree with other cited works? Is the evidence balanced or 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 reflect on the information contained in this work?

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

Sample Annotated Bibliography entries (in APA style):

Goldschneider, F.K., & Waite, L.J., & 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.

Smithers, B. R. (1997). Career expectations in college students: 1985-95. *Adolescence* 183(2), 224-228.

UCLA research based on interviews with students in both their first and final year of university. The longitudinal study makes strong claims for shifts in gender-specific vocational choices, noting a 56% growth in females entering the applied sciences between 1990-1995. It also examined factors affecting final career choices, concluding that parents, then lecturers, have more influence than peers, irrespective of gender.

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