

## **Annotated Bibliography**

Rough Draft: 10/31

Final Draft: 11/07

For this assignment, you must first find eight sources that will help you make an argument regarding the specific subject you choose to comment on for your research paper. Though you have not yet received the assignment for your research paper, it will ask you to take a position on a subject and support it through research. Though you are finding what other people have to say on this issue, the point of the research paper is not to repeat back what other people have written; the point is for you to take a position on this issue, a position that is uniquely yours, and to use sources to support what you say in support of your argument. In other words, the research paper is not a “report”; it is an argument in which the claim is yours and you use research to back up what you use for evidence.

The Annotated Bibliography is directly connected to your research paper. The eight sources you find could back up your claims in the research paper; however, if you read and consider the sources, you may find the sources irrelevant to your argument in the research. Such a discovery is part of the “invention” process and is fine—and you can still use these sources for your annotated bibliography, even if they end up being outside the scope of your research paper. This does not mean that you can find sources totally off topic! You may just decide to approach the topic from a different angle when you begin writing the research paper.

So, for the Annotated Bibliography assignment, you must **first** find eight peer reviewed articles on the specific topic of your research paper (you must have at least four peer-reviewed sources). **Second**, you must read and annotate these articles carefully. **Third**, you must write an annotated bibliography.

An annotated bibliography consists of the MLA citation for the source with a brief annotation following the citation. For this assignment, the annotation must consist of three elements: 1) a paragraph long summary of the article that is concise and non-repetitive; this summary should be informative, not descriptive (in other words, don’t state what the article is “about”; concisely state the author(s) main point and what evidence the author(s) use(s) to support the point); 2) your paragraph long evaluation of the value of the article, based on your understanding of the subject, the author’s credibility, the quality of the source; and 3) a statement regarding how this information is or is not relevant to the claim you think you might make in the research paper. **All three paragraphs combined should be no longer than 200 words.**

Your grade for this assignment will be based on 1) the quality of your summary; 2) your ability to evaluate the quality of the source; 3) the originality of the source material (did other people in the class utilize the same source?); 4) the range of sources, and 5) your sentence level clarity within your annotations.

## **EXAMPLE**

Wright, Elizabethada. "Reading the Cemetery, Lieu de Memoire par Excellence." *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 33 (2003): 27-44. Print.

This article argues people can "read" the cemetery, not merely by reading tombstones, but by looking at the geography of the burial ground, erosion of tombstones, and structure of roads. Such a reading reveals what generations have considered important and "factual"—and how something that may have been an important fact can suddenly become insignificant to an audience. Considering how this cemetery text is authored by many people who don't usually write long-lasting texts, the article argues the cemetery is a particularly good medium for considering "truths" not found elsewhere.

This article does not specifically cite Marshall McLuhan's quote "The medium is the message," yet part of his argument seems embedded within the article's argument. The theory on which the article is based gives credibility to this article's unusual perspective: that the message of the text in the cemetery is not nearly as important as how the medium of the cemetery conveys messages—and conveys meanings different from that found in other media. Additionally,

For my paper using ideas of Marshall McLuhan arguing that texting is detrimental to student writing, this article is invaluable. Though the essay does not address texting and student writing, the author's implicit understanding and use of McLuhan's ideas help me support my own claim.