

AP English Language and Composition
Annotated Bibliography

Length: 5 annotations (150+ words per annotation)

As you begin to explore your question, you'll supplement your experience with scholarly research. You'll find sources that speak to, enrich, extend, and complicate your understanding of your issue. Necessarily, your research question may narrow or widen as you go, and even now you may find and discard sources that aren't useful to your inquiry.

For this Annotated Bibliography, your job is to isolate 5 scholarly (i.e., peer reviewed) sources you think will be useful to your exploration of your question. For each source you will

Include a citation in MLA style

Annotate the text

Use commentary style (see the Academic Summary materials)

Use short, frequent quotations blended masterfully and cited using MLA in-text citations

Highlight the exigence of the article

What does the article respond to?

Who is the audience?

How does this article fit in with other key sources? Discuss the ongoing conversation among scholars and sources.

Explain quickly the ethos of the writer, either by credential or more descriptively

Use author tags and signal phrases for coherence, throughout

Foreground the main claim

Use stasis theory to analyze the main claim and the goals of the article

Include supporting findings, while not tediously recapitulating all evidence

Evaluate the fairness or bias of the source

Discuss how the text will help you gain a deeper sense of the issue and how you might use the source as you strive to understand more deeply your topic itself and the ongoing conversation in the Burkean parlor.

Sources should be alphabetized by the first word in the MLA citation (usually the author's last name); the whole document should be double-spaced with no extra spaces; in MLA style, the annotation follows the citation without so much as a return after it. Looks weird; is correct.

Warning

Check your reliance on the Abstract. That is, check it at the door. Read the Abstract to orient yourself, but rely on the article and its context to provide the content of your annotation. Avoid "patch writing" where you lift, uncited, information from the article itself or from the abstract. Patch writing is plagiarism. If you don't understand your article enough to write originally about it, providing only short quotations along the way, choose a different article or refine your research question so that it's not so technical.

positive —>

What to do, then?

Let your subjectivity show; analyze from your own point of view—you should be open minded to all sides of your issue and intellectually curious enough to work to understand the writer's motivations and specific take on or approach to the issue. Your tone should be unbiased, inquiry-based, truth-seeking.

Think about how the different articles speak to each other. Look at their dates: is there a conversation happening here? Even if a scholar doesn't say s/he is responding to a previous study or assertion, you can look at the ideas in juxtaposition to each other over time and make inferences about how each piece shapes the discourse.

If lots of current studies seem to be responding to a big important study from the past, feel free to include it, even if it violates your sense of timeliness. Include it consciously, treating its age as part of the view it offers.

At the same time, you may talk about how ideas do or do not make sense to you, tentatively, given everything else you know. You are encouraged to write overtly about how the given article fits into the broader discourse, to discuss what gave rise to the study or essay. You may use "I."

You may, and possibly sometimes should, go over the length guideline given here.