



Annotated Bibliographies

The introduction to an annotated bibliography is typically short (usually a couple of paragraphs). It generally identifies the topic that is being researched using the sources and explains how the sources were selected. The introduction, the sources, and the annotations should be double spaced. The sources are listed in alphabetical order and formatted the same way that they would be in the “References” or “Works Cited” page. An annotation is placed below each source; the content of the annotations can vary, but typically it should explain the credentials of the author (why he/she is qualified to discuss the topic), the subject or theme of the source, the strengths/weaknesses of the source, and any features that are included—such as charts or statistics. Annotations can also sometimes include reflection; the author can explain how the source is useful and how the information can be used.

Note that there are some slight variations between APA and MLA annotated bibliographies. The differences are mainly in the way that the annotations are positioned in relation to the actual source. The variations are noted below.

Bemus Engineering Foundation. (2002). *Implementing punch cards in a work setting*. Retrieved from <http://www.bef.org/punchcards>

The Bemis Engineering Foundation was one of the first organizations to use punch cards. The website offers information on the best ways to implement a punch card system and the benefits it can have for a business. In addition, it lists statistics on the system and data on the number of organizations using it. Unfortunately, the site does not offer much information on how the system was initially developed.

Comment [b1]: Note that in an actual annotated bibliography, the introduction would be double spaced.

Comment [b2]: This is a sample APA (6th ed.) annotation.

Comment [b3]: Note that, with APA, the annotation begins under the source and is two spaces to the right of the hanging indent.

Groff, Tyler, "Documenting Electronic Sources." *MLA Formatting Assistance* 19.4 (2009): 21.

Print. The credentials of the author are not given, but the journal article discusses how to document electronic sources in MLA. The information is useful because it explains the differences between the fifth and sixth editions of the manual and also includes a section on the "common mistakes" made by students using MLA style. The source would have benefited, however, from a more thorough explanation of how to cite online videos.

Comment [b4]: This is a sample entry for a MLA (7th ed.) annotated bibliography. Note that the sources are listed in alphabetical order.

Comment [b5]: Note that in MLA, the annotation begins on the same line as the source. APA requires that the annotation begins on a new line.

Comment [b6]: The annotation remains a hanging indent. In APA, the annotation is two spaces to the right of a hanging indent.