

ANNOTATIONS AND ABSTRACTS

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Annotations are short notes (usually 3-5 sentences) that are attached to the bibliographic citation that identifies an information source such as a book, article, or web site. The annotation is not expected to summarize total contents of the source but to indicate the value of the source to the topic of research. Therefore, the reader of the annotation will clearly understand why the source was selected for inclusion in the bibliography. In contrast, an abstract is intended to provide a general summary of the complete content of an information source and may, or may not, include evaluative comments.

Annotated Bibliography

“A bibliography may be annotated in whole or in part. The annotation need not be a grammatically complete sentence, but should begin with a capital and end with a period. The first line begins on the line following the entry proper and must be indented at least five spaces or more for a paragraph indention.”

(Turabian, Kate. A Manual for Writers. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996; p. 74)

“An **Annotated Bibliography**, or an **Annotated List of Works Cited**, contains descriptive or evaluative comments on the sources.” (Gibaldi, Joseph. MLA Handbook. New York: Modern Language Association of America, 2003; p. 145)

EXAMPLES:

MLA: The annotation is short and does not have to be in complete sentences. All the lines following the initial line of the bibliographic citation beginning with the author are indented 5 spaces.

(descriptive) Lyman, Howard B. Test Scores and What They Mean. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1978. A detailed description of a variety of testing theories and their uses in commonly available tests.

or

(evaluative) Lyman, Howard B. Test Scores and What They Mean. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1978. Provides clear, concise descriptions of a variety of testing theories and their uses in commonly available tests.

APA : The annotation is short. Complete sentences are required. The annotation is indented 3 spaces and begins on the next line after the bibliographic information.

Lyman, H.B. (1978). Test scores and what they mean. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall.
Provides detailed descriptions of a variety of testing theories and their uses in commonly available tests.

Abstracts

“An abstract is a brief, comprehensive summary of the contents of an article; it allows readers to survey the contents of an article...A good abstract is accurate...self contained...concise and specific...nonevaluative...coherent and readable.” (Publication Manual of the APA. Washington, D.C. : American Psychological Association, 2001; p. 12)

“An abstract, which may or may not be required, briefly summarizes the thesis and contents of the paper.” (Turabian, Kate. A Manual for Writers. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996; p. 9-10)