

## What is an Annotated Bibliography?

An annotated bibliography is an alphabetic list of citations, in MLA format, for each of the articles, books, websites that you have gathered while researching your topic. Each citation is followed by one or more paragraphs which includes the following:

- A summary of the content and intended audience,
- An evaluation of the author's point of view, authority or purpose, and
- A statement of how you will use the material in your paper.

The purpose of the annotation is to inform the reader of the relevance, accuracy, and quality of the sources cited.

## Why write an Annotated Bibliography?

**To learn about your topic:** Writing an annotated bibliography is excellent preparation for a research project. Collecting sources for a Works Cited page is useful, but when you have to write annotations for each source, you're forced to read each source more carefully. You begin to read more critically instead of just collecting information.

**To help you formulate a thesis:** Every good research paper is an argument. The purpose of research is to state and support a thesis. So a very important part of research is developing a thesis that is debatable, interesting, and current.

**To gain a good perspective on what is being said about your topic:** By reading and responding to a variety of sources on a topic, you'll start to see what the issues are, what people are arguing about, and you'll then be able to develop your own point of view. ([The OWL at Purdue](#))

## Sample (Note – Annotated Bibliographies are double spaced)

Koppel, Nathan, and Mark Whitehouse. "More Ex-Cons on the Streets, Fewer Jobs." *Wall Street Journal*. 20 Mar 2010: A. 3. *SIRS Researcher*. Web. 01 Apr 2011.

Koppel and Whitehouse wrote this academic article for the *Wall Street Journal* in 2010 for the purpose of describing the difficulties criminals face when searching for jobs upon their release from prison. According to the article, the economy is making it harder for states to hold as many prisoners as they do. As a result, they are releasing them after shorter prison terms and are focusing more on rehabilitation outside of prison, which is often cheaper than the \$80 an average prisoner costs each day. Having a criminal record can permanently stain job applications, which makes many employers throw away applications regardless of other credentials. The article provides case studies as well as general statistics about the United States prison system. It should be valuable to my research because it describes both criminals who go through reentry programs and those who do not, and compares the job opportunities for each.