

What is an Annotated Bibliography? from The OWL at Purdue

- A bibliography is a list of sources (books, journals, websites, periodicals, etc.) one has used for researching a topic. Bibliographies are sometimes called "references" or "works cited" depending on the style format you are using. A bibliography usually just includes the bibliographic information (i.e., the author, title, publisher, etc.).
- An annotation is a summary and/or evaluation.
- Therefore, an annotated bibliography includes a summary and/or evaluation of each of the sources.

Why should I write an annotated bibliography?

1. To learn about your topic: Writing an annotated bibliography is excellent preparation for a research project. Just collecting sources for a bibliography 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.
2. 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. Writing an annotated bibliography can help you gain a good perspective on what is being said about your topic.

Assignment For Stage One – Your annotations in your Annotated Bibliography must have two paragraphs each: One that briefly **summarizes** the source, and one that **reflects** on how you will use the source in your essay.

- **Summarize:** What are the main arguments? What is the point of this book or article? What topics are covered? If someone asked what this article/book is about, what would you say? The length of your annotations will determine how detailed your summary is.
- **Reflect:** Once you've summarized and assessed a source, you need to ask how it fits into your research. Was this source helpful to you? How does it help you shape your argument? How can you use this source in your research project? Has it changed how you think about your topic?

*****See the back of this page for an example of an Annotated Bibliography*****

Sample Annotated Bibliography

Aderth, M. "Aragon." *Commitment in Modern French Literature*. New York: Schocken Books, 1967. 81-126. "It is difficult to speak of Aragon without passion" is how chapter three of Aderth's book begins. "He arouses either profound admiration or intense dislike." The chapter follows Aragon's growth from Dadaist to ardent Communist, including a useful section called "The Assault on Reality: Surrealist Years (1918-31). This section will be useful for my essay because I will use the information to provide background information about how Aragon's artistic and political personalities evolved throughout his life.

Collier, Peter. "Surrealist city narrative: Breton and Aragon." *Unreal City*. Ed. Edward Timms and David Kelley. Manchester: Manchester U. Press, 1985. 214-229. This chapter presents a detailed look at how Breton and Aragon view "the city" in their respective novels *Nadja* and *Paris Peasant*. Collier states that there are two aspects of the city landscape that interest Surrealists. First, the revolutionary potential inherent in the mass audience found in an urban area could be tapped into through artistic subversion of the products of industrialization found in the city. Second, the high concentration of "cultural and imaginative facilities" created a "metropolitan projection of the imagination". This information will inform my essay because it provides specific evidence of how important the concept of "the city" was to the Surrealists. I will focus mainly on the city of Paris. More specifically, the areas surrounding the Arcades will be discussed to show how they embodied the Surrealist concept of the random image.