

Tips for Writing the Annotated Bibliography – Please Read All 3 Pages!

Be sure to include all five points below, in this order, and all in your own words. Quotes are rarely used in an Annotated Bib. Use this time to practice summarizing and paraphrasing the information you've found from your sources! The handout titled, "Acknowledging Sources," will help you with correctly paraphrasing material and avoiding patchwork phrasing in your papers. Your first draft will only include two annotations. Your final Annotated Bib paper will include a total of five sources (four of which must be research-based articles. See the Student Sample Paper as well to see how these five points are noted within the paper and there is a sample citation at the end of this document with notes in the margins that you can follow as an example. The more details you can put into the findings and noting possible themes, the more helpful your AB will be in helping you write the Literature Review paper!

1. **Note the main point of article (its purpose) and a brief summary of methods** (how the authors conducted the study briefly, the sample size, what kind of study was it. The methods noted should only be a couple of sentences. Be succinct in your writing for APA!).
2. **Note the author(s) findings or results of the study.** Do not skimp here; provide specific details of the findings from the article, especially in regards to your specific research question. If the article is not a research-based article, just summarize the main points of the article. Remember, you need at least four research-based articles for the final annotated bib and your rough draft should have two (2) research-based articles.
3. **Any limitations of the study** (examples could include a small sample size, limited geographic location, only one gender used in study, problems with the methods, etc.). Be brief with this section.
4. **Connections to your other sources' findings.** Be specific and list the author(s) names/date and how their findings are similar and/or different from one another in their findings (no connections should be made to their methods unless there is some reason why it is important to note). Only make connections to the sources you actually use in the annotated bib, not to sources quoted within a source. This will help you so much with creating the table and in writing the Lit Review!
5. Finally, note **how you might use this source/article in your paper and the recurring themes or threads in the study.** Students often forget to do this step and lose points, so be sure to add both of these as the last couple of sentences in your AB. It will help you so much in writing the Lit Review down the road! You can answer these questions: How does this source help to answer your research question specifically? Please do not just state that it answers the question, but how or in what ways does the article help to specifically answer it. **AND . . . Are you starting to see any themes** within your sources? What themes/threads are recurring that specifically help you to answer your research question? **Possible themes must be noted for each annotation for full points and should directly relate to the research question. See the student sample as an example of noting themes.**

Commented [AM1]: You will use a lot of this information in your lit review paper, so be thorough here in summarizing in detail the findings that specifically help you to answer your research question.

When writing the Annotated Bibliography, use phrases like the following:

The purpose of the authors were to . . .

The methods the authors used were . . .

The findings of the study . . .

The limitations of this article . . .

The article is similar and/or different from the article written by (insert authors name/date here), because . . .

This source will be helpful in the lit review because . . .

Some recurring themes/threads noted within the text included . . .

**** Remember to stay in past tense when possible for APA. **Do not use personal pronouns in formal APA writing (words like “I, we, me, us”).**

Each annotation should be around 250-300 words, no longer! Please use the Word count feature under the “Review” tab in Microsoft Word.

Avoid statements like the following:

The article stated . . . Technically the article cannot state anything. ☺

Better: The authors of the article stated . . .

The article found . . . Same as above; an article really cannot find anything

Better: The authors found . . .

I think I can use this source in my paper to show . . .

Better: This source will be useful in the lit review to demonstrate . . .

Try to pay attention also to the number of authors in a text and the use of the apostrophe to show possession:

One author: The author's findings (apostrophe “s” here to show one author and possession)

Two or more authors: The authors' findings (An “s” with the apostrophe after to show two or more authors and possession).

Citing the Retrieval Information: See 9.34 – 9.35 “When to Include DOIs and URLs”

Here are some examples of a correctly formatted citation for a journal article that was found on the databases. **Notice the spacing for each, the capitalization of the title of the article (only the first word and the word after a colon is capitalized. The rest is in lower case.) Also**

notice that the title of the journal is italicized, along with the volume (but not the issue number).

Wooldridge, M. B., & Shapka, J. (2012). Playing with technology: Mother-toddler interaction scores lower during play with electronic toys. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, 33(5), 211-218. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appdev.2012.05.005>

Tip for creating a hanging indent in Microsoft Word: For all sources, you'll need to set these up with a hanging indent, meaning that only the first line is flush with the left margin, the rest are tabbed in. First, highlight the citation that needs the hanging indent. If you click on "Home" and go to "Paragraph," you will notice a tiny arrow in the lower right-hand corner. If you click on that arrow, it will open up a box. Within that box, if you click on "special" and then "hanging," Word will format it for you.

Be sure you have done the following before turning in the final copy (See more on the Rubric and use as a checklist!)

- Created a correctly formatted title page
- Your title should be on line one and the title should be noted again on page two, along with the research question.
- Alphabetized all of your entries according to the first author's last name.
- Make sure to touch on all five points noted above.
- Citations are correctly cited including the DOI number.
- All citations must have a hanging indent.
- Only the first word in the title of the article and the first word after any colon should be capitalized. The rest should be in lowercase letters.
- The entire document is double spaced, 12-point font, Times New Roman
- First initials of the authors are only used in the Reference citation itself, **not within the body of the paper.**

Commented [AM2]: Author and date are noted by using the last name first and then the first initials. No first names are ever used in APA. Notice that there is a space after the period in the initials and the date always follows the authors. Always use an ampersand before the very last author's name. You need to list the first 20 authors noted in an article. You can copy and paste these from the citation within the databases, but just make sure the formatting is in APA format 7th edition. See 9.8 of the APA Manual for more about this.

Commented [AM3]: Notice that the title of the article is in lowercase letters except for the first word and the first word after any colon. This is called "sentence case"

Commented [AM4]: The title of the journal itself is italicized and all words except those less than 3 letters are capitalized. This is called "Title Case." The volume number only (the 33 in this case) is always italicized. Notice the formatting of the volume/issue and page number. Your citations should follow this exact formatting.

Since this source has a DOI number, it must be noted in the reference citation beginning with <http://> or <https://>

If there is no DOI noted do not include the URL, unless it is a website. Then you can use the URL for readers. See 9.34-9.35 of the APA Manual for more details. See Figure 9.1 of the APA Manual for an example. You might want to bookmark this page!