

Annotated Bibliography

Due: 2/16

Points: 100

I. Why are we doing this?

You have your initial research question; now it's time to find out where this question is situated in the larger conversation of writing studies. To answer real questions, it's essential to know what's already been said and asked. Your future audience of writing studies scholars and *Stylus* readers will be looking to you to generate new knowledge, and to do that, you'll have to gain an understanding of the existing literature.

Think about how you would join a conversation at a party. Before you can contribute (without derailing the thread), you have to hang back for a minute and find out what they're talking about. Think of the annotated bibliography as your "listening in" phase of this project, where you gain an understanding of the context before you add your voice in the form of your research paper.

By organizing your sources in an annotated bib, you'll both be able to track where the throughlines of this conversation and be able to find gaps in the existing literature. This literature will likely relate to both writing studies in general (think about our *Writing About Writing* textbook) and your specific writing task, community, or genre. This will be essential for your Revised Research Question, where you'll be explaining your chosen niche in the context of the larger academic conversation.

Additionally, this will provide you with the raw material of your fourth major assignment, the Literature Review. That Literature Review, in turn, will become a substantial component of your final paper. Your annotated bib will directly contribute to the content of your final research paper even as it guides the focus of your revised research proposal.

II. What will you be doing?

You will work within the annotated bib genre to list your sources alongside summaries of what each is contributing to your observed conversation. This annotated bib will be divided into two sections.

1. Introduction

This is where you describe your research niche. Why did you choose these sources, what conversation do you see by linking them together? Where do you see a gap in the literature, and what potential primary research could address it? This will be roughly a paragraph, so this will be more focused on establishing that overarching conversation than diving into any of your sources with real depth.

2. List

This is where you list your sources with accompanying 75-100 word annotations. For this assignment, you will be expected to have at least six sources, at least three of which must be in Writing Studies (any of the articles in our textbook will count).

Each source will be annotated to explain what was relevant to your research in its content. Each annotation should be extracting information from the source in the context of the research niche --

Writing (and research) is Collaborative

We've spent a lot of time discussing how you will be composing your research paper in the context of a broader conversation, but this is also a useful lens for reading the work of others. If you find a paper that feels especially relevant, comb through it as a resource for references as well as information.

One good source can easily become a gateway to three others. If you see others repeatedly refer to a specific work as foundational for your topic, steal that source! No matter your topic, others have come before you. Remember that all writing is collaborative. You don't have to do it on your own.

make sure you maintain that focus in order to build the foundations for your revised research proposal.

These annotations/citations will need to be arranged in MLA format in order to meet the genre expectations for this Annotated Bib.

III. How will you know if it's good?

Double-check before you turn it in to make sure that:

- Your annotated bibliography has both the brief introduction and the annotated citations
- It has been written in MLA format.
- Its annotations alert the reader as to why each source was chosen for this specific research niche.
- It includes at least six sources
- It includes at least three writing studies sources

This is a genre with specific features associated with it, so formal conventions matter a little more here. However, the most important thing for me will be to see you extracting information that is relevant to your specific research niche — this will be crucial to this assignment's future utility as you work toward your final research paper, and it will be one of the main aspects I'm looking for as I evaluate.

With this in mind, the most essential components of a successful annotated bibliography will be one that:

- Identifies an authentic gap in the existing research you have read
- Relates summaries to your area of research
- Interprets how your source's content might be useful to your research going forward.