

# Annotated Bibliographies

# Why write an annotated bibliography?

- You can discover what your source contains (**analysis**).
- You can discover how best to use that information in your paper (**organization**).
- You can discover how to restate your topic into a “working” thesis (**purpose**).

# Rules to Follow

- Take your sources one at a time.
- Answer the questions in COMPLETE SENTENCES.

# The First Three Questions

- What is the main, or most significant idea of this source?
- What is the author trying to do (purpose)?
- Who do you think is the author's intended audience?



# Combine the Answers

- Smith focuses on the dropping illiteracy levels among school children, categorizing the socioeconomic levels, racial groups, and parents' educational background. Aiming at a general audience, Smith attempts to convince his readers that most children do poorly in school because their parents don't work with them in home study sessions.

# The Next Two Questions



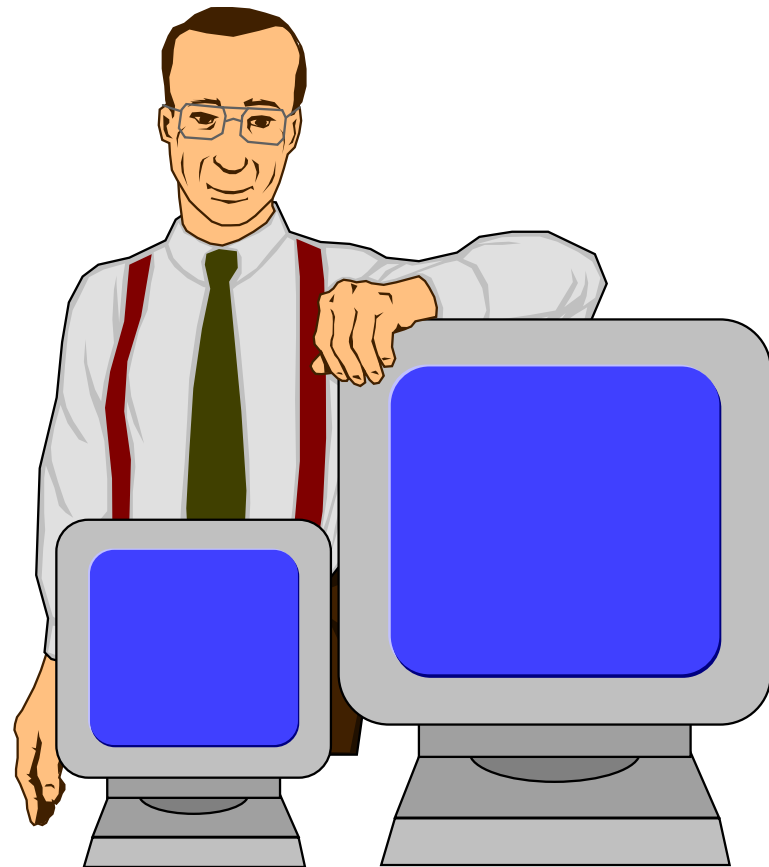
- What parts of the subject does the source emphasize or de-emphasize?
- What assumptions does the author make about the topic or audience?

## Again, Combine the Answers:

- The author emphasizes that parents need to be more involved in their children's education and assumes that these parents have the time, the expertise, and the inclination to do so.

# The Final Three Questions

- Is there any bias or slant in the source?
- Are there obvious omissions that seem important to the ideas being discussed?
- Does the evidence clearly support the author's main points?



# The Last Sentences

- While Smith's data supports his position, his solutions seem too simplistic and very general. Because he ignores the busy schedules, as well as the attitudes and expectations of some parents, his "just do it" advice doesn't seem likely to change the situation.

# Extra Tips

- Write **SHORT** paragraphs.
- Combine answers where possible.
- Have 5-8 sentences that accurately describe the information and ideas from each source in your bibliography.
- Use an MLA type Works Cited page with a paragraph of analysis for each source.

# Annotated Bibliography

- Cook, Sybilla. Instruction Design. New York: Garland, 1986.

This book provides an annotated bibliography of sources concerning instructional patterns for research libraries. Written for an academic audience, the author provides information on how such a bibliography can be used. Although it does not provide information on how to compile an annotated bibliography, the book proves a good source for examples.

# Annotated Bibliography

- Harmon, Robert. “Elements of Bibliography.”  
American Scholar 65 (1989): 24+.  
Although this article from a scholarly journal does not focus on annotated bibliographies, the author does a superior job of indicating the reason and process of general bibliographing. Harmon writes this text for librarians who must focus on detailing books. The bibliography for this text is annotated and provides a good source of examples.

# Annotated Bibliography

- Mitchell, Jason. "PMLA Letter." 1991.  
<<http://sunset.backbone.olemiss.edu/~jmitchel/plma.htm>> (23 May 1996).  
Mitchell protests the "pretentious gibberish" of modern literary critics in his letter to the PMLA. He argues that "Eurojive" is often produced by English professors to show that their status is equal to that of math and science faculty. His sense of humor make this letter a great read.

# Last Points



- Use alphabetical order.
- Double space everything.
- Leave two double-spaces between sources.