

National History Day in Wisconsin

THE ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

What is an annotated bibliography? Why is it important?

A bibliography is an alphabetized list of sources you used to create your project. An annotated bibliography not only lists the sources, but also gives a short description of the source and how you used it in your entry. The annotated bibliography is an important part of your NHD project, as the quality of your research is a large part of the NHD evaluation. The annotated bibliography is the record of your research and judges will look at this information carefully as part of evaluating your project.

What is a citation?

The citation is composed of all the vital information a researcher would need to know in order to find the same source that you used. You should format your citation in either MLA or Turabian style. Talk to your teacher or refer to the following for specific guidelines on bibliographic style:

- *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* by Kate L. Turabian
- The style guide of the Modern Language Association of America (MLA).

What is an annotation?

More than just a list of your sources, each citation should be followed by an annotation. The annotations for each source give a bref description of the how the source contributed to the development of your NHD project. Good annotations do not just summarize the content, but rather they go further to discuss how each source was useful in the creation of the project. For website annotations, also include a description of who sponsors the site.

How long should the annotations be?

Annotations are generally a few sentences, normally one to three. Including extensive annotations is not the appropriate way to enhance your bibliography or get around the word limit. Judges will often note if your annotations are overly extensive.

How is an annotated bibliography organized?

Your bibliography must be separated into primary and secondary sources. As you are creating your bibliography, think carefully about the correct category for each source. If a source could be classified as either primary or secondary, make sure to use your annotation to explain your reasoning to the judges.

What does a good annotation look like?

See the following examples of annotations for the same bibliographic entry:

Citation Eates, Daisy. *The Long Shadow of Little Rock*. New York; David McKay Co. Inc., 1962.

Annotation Daisy Bates was the president of the Arkansas NAACP and the one who met and listened to the students each day. This first hand account was very important to my paper because it made me more aware of the feelings of people involved.

Bates, Daisy. *The Long Shadow of Little Rock*. New York; David McKay Co. Inc., 1962.

I read this book about Daisy Bates.



Any other hints?

It is much easier to create your bibliography if you don't wait until the night before it's due. You should record citation information and write brief notes for your annotations as you work with each source.

Where can I find out more?

You can learn more about annotated bibliographies and get information on citation styles on the national NHD website: www.nhd.org/AnnotatedBibliography.htm

Basic Formats:

