

As you find and evaluate each source, record not only its publication information but also the following:

- **What you know about the content of the source.** Periodical databases and book catalogs generally include abstracts, or summaries, of sources that can help with this part of the annotation.
- **How you think the source may be helpful in your research.** Does it offer expert opinion, statistics, an important example, or a range of views? Does it place your subject in a historical, social, or economic context?
- **Your assessment of the source.** Consider how reliable the source is and how it might fit into your research. (See pp. 375–89 for more on evaluating and synthesizing sources.)

Taking the time with your annotations can help you discover gaps that may remain in your sources and will help you decide which sources to pursue in depth. The following entry from an annotated bibliography shows one student's annotation of a source, including a summary, a note on the source features the student thought would be helpful, and an assessment of the source's strength and weakness for his purposes.

Annotated bibliography entry with assessment

Gore, AL. *Our Choice: A Plan to Solve the Climate Crisis*. Emmaus: Rodale, 2009. Print.

A sequel to Gore's *An Inconvenient Truth* that emphasizes solutions to global warming. Expands on the argument that global warming is a serious threat, with recent examples of natural disasters. Proposes ways that governments, businesses, and individuals can reduce or reverse the risks of global warming. Includes helpful summaries of scientific studies, short essays on various subjects, and dozens of images, tables, charts, and graphs.

Compelling overview of possible solutions, with lots of data that seem thorough and convincing. But the book is aimed at a general audience and doesn't have formal source citations. Can use it for broad concepts, but for data I'll have to track down Gore's scholarly sources.

Publication information
for source

Summary of source
(from working bibliography)

Ideas on use of source

Assessment of source

MLA

APA

Chicago / CSE

Usage / Terms / Index

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Writing in the
Disciplines