What is an Annotated Bibliography?
A bibliography is a list of works (books, articles, films, etc.) on a particular topic. An annotated bibliography includes a paragraph following each citation that summarizes the work. An annotation can help the reader determine the value of each work on the topic and the contribution it might make to his own research. Two common types of annotated bibliographies are descriptive and critical.

What is included in a Critical Annotation?
A critical annotation includes value judgments or comments on the effectiveness of the work. In this context, critical means evaluative and may include both positive and negative comments. A critical annotation may contain the information found in a descriptive annotation and discuss some of the following features:

- The importance of the work’s contribution to the literature of the subject
- The author’s bias or tone
- The author’s qualifications for writing the work
- The accuracy of the information in the source
- Limitations or significant omissions
- The work’s contribution to the literature of the subject
- Comparison with other works on the topic

What is included in a Descriptive Annotation?
A descriptive annotation may summarize:

- The main purpose or idea of the work
- The contents of the work
- The author’s conclusions
- The intended audience
- The author’s research methods
- Special features of the work such as illustrations, maps, tables, etc.

What else do I include for my assignment?
When writing an annotated bibliography for a course, your assignment may specify required contents of each annotation, including expectations of descriptive or critical annotations. Your assignment may specify:

- Descriptive or critical (evaluative) annotations or both
- The length of each annotation
- The relevance of the work to the class
- The usefulness to a further assignment, such as a research paper

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