A **bibliography** is a list of sources (books, journals, Web sites, periodicals, etc.) one has used for researching a topic. Bibliographies are sometimes called "References" or "Works Cited" depending on the style format you are using. A bibliography usually just includes the bibliographic information (i.e., the author, title, publisher, etc.).

An **annotation**is a summary and/or evaluation. Therefore, an **annotated bibliography** includes a summary and/or evaluation of each of the sources. Depending on your project or the assignment, your annotations may do one or more of the following.

* **Summarize**: Some annotations merely summarize the source. What are the main arguments? What is the point of this book or article? What topics are covered? If someone asked what this article/book is about, what would you say? The length of your annotations will determine how detailed your summary is.
* **Assess**: After summarizing a source, it may be helpful to evaluate it. Is it a useful source? How does it compare with other sources in your bibliography? Is the information reliable? Is this source biased or objective? What is the goal of this source?
* **Reflect**: Once you've summarized and assessed a source, you need to ask how it fits into your research. Was this source helpful to you? How does it help you shape your argument? How can you use this source in your research project? Has it changed how you think about your topic?
* **Explain**: If the source is a primary source, why did it not make the “cut?” What about this source led you to NOT include it in your DBQ?

Your annotated bibliography may include some of these or all of the above. Your annotations should be comprehensive and qualitative rather than meet a specific length requirement. Use MLA format.

**Examples:**

Duus, Peter, ed. The Japanese Discovery of America: A Brief History with Documents.Boston: Bedford Books,1997.

This book explores the relationship between Japan and the United States in the mid-nineteenth century, focusing on the dramatic differences between the two cultures and the uneasiness, confusion, and misunderstandings that arose from those differences. In a short introductory history, Duus discusses Japanese isolationism, the military and economic factors that led the United States to forcefully open relations with Japan, and the ways in which the Japanese observed and interpreted Americans and their culture. The main body of the text comprises a series of documents, including political pamphlets, autobiographies, eyewitness accounts, broadsheets, and prints. The inclusion of both Japanese and American views of Japan invites a comparison of mutual misunderstandings.

Ehrenreich, B. Nickel and dimed: On (not) getting by in America. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2001.

In this book of nonfiction based on the journalist's experiential research, Ehrenreich attempts to ascertain whether it is currently: possible for an individual to live on a minimum-wage in America. Taking jobs as a waitress, a maid in a cleaning service, and a Wal-Mart sales employee, the author summarizes and reflects on her work, her relationships with fellow workers, and her financial struggles in each situation. An experienced journalist, Ehrenreich is aware of the limitations of her experiment and the ethical implications of her experiential research tactics and reflects on these issues in the text. The author is forthcoming about her methods and supplements her experiences with scholarly research on her places of employment, the economy, and the rising cost of living in America. Ehrenreich’s project is timely, descriptive, and well-researched.

Both examples from:

Mary Lynn Rampolla's A Pocket Guide to Writing in History. 3rd. New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2001.