

Assignments with Research & Writing Components

Annotated bibliography assignments:

- Gather and compare information on a topic found by searching web search engines and library search tools such as Summon. What kinds of information does each search tool find? What criteria should be used to judge the resources?
- Analyze coverage of a topic by investigating different types of materials-e.g. popular & scholarly, primary and secondary. What is learned from each form of writing? Annotate examples.
- How is an event reported over time? News item at time of event, opinion magazine article, scholarly analysis in journal, books. Students locate works, and then annotate them.
- Using indexes, bibliographies, and serendipity, compile an annotated bibliography of a variety of sources to demonstrate the range in sentiments about a particular issue.
- Write a bibliography for a proposal for a practical project--with positive environmental, political, and/or economic ramifications. Entries would include articles in recent magazines, journals, books, and gleanings from the Internet.
- Prepare for an interview of a current world leader or other prominent person. Gather country, political, biographical, etc. information, listing sources and determining why they're useful and what information's still missing.

Tip: Direct students to the Annotated Bibliographies guide (go/annotate) for help with how to write one.

Other types of assignments:

- After reading the results of a health or environmental study, write an article for a newspaper or news magazine. Find an existing newspaper article about that same study. How do student articles measure up to published articles? What are the difficulties, advantages, and drawbacks to this kind of writing?
- List of quotations, with sources given. Find quote in original source and place in context of the larger work.
- Compare historical reviews and more recent criticisms of a literary work.
- Research and write about historical events that provide setting for a literary work.
- Find an interesting array of information about a place, and write a brief chapter for a travel book.

- Structured "treasure hunt" type assignment--where students have a list of questions to be answered and are given a list of resources to check. They find the answer and cite the source.
- Choose one book that has bearing on your subject. Students find and read 2-3 reviews of the work, then write a response to one of the reviews.
- Choose a controversial article or one that has been heavily critiqued by scholars. First have students read article and write and submit their own critique (no outside sources). Then have students research the article to discover what others have said and write a response to that criticism and what they learned about evaluating articles, even scholarly ones.
- Write an editorial that incorporates and cites facts from outside research.
- Group project using two partners or a group of four. Pick a broad, large topic which can be researched historically and is still being explored today (e.g. poverty in the US). One partner researches the past (say, 1960-1990) through print means and the present (1990-2010) through electronic sources, while the second does the opposite search. Or four people could have one of the searches each. What sources are found and what are the strengths and weaknesses of the information they offer?