**How to evaluate a source**

When you're doing research for a project, you're checking out a lot of different sources. It's easy to lose track of who said what and how the sources relate to each other or to your argument. That's where an annotated bibliography comes in. The entries lay out what each source said and how it matters to your project. Let's talk about the language of summary and evaluation and annotation.

Your annotated bibliography will have entries for all your sources, but let's take a look at just one entry. This one cites a journal article. Each entry is built of three parts-- a citation, a summary, and an evaluation. We'll talk about the citation in a different tutorial.

The summary section is objective. It's not the time for your opinion. This is where you recap what the source's author wrote. Note the author's credentials, and refer to the author by name. Remember, books and articles don't say things. People do. Use verbs like argues, claims, explains, and acknowledges. These show that you understand the points the author made without getting your opinion involved-- keeping things objective.

But now, it's time to give your take, because the evaluation section is subjective. This is where you get to lay out, in your own words, the strengths and weaknesses of the source. To analyze the source, think about the author's argument, evidence, bias, and credentials. Is it up to date? And does it counter, or support, arguments or data in other sources? Evaluate how seriously you think readers should take the other's claims. Consider what the source contributes to your topic. You can even use the word contribute. Seriously, it helps.

And that's it. With the summary and evaluation in your annotated bibliography entry, you've created an easy-to-use tool, reminding you what the source said and what you thought about it. Easy. This will make writing your project a lot simpler, and will also help your readers.