An annotated bibliography is a summary of the contents of a book or article. A bibliography is a list of sources on a selected topic. Thus, an annotated bibliography does two important things: (1) it gives a bibliographic entry to all your sources, and (2) it summarizes the contents of each book or article. The annotated bibliography will evaluate the strength of your sources.

An annotation describes the essential details of a book or article. Place it just after the facts of publication. Follow these suggestions:
1. Explain the main purpose of the work.
2. Briefly describe the contents.
3. Indicate the possible audience for the work.
4. Note any special features.
5. Warn of any defect, weakness, or suspected bias.

Provide enough information in about three sentences for a reader to have a fairly clear image of the work's purpose, contents, and special value.

The following is a sample from an annotated bibliography:

Annotated Bibliography

Clark, Charles S. "Pursuing the Paranormal." *Tile CQ Researcher* 6.12 (29 Mar. 1996): 265-288. *JSTOR*. Web. 5 Feb 2011. *Clark explores the new interest in paranormal activity and unexplained phenomena ranging from UFO sightings to alien abduction testimonials to psychic abilities. This new interest in the paranormal is attributed by Clark to the high level of mistrust in the government, which is due in part to the decade-old rumors about the cover-up of the Roswell Incident. A brief chronology of paranormal activity from the 1940 to 19996 is given, as well as annotated bibliographical information on sources pertaining to paranormal activity.*

Headquarters United States Air Force. *The Roswell Report: Fact Versus Fiction ill the New Mexico Desert*. D301.82/7:R73. Washington: GPO, 1995. Print. *In an attempt to end rumors of government conspiracy, this is the first official report on the "Roswell Incident" issued by the Department of the Air Force regarding the alleged UFO crash in Roswell, New Mexico. The report contains Colonel Richard L. Weaver's report of Air Force research and a synopsis of balloon research findings. A number of interviews with and statements of airmen stationed at Roswell in 1947 are also disclosed.*

When writing the annotated bibliography, make sure your sources are in alphabetical order. Also, you do not need to go to a new line when you go from you source citation (bibliography) into your summary of contents (annotation) (see under-lined section*).