Writing to Explore and Inform: Proposal and Annotated Bibliography Assignment

**Purpose:** To prepare you for the next assignment, the research report, you’ll need to do some research and develop your thesis (main argument). A common genre in literature classes is the paper proposal and annotated bibliography. The proposal explains what aspect (themes, characters, symbols, etc.) of your chosen text you intend to analyze, what your argument will be, and a brief lying out of your main points. The annotated bibliography demonstrates the types of sources you are seeking and how you intend to use them in your final analysis. This genre allows the instructor to assess your progress in researching and developing your ideas as well as to provide help improving your argument, analysis, and use of sources.

**Audience:** This assignment should be directed at your scholarly peers and instructor who are familiar with the text you are studying.

**Content/Subject:**

Your proposal will consist of 100 to 200 words explaining the text and author you are analyzing, the literary theory you are applying to this text, the theme, motif, character, or moments in a specific text you will analyze, and your thesis.

Your annotated bibliography will consist of 15 to 20 sources that you have deemed relevant to your text and/or the background/context of the ideas you will be analyzing. You will only include the sources that you find useful and relevant. These sources can include several types of the following genres: scholarly articles written about your piece, scholarly articles written about other pieces by your author that relate to your thesis, biographies on your author, books and articles about the critical school you are approaching your text from, background on the time period in which your piece was written, background on the genre your piece is from, and any other sources deemed relevant to your proposal with strong ethos. Find the sources directly related to your piece, then find sources directly related to your author, and then expand to related ideas and fields that would be useful.

Your annotations should generally contain the following elements:

- Citation of the source in proper MLA format. The citations should be organized in alphabetical order by author just as in an MLA References page (see the Purdue Owl online for help with MLA).
- A brief annotation that summarizes the important points of the source (approx. 3-5 sentences). Ideally, all of the annotation should be in your own words.
- A 2-3 sentence explanation of the source’s relevance and importance to your thesis.
- Two quotes from the source you anticipate using in your final Literary Analysis.

**Constraints:** Your citations must adhere to MLA format. This will be one of the central components of the grade for this assignment. Failure to follow MLA format exactly will harm your grade. The annotations for each source should follow an academic style. This means that you must construct, with elevated and sophisticated language, correct grammatical sentences that effectively summarize what each source has to say. Additionally, you should explain how each source is relevant to the issue that you have selected and what it adds to your knowledge about your issue.