Sample MLA annotated works cited entry

Based on **Annotated Works Cited OWL Purdue handout** Dana Bisignani, Allen Brizee

Lamott, Anne. *Bird by Bird: Some Instructions on Writing and Life*. Anchor Books,

1995.

Lamott's book offers honest advice on the nature of a writing life, complete with its insecurities and failures. Taking a humorous approach to the realities of being a writer, the chapters in Lamott's book offer advice on everything from plot development to jealousy, from perfectionism to struggling with one's own internal critic. The discussions are accompanied by demonstrations of the writer’s work in progress. In the process, Lamott includes writing exercises designed to be both productive and fun. Her main project seems to be offering the reader a reality check regarding writing, publishing, and struggling with one's own imperfect humanity in the process. Lamott’s style reinforces what Smith and Taylor have indicated as hallmarks of professional writing distress and stands apart from the more methodical approach advocated in Berndez’s work. The commentaries would be appropriate to include early in the discussions about writing preparation. Lamott’s work contributes to a personal understanding of writing anxiety as a shared reality.

NOTICE:

* Author is referred to by last name.
* The MLA entry starts at the margin double-spaced; the paragraph is blocked (indented)
* No “I” expressing personal reaction
* The paragraph includes summary, some comparison to other pieces in the works cited, and a speculation of how the work fits into the paper.
* The list of sources needs to be alphabetized

**Why should I write an annotated works cited?**

**To learn about your topic**: Writing an annotated works cited is excellent preparation for a research project. Just collecting sources for a bibliography is useful, but when you have to write annotations for each source, you're forced to read each source more carefully. You begin to read more critically instead of just collecting information.

**To help other researchers**: Extensive and scholarly annotated works cited are sometimes published. They provide a comprehensive overview of everything important that has been and is being said about that topic. You may not ever get your annotated bibliography published, but as a researcher, you might want to look for one that has been published about your topic.