

CAPTIONING GUIDELINES FOR THE DCMP

Funds for captioning are provided by the U.S. Department of Education (ED). In its contractual statement of work, the ED specifies captioning requirements. The DCMP provides technical assistance to video companies and captioning service vendors regarding this captioning, and then a review of the work performed is administered.

I. Specifications

A. Text (Unless otherwise specified, subtitles should be used.)

1. Open Captions
 - (a) Use character-generated upper- and lowercase letters (with descenders that drop below the baseline).
 - (b) Use proportional spacing and maintain a 32-character line.
 - (c) Use medium weight sans serif characters with a border or rim shadow.
2. Modified Closed Captions
 - (a) In cases where a closed-captioned version of a title is available with captioning that is acceptable to the DCMP, the captioning service vendor shall convert the captions to a subtitled format.
 - (b) All specifications listed under #1 above should be met.

B. Presentation Rate

1. Lower- to middle-level educational videos should be captioned at a presentation rate range of 120–130 words per minute (wpm). Upper-level educational videos can be captioned slightly above the 120–130 range.
2. Adult special-interest videos require a presentation rate of 150–160 wpm. The presentation rate can be increased if heavy editing radically changes the original meaning, content, or language structure.
3. Children's cultural movies should be captioned at a rate of 150 wpm.
4. Adult cultural movies should be captioned at a near verbatim rate, but no captioning should remain on screen less than 2 seconds or exceed 225 wpm.

C. General Captioning Guidelines and Preferred Styles

1. The [Captioning Key for Educational Media](#), developed by the DCMP with the collaboration and experience of several captioning agencies, professionals, consumers, and others involved in captioning work, details the guidelines and styles of captioning for the DCMP.
2. In order to perform DCMP work, this manual and its specifications must be followed.

D. Editing

1. Edit only if necessary to fit within the proposed wpm range.
2. Always retain original meaning.
3. Attempt to retain original vocabulary.

II. Review by the NAD

A. Proof Dub and Script

1. A 1/2" time-coded VHS proof dub, a copy of the time-coded script, and research verification must be sent to the DCMP for a review of the above requirements and for language mechanics (spelling, grammar, punctuation, line division, and other features). The time-coded script and research verification may be sent electronically.
2. The DCMP will notify the captioning agency if changes should be made.
3. Caption changes are penned on script pages or sent electronically.

B. Check Dub

1. Under unusual circumstances, such as a high number of requested changes or technical problems, a second dub (check dub) will be required.
2. The DCMP will review the check dub to ensure that all requested changes were made.