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Dear Staff,

On March 1, the students will be participating in a new event titled, “Read *Captions* Across America.” The goal is to educate students and parents about the many benefits of utilizing captioned media at home. Our hope is that you will also begin to use them in the classroom. While they are absolutely necessary for students who are deaf/hard-of-hearing, d/hh, to access important educational content, they are also very useful for hearing students as well.

Captioning is the process of converting the dialogue and sounds heard on video into text that is then printed onto the media—television programming, DVDs, movies at a cinema, web- streamed media. Captions ensure equal access to content for students with hearing loss. If a student who is d/hh utilizes interpreter services, it is still important to have captions on media. It is difficult to simultaneously attend to both the video and the information being delivered by the interpreter. It is also challenging to follow along with a written transcript while watching media. The lighting is typically poor, the eyes bounce back and forth through a large visual field from screen to written text, and without auditory feedback or with distorted auditory feedback, and it is hard to track along with the programming.

You might find that some of your hearing students will also benefit from the delivery of this information in a written format. Captions offer delivery of material in three formats: video, text, and audio. Research on persons without hearing loss indicates that captioned television can enhance reading comprehension, listening comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, word recognition, decoding skills, and overall motivation to read. (Koskinen, Wilson, Jensema- Reading World 1986) Captions can benefit hearing students who are visual learners, second-language learners, and can help discern information when the audio is not clear or the speaker has an accent that is difficult to understand.

Captions are a free resource available at the tap of a key or two or push of a remote button in many instances. Turn them on in all places that they are available. Closed-captions must be opened or turned on to activate. Instructions follow for some typical methods of viewing captions or subtitles.

Here is the catch: While most of what we view on TV and watch entertainment-wise in DVD format is captioned, a large percentage, some say as high as 80 %, of educational media is NOT captioned. That leaves our students with hearing loss at a great deficit for acquiring information. A wonderful resource for classrooms with a student who is d/hh is the Described and Captioned Media Program, or the DCMP for short. The DCMP is a free-loan library containing over 4,000 educational media videos available to students who are d/hh and the parents and teachers of students of these students. You simply apply for an account and the resources are then available in one of two formats- instantly streamed and projected with the Promethean Boards or in a traditional DVD format. All DVDs are sent through the mail with a pre-paid postage envelope for return. Please visit the DCMP website at [www.dcmp.org](http://www.dcmp.org) for more details.

Students will also be challenged to watch a video or TV program at home during the first week of March. A letter about the many benefits of utilizing captioned media will be sent home with students along with instructions for viewing captions at home. Students will fill out a raffle ticket and enter for a chance to win prizes. The class with the most raffle tickets turned in will win a cupcake party. Raffle tickets are due March 11th.

Thank you for being open to providing media in a format that is accessible to as many students as possible. Please let us know if you have trouble activating captions in the various formats or about captioning in general.

Jennifer Beard & Michelle Rich

**How To Turn On Television Captions**

The default position for TV captions is to be closed.   
  
To open the closed captions, a click of the CC button on the remote control is all it takes for most modern television sets.  
  
For older sets and for some models, a slightly different procedure using an on-screen Menu is necessary.  
  
Where the use of a Menu is required, there is usually a button on the remote control that reads “Menu.” When a Menu button is pressed various choices or menus appear, such as a choices of language, setting the TV’s internal clock, auto-programming the TV, choosing channels and so on, including several options for captions, such as having them run with the sound on or eliminating the sound, but keeping the captions.  
  
We recommend that you leave the TV captions open, along with the sound, all the time for your learners.

If you are a cable TV subscriber, you need to use the remote control that came with your TV rather than the remote control provided by your cable supplier.

Directions supplied by: http://captionsforliteracy.org/how\_to\_turn\_on\_captions.htm

**DVD Subtitles**

DVDs are often authored with English Subtitles in lieu of captions. Subtitles must be turned on in the menu section of a DVD prior to beginning the movie. All DVDs are authored differently, but basically you want to go into the Menu and select “Playback Options” or “Languages” and then find English Subtitles.

**Web-Based Content**

Captions must also be activated for viewing on web-streamed content. You can always search for specific modalities, but here a few basic scenarios.

For Windows Media Player, Ctrl+Shift+C toggles the captions on and off.

For You Tube media, when you search, choose "Closed Captions" under "Type" to filter out uncaptioned videos. If you are using the Advanced Options for your YouTube search, check the "Closed Captions" option under "Show only videos with these features.” You can also select the Auto Caption feature. Since this utilizes a speech-to-text program, the captions are not always accurate.

**Discovery Streaming**

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| **Play Video** You can view a video segment "live" or stream in "real-time" by clicking on the Play button. The quality of the video streaming experience will depend on many factors including the speed of your Internet connection and the number of people at your school who are online while you are streaming video content.   **Download a Video** When you download a video segment, you save a copy of the file on your computer or local network for future access. To download a video or video segment, right-click on the download icon (or Ctrl + click if using a Mac) and choose "Save Target As..."   **Closed Captioning** Many Discovery Education™ *streaming* videos are available with closed captioning (Windows Media Player only). To activate closed captioning, check the box next to "Enable Closed Captioning" in the Media Settings.   http://streaming.discoveryeducation.com/images/help/media%20settings%20-%20cc.gif  To download videos with closed captioning, first download the video following the above instructions. Next click on the http://streaming.discoveryeducation.com/images/help/image1.gifnext to the play and download icons to download the closed captioning file. This file must reside in the same directory as the video and the filename (before the .smi extension) must be identical to the video filename.   http://streaming.discoveryeducation.com/images/help/clips%20-%20cc.gif |