

# How to Create an Accessible Transcript

## Background

When we describe what accessibility requirements are, we are referring to the requirements that are set forth by the [W3C.org](http://W3C.org). The current guidelines that we are required to meet are [WCAG 2.0 Level AA](http://WCAG 2.0 Level AA).

It is always better to have video with closed captioning, but there are times when that is not possible. In those rare situations you will need to create an accessible transcript.

When we create a transcript from a synchronized media presentation we are required to provide an accurate text alternative that includes; dialog, sounds (natural and artificial), the setting and background, the actions and expressions of people, animals, etc., text or graphics, and anything else that is relevant. The transcript that we create must tell the same story and present the same information as the synchronized media. It must include all the important dialogue and actions, as well as descriptions of backgrounds, etc. that are part of the story.

Some types of synchronized media include interaction that has to occur at particular places in the playing of the synchronized media. Sometimes it may result in an action taking place. Sometimes it may change the course of the synchronized media. In those cases links or some other mechanism would be used in the transcript to allow people using the transcript to be able to have the same options and abilities as those using the synchronized media.

## Process

Keeping the requirements described above in mind, let us look at an accessible transcript.

[Background image: Marketplace in small Mexican village. Vendors and customers bustling about. Dogs barking in the distance. Children's laughter.]

Professor Chris Montez: Welcome to "The History of Mexico". In this class you will learn about Mexican history from the time of the Mayan Civilization to today.

[Background image: Split screen with Mayan pyramid on the left and the historic center of Mexico City on the right.]

You will meet the people of Mexico and see how this civilization developed.

[Image on screen shows two animated characters against a solid blue background.]

Male character Jose: My name is Jose and I will be telling you all sorts of trivia. I am a know it all.

Female character Maria: My name is Maria and I will be telling you about the people and places that make Mexico so exciting.

[Maria points to map of Mexico]

I'll bring you on a wonderful tour of Mexico from north to south.

[Jose pointing at his stomach]

Jose: While I demonstrate all of the delicious foods.

Professor Montez: Thank you Jose and Maria. I'll be your guide, [chuckling] and I'll try to keep Jose and Maria from talking too much.

[Background Mariachi music plays]

Text on screen: To get started in this course, please complete the Student Learning Contract, read the Course Syllabus, and then visit the Introduction Discussion Forum and tell us about yourself.

Please notice some important features. The first time a character speaks I show their full name. For the remaining instances I give a shortened version of their name. For example; Professor Chris Montez becomes Professor Montez, Male character Jose becomes Jose, and Female character Maria becomes Maria. When a character begins speaking I identify that at the beginning, and then again only after their speech is interrupted by another speaker or a major break. For example; the fourth paragraph above is a continuation of Professor Montez speech.

A visually challenged viewer with a vivid imagination can see this video as well as a fully sighted viewer would.

## Conclusion

Don't think of captioning or transcripts as something extra that you have to do. Think of it as a natural part of the creation process. Most people find that creating a script or screenplay will make the entire process go much smoother.