

Captioning in the Classroom*

Some students who are deaf or hard of hearing, particularly those who rely on spoken language, will require captioning to fully access educational material—especially at the secondary and post-secondary level. Several options are available.

Computer-Assisted Notetaking (CAN)

This technique provides a visual display of a speaker's words typed on a standard computer keyboard and displayed on a projection screen or a laptop computer monitor. CAN provides a summary of what is being said. The product is as accurate and comprehensive as the skills of the typist in comprehending and then summarizing the verbal content. CAN is generally done by a fast, accurate typist, so no training specific to specialized software is required. This procedure may be suitable for an individual or a group, but it may not be satisfactory in all situations. An edited printout or disk of the notes can be made available. Provision of CAN is less costly than CART or C-Print™.

C-Print™ (Computer-aided speech-to-print transcription system)

This technology was developed at the National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID) at Rochester Institute of Technology (Rochester, NY). It utilizes word processing software aided by abbreviation software. A captionist uses reduced key strokes and text condensing strategies to take comprehensive but not verbatim notes. C-Print™ is sometimes characterized as being more appropriate for liberal arts or humanities subjects, than for highly technical or scientific subjects (requiring very specific language) such as mathematics or sciences. Although numbers are increasing there are fewer C-Print™ reporters than CART reporters. The initial training requires one week's time and proficiency is acquired with practice over the course of approximately one year. The remuneration for a C-Print™ reporter is generally less than that of a sign language interpreter or CART reporter.

Computer-Assisted Real-time Transcription (CART)

CART provides a visual display of the speaker's presentation, word for word. A trained court reporter types on a stenographic keyboard, and the visual display can be seen on a computer monitor or projection screen. Because of the technology employed and the specialized skill required, the stenographic reporter can generally keep up with a moderately paced speaker or multi-speaker discussion. CART is suitable for an individual or even a large group or audience and can be readily used to provide access in a classroom, courtroom, business meeting, lecture, group discussion or entertainment venue. An edited printout or disk of proceedings can be made available. CART is the most costly of the options listed here but it is also the one that provides the student with the closest representation of the class content.

* Source: Self Help for Hard of Hearing People (SHHH), Bethesda, MD, www.hearingloss.org, 301.657.2248

Northeast Technical Assistance Center (NETAC), NTID, Rochester, NY, www.netac.rit.edu, 716.475.6433