



BACK TO SCHOOL WITH DCMP... FOR PARENTS!

By Staci Bechard

Pencils ready! Depending on what kind of summer you have had, it is with a sigh of relief (or a groan) that the school year begins anew. So, in preparation for all those school supplies and sleepy eyes—it's quiz time—but this one's for you, parents. What is the name of the high-quality media service geared specifically toward improving the educational experience of your deaf and hard of hearing children? Another hint—it is also convenient, informative, and free!

If you said the Described and Captioned Media Program, you've earned an A+ and are probably one of the many thousands of parents who have already reaped the rewards of this wonderful program. For others, who may need a quick peek at the CliffsNotes, the Described and Captioned Media Program is a free-loan service providing open-captioned and described media to you and your children at home or at school. The DCMP is funded by the U.S. Department of Education and administrated by the National Association for the Deaf.

Any parent of a student who is deaf, hard of hearing child, blind, visually impaired, or deaf-blind can qualify for DCMP services. No special equipment is needed to view our materials. DVDs and CD-ROMs can be borrowed and mailed, postage-paid, right to your door—we also include return postage and the case to send it back. If you'd rather view the media online, try DCMP's Internet streaming media. It's that easy—DCMP really makes the grade!

How DCMP Supports Parents

DCMP supports the parents of deaf and/or blind children by providing free access to thousands of educational, special-interest, and entertainment titles. Whether you are looking for materials that can help supplement an educational topic your child is learning at school or just want something to help reinforce what your son or daughter is learning in school, the possibilities are vast. With a little searching, you can always find something to fit your needs or fill a gap in your child's learning.

In fact, DCMP not only houses educational materials for students, but also for parents who wish to explore topics related to deafness, child-rearing, sign language, early intervention, and more. Our sign language titles are especially popular. DCMP allows parents to help enhance their children's education, as well as their own—in the privacy of their own home. Parents can really go "back to school" with DCMP.

Here's What Parents Are Saying About DCMP

Mary S., parent of deaf 12-year-old:

"We have liked the convenience of getting the videos in the mail and sending them back post paid. The variety of materials in the catalog is impressive."

Angela M., parent of deaf 14-year-old:

"It is a great way to build vocabulary and increase reading speed."

Connie H., parent of deaf 16-year-old:

"DCMP offers a wide variety of videos for learning concepts and entertainment. I enjoyed the convenience of mailing them back. My daughter was able to look in the catalog and choose her own videos from the time she was able to read. It was convenient to go through the catalog at home and not stand in the video store and wonder if it is captioned."

Lindsay W., parent of deaf 9-month old:

"Captioned Media offers access to such a variety of programs. It's so easy and it's free."

How DCMP Supports Students



For deaf children, captioned media help open the door to the world, much like a book. While the captions encourage reading, the action is presented through a visual mode appropriate to deaf students. When a title is viewed in connection with what is being taught, the information becomes more accessible. DCMP media invite the students to explore topics that may be abstract or otherwise hard to understand. DCMP also helps make learning fun.

The Described and Captioned Media Program strives to provide the highest-quality educational media to preschool through high school students and beyond. For an older student, DCMP media might mean they can travel vicariously to faraway settings, discover career paths, delve into unique topics, and more. Littler ones may choose to snuggle-up for a visual story time with a parent, brush up on their ABCs, or go on virtual fieldtrip. A lone student in a rural setting can be given the chance to see other deaf students signing, or "visit" a big city, museum, or art exhibit. With so many choices and *hundreds* of new titles added every year, the opportunity to enrich a child's education and experiences through captioned media is endless.

Here's What Students Are Saying About DCMP

Tearra, 16-year-old deaf student:

"I think it's good to have captioned videos. I have added to my reading vocabulary from captioned videos. Some of my mainstreamed classes do not use captioned videos and it is hard because I have to watch the interpreter and miss the pictures."

Ashlee, 14-year-old deaf student:

"It's the only way to understand what the characters are saying when lip-reading is not available."

How You Can Help Support DCMP

Sign up for a DCMP account and watch videos, CDs, DVDs, or “streamed” titles in your home. For more information or to search our catalog online, visit our Web site at www.dcmp.org. If you are not yet a DCMP client, you can register online or call 1-800-237-6213 (V) or 1-800-237-6819 (TTY). Remember, every title you watch helps support DCMP while it also benefits you—it’s a win-win situation!

Be proactive—ask your child’s teachers if they know about DCMP. If so, are they using it? They qualify for accounts too, so encourage your children’s teachers to use DCMP. Bonus point: research shows captions can benefit everyone in the classroom.

Spread the word about DCMP to deaf individuals and other families of deaf or hard-of-hearing children. DCMP is a far-reaching program with a positive impact on learning. Those you tell about DCMP will thank you!



So, as we head back into the busy school year, remember not only to sharpen your pencils, but also your mind, with the Described and Captioned Media Program. *Happy School Year!*

(Special thanks to Sandy McGennis, MSDB Outreach Consultant, for her assistance in gathering comments for this article.)



About the Author

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