

TIMELY TIPS

Writing

The ABCDs of Caption Writing

OBJECTIVE

Students will be able to write accurate and informative captions for photos by identifying key details and applying proper caption structure and style.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Laptops or tablets
- Projector or whiteboard
- [ABCDs of Caption Writing poster](#)
- Examples of strong and weak captions
- Student photos from the school year

PART 1

INTRODUCTION (10 MINUTES)

Begin by discussing the ABCD structure using [Walsworth's Caption Writing poster](#).

Then, display a series of photos – some with captions, and some without. Ask the class:

- What do you understand about this photo without a caption?
- How does a caption change the story or deepen the meaning?

Introduce the concept: Explain that captions are often the most-read text on a spread and are essential to telling the story behind a photo.

PART 2

GUIDED PRACTICE (15 MINUTES)

Divide students into small teams.

- Provide 2-3 sample photos to the class.
- In teams, have students write captions using the ABCD method from the handout. For the purpose of this exercise, staffers can pull quotes from past captions or create their own.
- Volunteers will share their captions aloud. Discuss strengths and opportunities for improvement as a staff.

Teacher Tip: Reinforce key points during feedback. Are they using present tense in the first sentence? Did they include complementary information or a quote?

PART 3

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE (25 MINUTES)

Direct each student to practice on their own for the assignment.

- Each staffer will select one new photo and write a complete caption using the ABCD method.
- Encourage students to include as much of the 5 Ws and H as possible and gather a short quote from someone pictured, if time allows.

Encourage students to write multiple captions for their photo to tell the best story of the photo.

PART 4

WRAP UP & NEXT STEPS (10 MINUTES)

Each student will submit their caption for review.

- Provide students with feedback highlighting one strength and one growth area.
- Have students reflect by answering the prompt: "How does the ABCD method help you make captions more meaningful and professional?"

Encourage them to use the [ABCDs of Caption Writing](#) as a personal checklist for future assignments.