

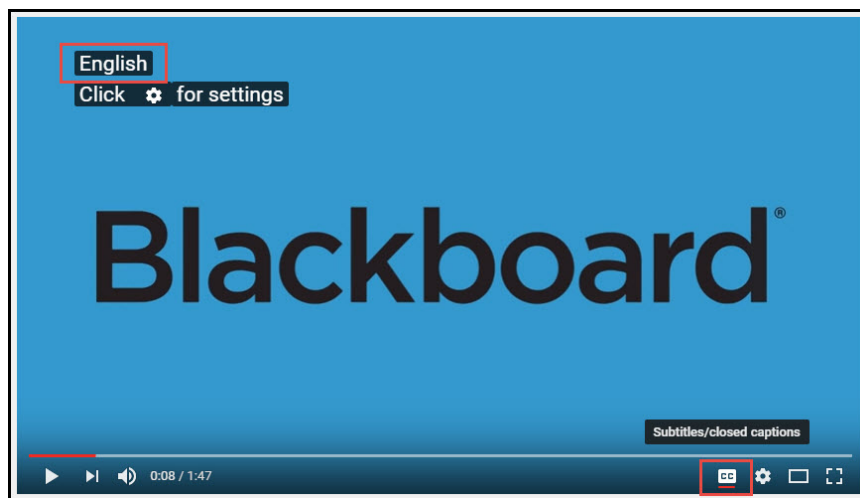
# Captioning Videos with Amara

Online Accessibility Series

This document will show you how to use Amara (<http://www.amara.org>) to add captions to an online video, making it accessible to individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing. Unlike YouTube captioning, you can use Amara to caption videos that are not in your own YouTube account.

It is important to note that in order for the captions to be displayed, you must direct viewers to a custom Amara webpage instead of the YouTube page for the video.

- 1) First, you will need to determine whether a video already has appropriate captions. Open the video in YouTube.

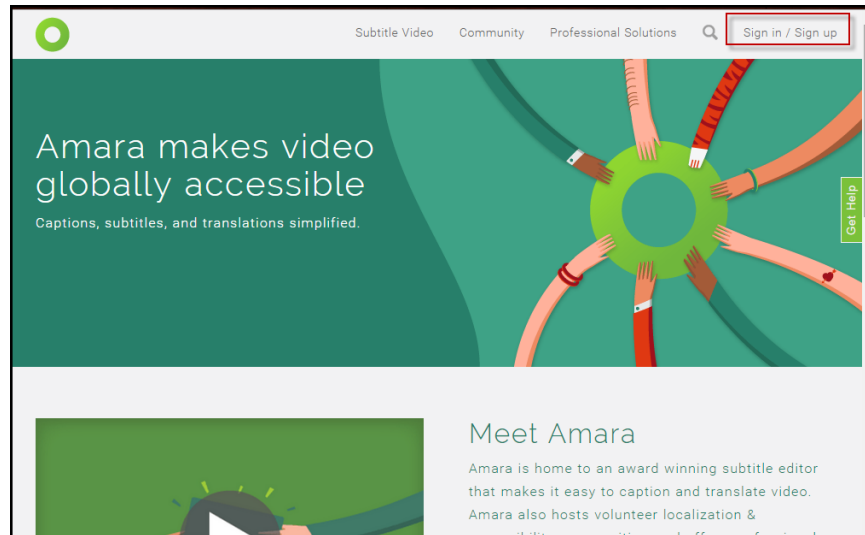


Click on the **CC** in the lower left corner. The text shown in the upper left will appear, showing the language of the captions. If it says **English**, then the captions have been manually added and you can assume the captions are appropriate, though you may want to review them to make sure.



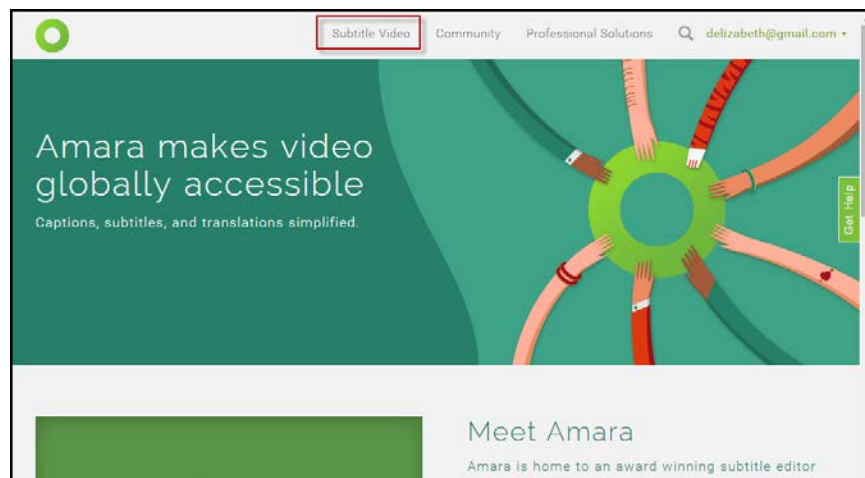
If the text says **English (auto-generated)** then the captions have been created by a computer. The auto-generated captions are on average 65% accurate, so you won't want to depend on them for accessibility. In this case you can use Amara to create captions.

2)



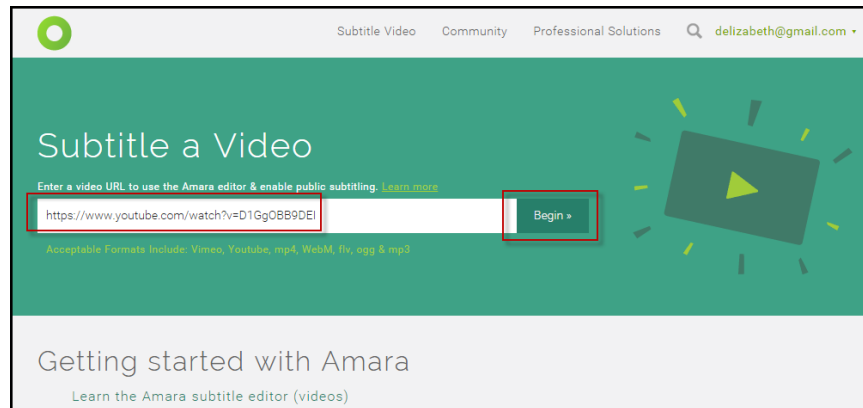
Go to <http://www.amara.org>. Click **Sign in / Sign up** and login or create an account.

3)



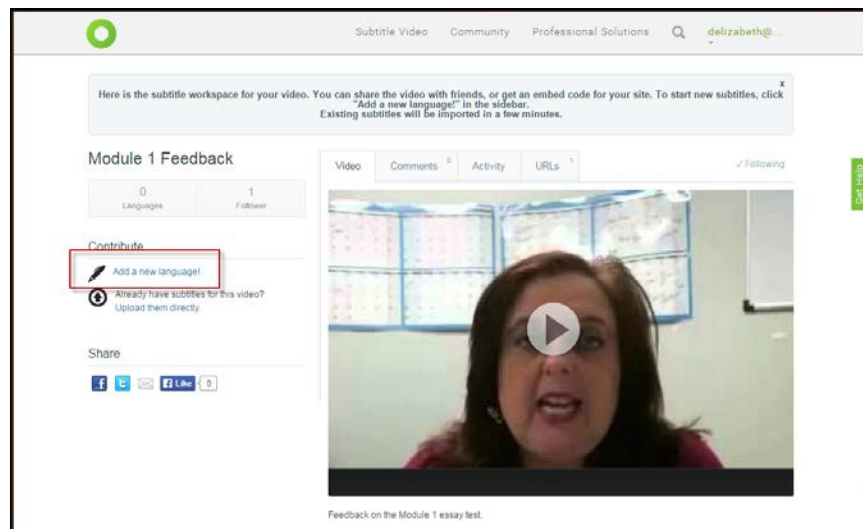
After logging in, you will be sent to the home page. Click on **Subtitle Video**.

4)



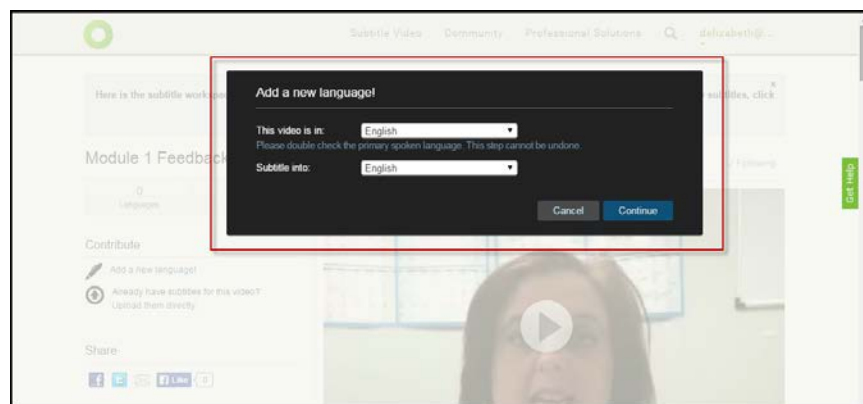
Enter the URL of the video you wish to caption, then press **Begin**.

5)



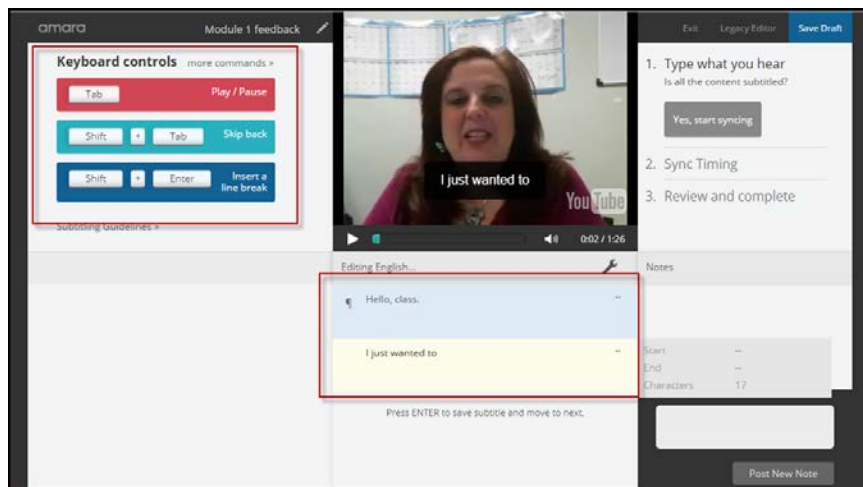
Click **Add a new language!**

6)



Verify the language of the video and captions, then press **Continue**.

7)



Use the Tab and Shift keys to control the playback of the video, as described on the left.

8) Type what you hear into the box under the video. Hit **Enter** to go to the next caption (the group of text that appears on the screen at one time). To go to a new line within the same caption, press **Shift + Enter**.

9) Use the following guidelines for formatting the captions:

- The transcript should be verbatim, which includes vocalizations like “Umm”.
- Include off-screen noises and sound effects when they are essential to the plot or add meaning. Put these in brackets (for example, [dog barking] or [audience laughing]).
- If it is not obvious who is speaking, identify the speaker by putting their name or descriptor in parenthesis on a line above the caption.

(John)  
Good morning, class.

(male teacher)  
Good morning, class.

- Keep lines to 32 characters or less, including spaces. Amara will warn you if the line gets over 42 characters.
- Try to have no more than 2 lines per caption. You can go to three in some circumstances, but never more than 3.
- Line breaks:
  - Do not separate modifiers from the word it modifies

<b>Inappropriate</b>	<b>Appropriate</b>
Mark pushed his black truck.	Mark pushed his black truck.

- ii. Do not break propositional phrases.

<b>Inappropriate</b>	<b>Appropriate</b>
Mary scampered under the table.	Mary scampered under the table.

- iii. Do not separate a person's name or title from the name.

<b>Inappropriate</b>	<b>Appropriate</b>
Bob and Susan Smythe are at the movies.	Bob and Susan Smythe are at the movies.

- iv. Do not break a line after a conjunction.

<b>Inappropriate</b>	<b>Appropriate</b>
In seconds she arrived, and he ordered a drink.	In seconds she arrived, and he ordered a drink.

- v. Do not separate auxiliary (helping) verbs from the verb it modifies.

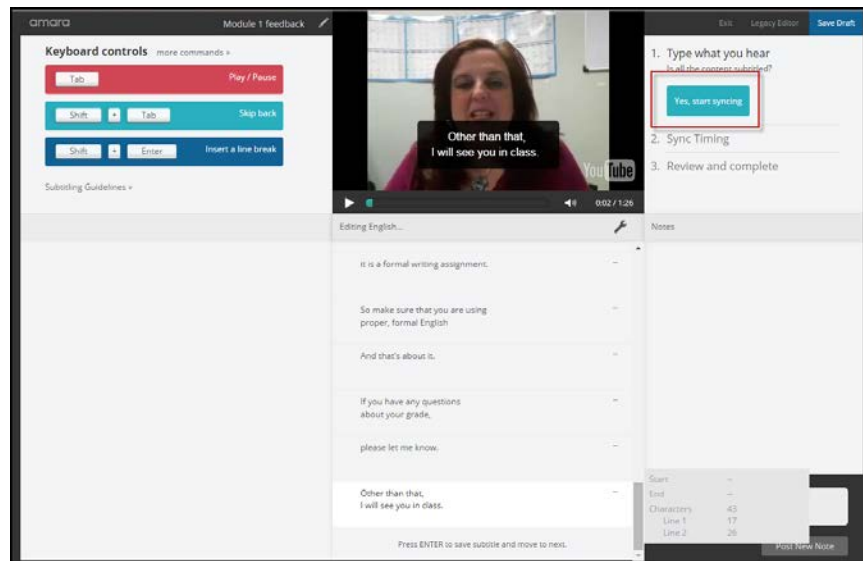
<b>Inappropriate</b>	<b>Appropriate</b>
Mom said I could have gone to the movies.	Mom said I could have gone to the movies.

- vi. Never end a sentence and begin the next sentence on the same line unless they are short, related sentences containing one or two words.

<b>Inappropriate</b>	<b>Appropriate</b>
He suspected that his face turned pale. He knew he wouldn't be able to speak if spoken to. Running toward the void, he halted...	He suspected that his face turned pale.  He knew he wouldn't be able to speak if spoken to.  Running toward the void, he halted...

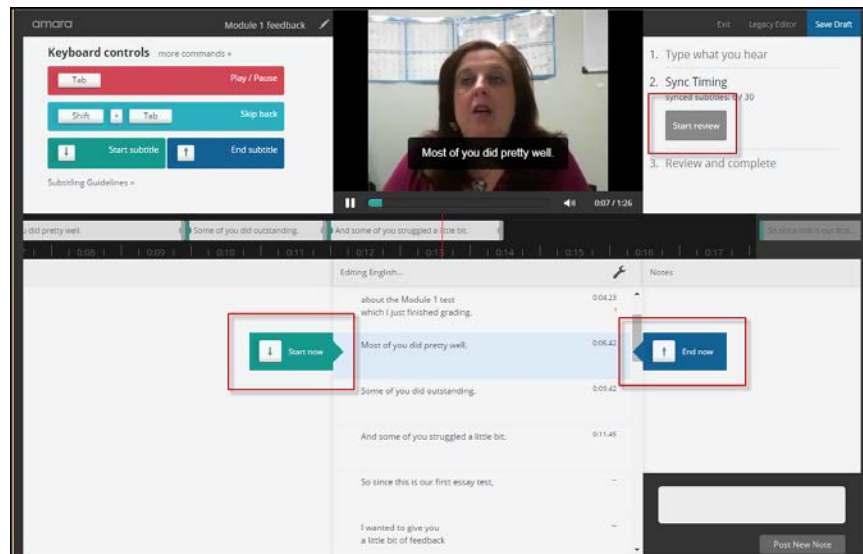
- g. Use standard rules for spelling and punctuation as much as possible. Because people usually do not speak in Standard English, use punctuation to clarify meaning.
- h. If you can see people talking, but there's no sound, or if there are long periods with no sound, caption it as [no audio].

10)



Once you have finished transcribing the entire video, press **Yes, start syncing**.

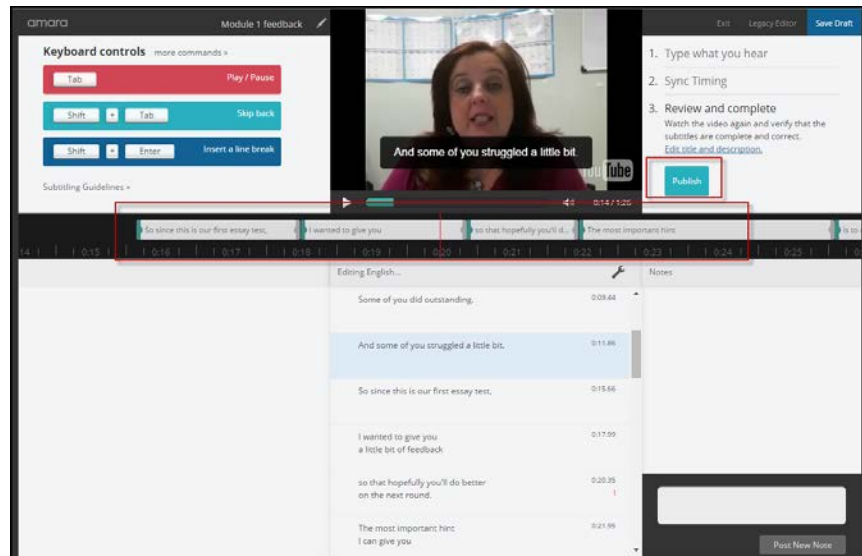
11)



12) In this step, you will identify when to display each caption. When you are ready to start, press **Start review**.

13) The video will start playing, and when it is time to display the first caption, press the **Down Arrow** (indicating **Start now**). When it is time to display the next caption, press the **Down Arrow** again. You don't have to press the **Up Arrow** (indicating **End Now**) unless you want the caption to stop displaying without showing the next caption yet. Just watch the video, pressing the **Down Arrow** every time it should display the next caption. Don't worry if you make a mistake, you can fix it in the next step.

14)

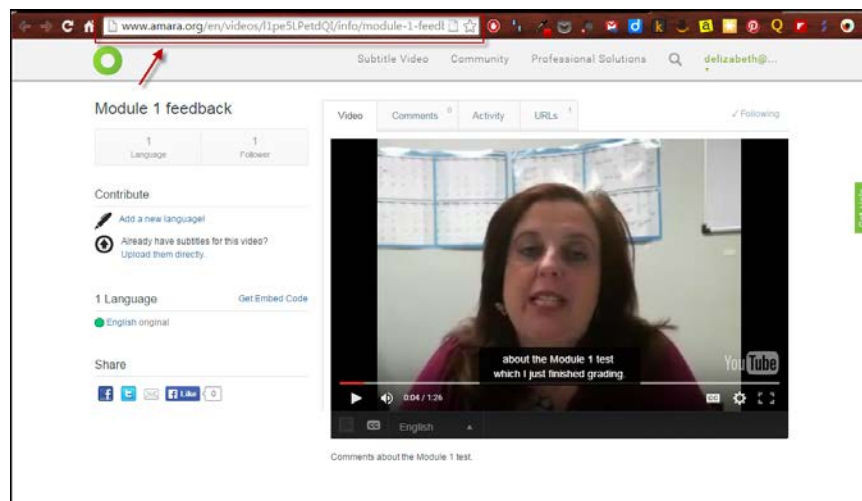


15) Play the video back, proofing the timing of the captions. You can adjust the timing by dragging the edges of the text boxes underneath the video (the green or grey “handles”).

16) If you notice a mistake in the text, you can correct it where the text is displayed on the lower part of the screen.

17) Once you are happy with your captions, press **Publish**.

18)



The video is now captioned! Instructions for how to embed an Amara-captioned video into Blackboard can be found in *Embedding Amara Videos*.

19) If you have any questions about this process, please contact Beth Case at 502-852-7689 or by email at [beth.case@louisville.edu](mailto:beth.case@louisville.edu).