Getting Into the Thriving Arena of Educational Publishing

Presented by:
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Who Might Benefit From This Session

• Editors interested in e-learning/educational publishing
• Editors who wants to diversify their skill set
• Fellow fans of the UNC Tar Heels who want to discuss the Final Four immediately after this session (Go Heels!)
About Me

• Math degree from Morehouse College
• Began career as a teacher; taught eighth grade math for two years
• Awarded short-term contract with Pearson Education aligning state standards
• Received first copy editing job with Pearson Education
• Began as a math editor, then began editing other types of content
• Over a decade of experience
About Me (con’t)

• Joined ACES in 2013
• Was on Robinson Prize judging panel for the 2014 award
• Named Head Judge for 2015 award
What Is Educational Publishing?

• An industry that employs writers, editors, graphic artists, etc. to create print, digital, and supplemental content for students.

• This content might be in the form of a textbook, assessment (printable or online), video, etc.

• **Writers** create the instructional content, using what is known as a storyboard. They also write assessment items.

• **Editors** copy edit/proofread content, as well as provide fact/content accuracy checking as needed.

• **Artists** design pieces that are specific to the content.

• **Producers** shoot and edit video content.
Requirements for Editor Role in Educational Publishing

• Experience as a copy editor (or at least has a natural talent)
• Subject matter expertise
• Strong fact-checking skills
• Ability to create/follow a style guide
• Ability to suggest content changes/rearrange content
• Reviewing visual elements
• Ability to transcribe
• Teaching experience (helpful)
• Understanding of alt text (helpful)
• Closed-captioning and XML knowledge (helpful)
• Second language (helpful)
Outlook of Educational Publishing

• Will continue to thrive (especially digital)
• Number of editing jobs will remain roughly the same
• In 2014, editing jobs paid a median salary of $54,890 (between $25 and $30 per hour).
Benefits of Career in Educational Publishing

• Opportunity to help students learn and succeed in the classroom
• Steadiness of work (for freelancers)
• Variety of work
• Opportunity to learn
• Many opportunities to freelance
• Generally pays well
Fact-Checking

• Important for all nonfiction text
• Often outsourced, but sometimes done in-house by copy editor
• This also applies to math editors.
The Video and Audio Component

The goal is to create videos that:

• Meet the lesson objective(s)
• Follow product style guidelines
• Are social and legally compliant
• Are engaging
Video: The Visual Component

• Contains cues for the producer about what to show onscreen
• Includes information on how to move things around. (These comments should be edited minimally, and only if they seem confusing.) If you move sections of the script around, make sure to also move the TOS and visual columns.
Video: The Text Onscreen Component

- Contains the text that will be shown onscreen to the students
- Should be edited carefully

Maintain consistency in formatting information onscreen. If unsure about presentation, query the producers, offering options.
Video: The Audio Component

• Contains the script for speaking parts
• Will sometimes be broken down into different speakers (narrator, child voiceover, etc. At other times, it may be a single speaker.)
• Feel free to suggest wording changes to make dialogue flow more smoothly, but be sure to use comments or tracked changes.
• Don’t worry too much about punctuation, paragraphing, etc. Fix only the most egregious errors.
The Importance of Tone

• Conversational
• Grade-level/age appropriate

Remember that video and audio talent (not necessarily teachers) read the passages on first sight. It’s important for them to get the right timing and tone.

Tip: Read the script aloud. If your narration sounds long-winded or disjointed, so will the actual narrator’s.
The Importance of Tone (con’t)

Acceptable

For the verbs in the sentence, add an *s* or *e-s* to make a singular verb that agrees.

Preferred

**Elementary:** Add *s* or *e-s* to the verb! And look! It agrees!

**Middle:** Can you see what we have to do to the verbs here? You guessed it—we add an *s* or *e-s* to make a singular verb that agrees!
Readability: Lexile

- Provide scientific measures to check readability and grade-level appropriateness of content; a numeric representation of readability
- Lower scores indicate lower reading level; higher scores indicate higher reading level.
- Used to match readers with books
- In e-learning, used to measure readability of short passages and ensure content reads grade level appropriate
Assessment Editing

• Assessments are tools that educators use to gauge a student’s mastery or understanding of a concept.

• Assessments can be multiple choice, fill in the blank (FIB), short answer (or numeric response), drag and drop, matching.

• Unique style

• Especially important to pay attention to detail when editing assessments.
Assessment Editing Best Practices

• Keep verbiage clear and concise.
• Avoid window dressing.
• Use factual data whenever possible.
• Make sure there are no giveaways.
• All of the distractors should be plausible.
Sample Assessment Question (Pre-edit)

Use the pythagorean theorem to find the missing side length.

A. 7 in   B. 5 in  
C. 6 in   D. 36 in

3 in  
4 in  

x
Sample Assessment Question (Post-edit)

Use the Pythagorean Theorem to find the missing side length.

A. 5 in.  
B. 6 in.  
C. 7 in.  
D. 12 in.

3 in.  
4 in.  
x
Pop Quiz!
Assessment Question #1

Which of the following is **not** a copy editor’s role in the educational publishing field?

A. Reviewing content flow  
B. Shooting video  
C. Creating style guides  
D. Verifying facts
Assessment Question #2

According to a 2014 report, what was the mean salary of a copy editor in the educational publishing field?

A. $32,570
B. $46,210
C. $54,890
D. $65,230
Assessment Question #3

The _____ will win the NCAA Men’s Basketball Championship.

A. North Carolina Tar Heels  
B. Oklahoma Sooners  
C. Villanova Wildcats  
D. Syracuse Orange
508 Compliance: Closed-Captioning

• Captions display audio content on a screen or monitor as text.

• Closed-captioning is a useful tool for the hearing-impaired audience.

http://www.section508.gov/
508 Compliance: 
Alt Text

• Alt text is “alternative text.” It is a textual alternative to non-text on-screen content (i.e., images, audio, or video) that people with visual or cognitive disabilities can access.

• The primary purpose of alt text is to provide semantic meaning and description to images. It is read by a screen reader and is intended to help users make sense of the page and grasp the purpose and context of images.
Alt Text Example #1

Source: ScienceNotes.org

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Periodic Table of the Elements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Md</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rg</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lanthanide Series

Actinide Series

ACES2016 Portland
The periodic table of elements
Alt Text Example #2

Source: NewYorkTimes.com
President Obama signing the Affordable Health Care Bill

as members of Congress look on
Alt Text Example #3

Source: BusinessInsider.com
A crazy rich guy with bad toupee making a silly face behind a podium
Social and Legal Compliance

Addresses the following:

• Multiculturalism
• Biases/stereotypes
• Diversity

Best Practices:

• Include contributions and achievements of people from diverse cultural groups.
• Include folktales, stories, and other literature, both historical and contemporary, from a variety of cultural groups.
• Maintain an equitable balance of males and females in illustrations (artwork and photographs).
• Maintain a racial and ethnic balance in illustrations and photos that reflects the diversity of our school populations according to the latest U.S. government statistics.
Social and Legal Compliance (con’t)

• Illustrations and photos should include people of various physical types.
• Illustrations and photos should also realistically portray people with various disabilities.
• Include a variety of family units and family sizes.
• Acknowledge that there are different and sometimes opposing perspectives and opinions on historical events, as well as on contemporary political and cultural issues.
• Integrate information about cultural groups throughout the materials.
Social and Legal Compliance (con’t)

• Avoid brand names.
• Avoid corporate logos.
• Avoid discussion of dangerous substances.
• Model exercise and healthy lifestyles.
• Model environmental protection.
• Promote safety.
• Promote modest attire.
• Promote scientific accuracy.
Software Considerations

- Adobe Dreamweaver CS6
  - Komodo Edit
  - Adobe Acrobat Pro
  - WordPress
- Closed-captioning software
  - Express Scribe
  - MathType
  - Camtasia Studio
- Microsoft Office Suite
  - Stratalogica
Performing Job Search: Sites

- Indeed.com
- FlexJobs.com
- Craigslist.org
- SearchCraigslist.org (GLOBAL)
- FreelanceWriting.com/freelance-writing-jobs.php
- LinkedIn
- ACES Job Board
Performing Job Search: Keywords

- Copy editor/Copyeditor
- Copy editing/Copyediting
- Freelance editor
- Freelance copy editor
- Freelance copyeditor
- Proofreader
- Contract editor
- Contract proofreader
- Remote editor
- Remote copy editor
- Remote copyeditor
- Content editor
- Math editor
- Social studies editor
- Science editor
Any questions?

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