

IPM Transcript Guide

Before getting started, we want to make it clear that there isn't a single best way to do podcast transcripts. The formatting suggestions given here aren't written in stone. Do what works for you. What matters most is readability and consistency within the transcript.

People Working Off a Script: For those of you who are turning a script into a transcript, the main areas of concern will be adjusting the formatting, transcribing any unscripted bits (such as introductions), and adding the music and sound effect descriptions. This document gives information to help with all of these things.

People Transcribing an Unscripted Episode: The biggest concern for transcribing unscripted audio is reducing the amount of work that it takes to do the transcription process. Transcription tools, like Otter.ai, provide both automatic transcription and a transcript editing program that significantly speeds up the transcription process. Before you get started transcribing, however, please be sure to look at the formatting information in this document. Knowing what you are aiming for makes everything more efficient.

How Transcripts Will Be Posted: Transcripts will be posted both as an online link to a google doc and as a downloadable doc file. Links to both formats will be posted in the show notes and on the International Podcast Month website.

Getting Your Transcript to the IPM Team: Please email finished transcripts to the IPM team as either a doc file or a google doc by August 25, 2019.

Need Additional Help?: Please contact us at podcastmonth@gmail.com

How to Write and Format a Transcript

Because formatting information can be a bit abstract, all of the formatting information in this document is presented in three ways. Written explanations are given here. These instructions are repeated as a template in the "Transcript of Podcast Episode Title" section. Finally, an example transcript that demonstrates all of the things talked about in the previous sections is given in the "Transcript of Writing Alchemy Episode 100 – Imaginary Game Part 1" section.

Transcription Tools:

Podcast transcription can be time consuming. Fortunately there are tools available to reduce the amount of time it takes to transcribe audio. These tools provide both automatically generated transcripts and transcript editing apps that make it easier to correct all of the mistakes that result from automatic transcription.

- We recommend [Otter.ai](#) as the best tool for podcast transcription. It is easy to use and allows multiple people to work on transcription together. Full details on using Otter for podcast transcription can be found in ["How to Create a Podcast Transcript with Otter.ai"](#) by Fay Onyx.
- YouTube is another tool that can be used for podcast transcription. Full details on transcribing with YouTube can be found in ["How to Use YouTube to Create a Podcast Transcripts"](#) by Fay Onyx

Core Transcript Practices:

- Write the name of the person who is talking in bold, followed by a colon, and then what was said in the regular font style. Note that there are different ways of doing this formatting (for example, using all caps instead of bold). Do what works for you. What matters most is readability and consistency within the transcript.
- Make a new paragraph each time a new person speaks, or if a person switches between talking as a character and talking as themselves.
- Don't indent paragraphs. Instead, format the transcript document to automatically have a space after each paragraph. Note that this is particularly helpful if posting the transcript on a website, as many websites automatically add spaces after paragraphs. Doing this helps avoid situations where extra spaces are put into the transcript that will need to be deleted once it is on the website.
- Descriptions of music, sound effects, and other important sounds (like dice rolling, group cheers, and sounds that are commented on) are written in brackets on their own line. Note that background sounds that no one reacts to are usually ignored.
- Expressive sounds that are part of talking, like gasps, sighs, and laughter are described in brackets in the same line as the talking they go with.

- Brief descriptions of unusual ways of speaking, such as whispering, squealing, or talking in a silly voice, are written in brackets right before the words that were said in that manner.

Good Practices for Better Readability:

- Break up long sections of talking into paragraphs, even if the same person is talking.
- Italics are harder to read than regular font, so either avoid italics or use them sparingly.
- It is helpful to distinguish between a person talking as themselves and a person talking as a character. This can be done by writing "(as Character Name)" immediately after the name of the person who is talking.
- If a person or character is unnamed (or hasn't yet been introduced), a descriptive word or phrase such as "shopkeeper" or "mysterious voice" can be used instead of their name.
- Writing down the little stumbles, stutters, and other quirks that happen when people talk makes the transcripts more accurate and captures the feeling of real talking.

Additional Details:

- Use a "..." to indicate when someone pauses or trails off.
- Use a "—" to indicate when someone is cut off or suddenly changes the direction of what they are saying.
- If someone is reacting to someone talk by laughing, saying words like, "Yes," and "Absolutely," or making sounds like, "Mhm," those can be written like a regular dialogue line, but put in brackets in the same line as the talking they are responded to.
- Don't forget to credit the person or people who did the transcription (unless they want to be anonymous).

Transcript of Podcast Episode Title

Transcribed by Name

[Music and sound effect descriptions are in brackets on their own line.]

First name: What the person said.

First name (as Character): What the character said.

First name (as Brief Description of Unnamed Character): What the character said.

Brief Description of Unnamed Person: What the person said.

First name: [Expressive sounds like laughter, gasps, and sighs are written in brackets in the same line as the dialogue they go with.] Thing they said.

[Other important sounds, like dice rolling, group cheers, and sounds that are commented on are described in brackets on their own line.]

First name (as Character): Use a dash when someone changes— suddenly goes in a different direction with what they are saying. Dashes are also used when someone is cut off—

First name: Use an ellipsis to indicate when someone pauses... or trails off...

[Important room sounds like dice rolls are also written in brackets on their own line.]

First name: [Unusual ways of speaking, such as whispering, squealing, or talking in a silly voice are described in brackets right before the words that were said in that manner.] What the person said.

Break up long sections of talking into paragraphs, even if the same person is talking.

First name: What they said. [**First name of different person:** Different person's reaction word or sound.] The continuation of what the original person said.

First name: Writing down the little stumbles, stutters, and other quirks that happen when people talk makes the transcripts more accurate and captures the feeling of real talking.

Transcript of Writing Alchemy Episode 100 – Imaginary Game Part 1

Transcribed by Fay Onyx

[Bouncy theme music plays.]

Fay: Hello, and welcome to the Writing Alchemy Podcast! I'm Fay Onyx.

Chloe: [Squeals with joy.] I'm Chloe Williams!

Fay: [Whispers] Jasmine!

Jasmine: Uh... Oh, yeah! I'm Jasmine Diaz.

[The group laughs together.]

Chloe: Well, I'm especially excited to be here today because—

[Loud clunk.]

Chloe: Whoops! Good thing my, uh, water bottle was closed. So, back to what I was saying [mock anger] before my water bottle so rudely interrupted me!

[Fay and Jasmine both laugh.]

Chloe: Today is an extra special episode. [**Fay:** Mhm!] Today is the one hundredth episode of Writing Alchemy! Wohoo! Those of you who follow us on Twitter got to vote about this. And the result of the voting i-i-i-is that we are going to celebrate by playing our favorite bloopers.

We are going to start with my personal favorite. So, this one was where we were investigating the strange magical transformations that were happening in the sea. Diamond had just cast a water-breathing spell on all of us and we were diving down to investigate a mysterious cave near the kelp forest.

[Underwater sounds.]

Jasmine (as Diamond): It may feel like we're shrinking, but that is because everything has been magically enlarged.

Fay (as The Mysterious Echo): Feel like we're shrinking... Shrinking... Shrinking...

Chloe (as Celia): I think the voice is coming from behind one of those giant anemones—

[Laughter]

Chloe: Let me try that again. Amem— anem— anemomies— anemo— an— Oh, no!

[More laughter]

Fay: Anemones?

Chloe: [Laughing] Anemomomies!

[More laughter.]

[End of underwater sounds.]

Chloe: In my defense, anemone is officially a hard word to pronounce. It's— I looked it up and it's on the list of hard words.