

Recommendations

### 4.3. Accessibility for blind and partially sighted learners

**Visual content** (e.g., videos, images, diagrams, tables) can be made accessible to people with visual impairments through **Audio Description (AD)**.

**AD is a technique that provides spoken descriptions of key visual elements of a resource. It narrates details** such as actions, settings, facial expressions, and other important visual information, **ensuring a full understanding of the content.**

AD is mostly used by people with total blindness but also helps those with low vision. Besides, it is also useful for individuals whose first language is not the one used in the OER content, and it can assist those who want to follow a video or a lesson via audio for other reasons: lack of time, multitasking, etc.

The recommendations below will help you create an AD that is as tailored as possible to the needs of your students. Try to implement as many of them as possible in your work.

#### 4.3.1. Audio description for images

**Audio Description (AD) for images** is a spoken explanation of visual elements in an image, such as objects, people, colours, settings, and actions. It conveys essential details on the content and context of a visual resource to make it accessible to people with visual impairments (congenital or acquired) or low vision. It might not be functional to describe that e.g. a kid is wearing a red pullover, but providing those pieces of information enable students with visual impairments to create their own opinion and interact like the other learners.

LANGUAGE: CONTENT	RECOMMENDATION	EXAMPLE
RESOURCE	Indicate what type of resource is being described, such as photos, drawings, illustrations, diagrams, slides, or maps.	

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LANGUAGE: CONTENT	RECOMMENDATION	EXAMPLE
<b>PICTURE DESCRIPTION</b>	<p>Describe the most representative visual information, so the listener can understand the described image. Provide details of the image, clarifying the “when”, “where”, “who”, “what”, and “how” of each image.</p> <p>Describe additional information with vivid details. Provide information about the colours and tones of the image.</p>	
<b>CHARACTER DESCRIPTION</b>	<p>When describing people, include clearly recognizable attitudes and emotional states if they contribute to the understanding of the picture.</p>	<p><i>“The child on the left appears to be sad.”</i></p>
<b>ORDER</b>	<p>Describe the visual elements in a specific order: from top to bottom and from left to right, if the image allows it.</p>	
<b>WRITTEN TEXT AND SYMBOLS</b>	<p>Point out any text in the picture and read it out.</p>	
<b>NEUTRALITY</b>	<p>Stay neutral. Do not add personal opinions or interpretations.</p>	
<b>INCLUDE SOUNDS</b>	<p>Add music or sound effects to create a context or help identify the image before or during the AD.</p>	
<b>QUALITY CHECK</b>	<p>Ask someone with experience to review and correct the AD script to ensure quality. This reviewer could be a person with visual impairment.</p>	

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VOCABULARY & SENTENCES	RECOMMENDATION	EXAMPLE
<b>AGE-APPROPRIATE VOCABULARY</b>	Tailor vocabulary to match the age and comprehension level of the students.	Instead of “The child retrieves the book from the shelf,” you could say, “The boy picks up the book from the shelf.”
<b>VARY THE VOCABULARY</b>	Use a rich vocabulary with synonyms to avoid repetition, as long as it doesn’t cause confusion. The vocabulary should be suitable for the type of image and the young audience. Nevertheless, keep the simple language in mind.	
<b>NEW CONCEPTS AND TERMS</b>	If you use or introduce unfamiliar concepts or words, explain them in a simple way, embedded in context.	“The teacher points to the ‘volcano,’ a big mountain that can erupt with lava.”
<b>SPECIFIC VOCABULARY</b>	Avoid complex vocabulary or abstract concepts not suitable for the age of the students. Use specific words for objects and actions, and avoid vague descriptions or figurative language.	Avoid for example: “to fly into a rage”, or “to take on the world”.
<b>ANALOGIES AND METAPHORS</b>	Use analogies and metaphors with elements from the students' reality.	“The building's shape looks like a shoebox” or “The planet is round like a soccer ball”
<b>SENTENCE CONSTRUCTION</b>	Use short, clear sentences. Each sentence conveys one idea. Avoid overly complex sentences and subordination. Use active voice and direct action verbs.	
<b>TENSES</b>	Describe in the present tense to make the description easier to understand.	