

TIPS FOR AUDIO DESCRIPTION IN PRESENTATIONS

OVERVIEW – AUDIO DESCRIPTION

Audio Description (AD) in a live or recorded presentation is part of the natural narrative that describes the visual information on a slide or content being shown on screen. Audio descriptions increase accessibility of visual or screen-based content for people who are blind, visually impaired, or otherwise benefit from additional audio supports.

When all important visual information is described, it eliminates the need for an audio described version that is often times longer – and the description is not provided by the original content developers.

In order to be naturally descriptive during your presentation, you may want to verbally include names, text, graphics, charts, or graphs, as well as any additional relevant visual information. AD can also include places, objects, or use specific language to describe actions occurring on screen.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

- Accessibility
 - » Provide information for people who cannot see everything on the screen
 - » Meet learning preferences for auditory learners who retain information best through sound (20-30% of audience)
 - » Support language development for English learners
 - » Flexibility in attendance options – eyes-free environments

HOW TO INCLUDE AUDIO DESCRIPTION IN YOUR RECORDED PRESENTATION

- If you are using PowerPoint or similar slide presentation tool, be sure to include all essential information. Remember: People who are blind or have low vision may not be able to see the text on the slide. Providing descriptive language allows everyone to get the information.
 - » If you are using bullet points, make sure you naturally include the key information as you present.
- If you have visuals, pause in your presentation and describe them.
 - » Visuals include photographs, diagrams, drawings, graphs, and charts.

FAQ – AUDIO DESCRIPTION AND PRESENTATIONS

Does color need to be described?

Color should be included if it is relevant to the content. For example, if a chart is color coded, you may want to say the red area of the pie chart represents students with IEPs at 11%, the blue area shows students who have 504 Plans totaling 5%, etc. You can also use the [WebAIM Color Contrast Checker](#) to check for adequate contrast.

Should I describe pictures of people?

Pictures do not always need to be described. Pictures or photos should be described if they are presenting a new idea to support access to the content or if they are directly referenced in the video (“The picture shows....”).

Do I need to state logos of the organizations that appear on the slides?

Logos only need to be described on their first appearance. Often times the name or organization affiliated with the logo is sufficient (“Hi, I’m Rachel from OCALI.”)

How should I describe charts, diagrams, tables, and graphs?

Charts, diagrams, tables, and graphs often contain a lot of visual information that is not directly relevant to the content. The speaker should describe the highlighted areas of the charts or graphs that are being used to support the content. For more information on complex images, visit the [Poet Training Tool from the Diagram Center](#).

Should I include contact information?

Names and titles of presenters should be included at the beginning of the presentation and it is helpful to indicate who is speaking if there are multiple presenters (“Let’s turn it over to Rachel,” etc). Phone numbers and emails that are provided as contact information for a person or organization should be included in your audio.

Do I need to read out full URLs?

URLs as text on screen should not be included in videos; however when they are present they do not need to be included in audio description. URLs should be included as text on the webpage beneath the video as appropriate or within a resource document that is provided as a handout to attendees.

How should I cite my sources while I’m presenting?

Sources that appear as text on screen should be included naturally. You do not need to read a full APA citation.

Do I need to describe decorative images?

Decorative images do not need to be described.