

Adding audio description to a short video

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Teacher Sheet

Task

Your students will be given the following task.

You are going to create an audio description (AD) for a short YouTube video to be used by people with a visual disability.

To do so, you will first select the video you wish to describe, then prepare the text used for the audio description and add it using YouDescribe, a site providing AD videos for visually impaired people (<https://youdescribe.org/>). In doing so, you will contribute to their catalogue of AD videos.

Website

<https://youdescribe.org>

YouDescribe is a platform hosting audio description (AD) videos for people with visual disabilities who cannot see what is going on in a video. The AD videos are recorded by sighted volunteers and are sourced from YouTube.

The interface of the site is in English. AD videos are available in several languages including English, Spanish and German, but it can be adapted to any language.

CEFR level - For B1 level and above

Objectives

Digital citizenship and literacy

	Dimensions covered in task	(Potential) specific objectives
Digital citizenship	Ethical and responsible	<p>Developing social responsibility and inclusiveness towards visually impaired people.</p> <p>Selecting a video that is relevant, interesting and suitable for audio-description (no copyrights issues).</p> <p>Being able to assess and cater for the needs of others (visually impaired people).</p>
	Safe	Being aware of personal information to be shared on the account and the sharing of one's own voice to produce the AD video.
Technological literacy		Being able to use the technology to record an AD video.
Interaction literacy	Multimodal literacy	<p>'Translating' visual/video elements into words.</p> <p>Being aware of the audio-description style and requirements (language, terminology, technology).</p>

Main language activity

- Written production: preparing the script of the audio description.
- Oral production: Reading aloud the audio description.

Intercultural aspects

When creating the audio-description script, learners must reflect on the (inter)cultural elements which are essential to understand the context of the video.

Possible steps

- Before working on this task, learners could first complete the task 'What makes a good audio-description'. The task 'Adding audio description' builds on the previous reflective task. If not, learners first need to become familiar with what audio description is. A video such as [Audio Description in a Couple Minutes - YouTube](#) can be useful. They also have to reflect on what makes a good AD video and can review documents such as <https://youdescribe.org/support/describers>.
- The video to be audio described has to be selected (by the teacher or by learners depending on the context). This task is best performed in pairs or groups.
- The video has to be watched and the crucial elements to be included in the description have to be identified. This may include (inter)cultural elements which will have to be integrated in the description. Learners can identify elements to be further researched (vocabulary, cultural issues, etc.).
- The timing of the description has to be decided.
- To help with these steps, learners can develop a storyboard of the video, detailing the crucial elements to be described for each scene of the video.
- They can then write the script of the audio description, keeping in mind all the requirements mentioned before. Digital tools such as online dictionaries and grammar checkers can be used for the writing process.
- They can practise reading the description and if need be use text-to-speech technology to check pronunciation. They can also use peers to test the relevance of their audio description.
- Finally, they can record (using the technology provided on the site), edit and save their work, which will then be published on the site.

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Student Sheet

Task

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CEFR level - For B1 level and above

Objectives

Digital citizenship and literacy

While completing this task, you can:

- reflect on the needs of visually impaired people;
- think about how technology can open possibilities for people suffering from a handicap;
- reflect on the links between visual and spoken elements;

- think about the (inter)cultural elements which are present and need to be described to access meaning;
- think about the criteria for a good audio-description;
- learn to create audio-descriptions;
- learn to use tools to improve your writing or reading skills;
- be aware of the information you share online (including your voice).

Intercultural aspects

When creating the audio-description script, you must reflect on the (inter)cultural elements which are essential to understand the context of the video.

Hints

Keep in mind who you are addressing

You will first need to choose a video to offer as an audio description. You should ask yourself if this video can be of interest to others and make sure it can legally be used for this purpose. You can first check the catalogue of videos available on the site in the language you wish to post. You can browse the catalogue by language. You can also check the wish list (<https://youdescribe.org/wishlist>).

Once you have selected the video, you can then visit the site support page to learn how to create a good audio-description and to learn how to do it: <https://youdescribe.org/support/describers>.

In order to carry out this task, it can be useful to:

- listen to other audio descriptions on the site (you can carry out this task in several languages if you wish) and determine what makes a good audio-description;
- read the advice given on the support page <https://youdescribe.org/support/describers> and watch some of the videos provided to learn how to create audio descriptions: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLNjrbl_nyy9uzywoJfyDRoeKA1SaIEFJ7.

All this information will help you to find out how to record and provide some useful tips on how best to make it work and take the audience into consideration. You can also work with others in your group to test your audio description. They can listen to it and then watch the video and give feedback on your work.

Work on the language-related aspects

You need to decide what aspects of the video you are going to describe. You need to be concise and precise.

You can use online dictionaries to find the best words for the context. In English, you can use sites such as <https://www.wordtune.com/> to help you. You can also use online spell checkers to check your script.

Once you have the script of your text, you should practise reading it aloud. If you are unsure about the pronunciation of a word, you can use Forvo, the multilingual pronunciation dictionary: <https://forvo.com/>.

If you want to hear a couple of sentences, you can use text to speech technology. You can copy and paste an excerpt from your text and hear it. Here are a few suggestions of text-to-speech technology sites: TTS Reader: <https://ttsreader.com/>, Natural readers: <https://www.naturalreaders.com/online/>, From speech to text <http://www.fromtexttospeech.com/>.

For you to think about

While completing this task, you can reflect on the following:

- Have you ever considered how technology can help visually impaired people to access information and content? Is it important to contribute to the catalogue of audio-descriptions?
- Have you ever thought about copyright issues before using or adapting videos online?
- What makes a good AD video? What qualities does your recording need to have to be good for visually impaired people? What are the elements you should include, and which ones can you leave out?
- In which language(s) are you recording your audio-description? Are you satisfied with your production? What are the challenges for you to produce an audio description in that language?
- What tools can you use to improve your ability to read out loud? Which ones can you adopt for other activities, such as presentations or public speech?