



### **Frequently Asked Questions about Audio Description for Theater, Performance, and Video**

#### **What is audio description?**

Audio description involves using spoken words to describe the visual images of theater, television, movies, and other art forms for people who are blind or have low vision.

#### **How do people hear audio description?**

In theatrical venues, listeners use an earphone or headphones to hear the audio description, which is usually being provided live by a trained audio describer who is physically present in the theater or other performance space.

#### **Does audio description replace the narration and dialogue of a performance?**

No. Concise, objective descriptions of settings, costumes, body language, etc. are inserted between portions of dialogue or songs.

#### **How does audio description work for movies or television?**

Usually the audio description is prerecorded and synced to the movie soundtrack. For television, the audio description is delivered along with the existing audio via an alternate audio track, usually noted as the Second Audio Program (SAP) channel on the remote control. It is also used to transmit an audio track in another language (such as Spanish).

#### **Is audio description the same as verbal description?**

Some people use the terms interchangeably. Others reserve verbal description to describe the live or recorded description of objects in museum exhibits or on websites. Other phrases include “audio narration,” “narrative description,” “video description,” “narrative audio,” etc. “Audio description” is generally accepted as the most appropriate/overarching phrase to use.

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### Where can I learn more about audio description?

1. From this book, [The Visual Made Verbal: A Comprehensive Training Manual and Guide to the History and Applications of Audio Description](#) by Joel Snyder, published by the American Council of the Blind in 2014.
2. At these sites:
  - [The Audio Description Project](#)  
An Initiative of the American Council of the Blind
  - [The Audio Description Coalition](#)
  - [Audio Description Associates](#)