



Open Captions and Audio Description

Open Captions

Open captions are burned into the film and cannot be switched on or off. They look similar to subtitles but are different in two important aspects:

- They include a description of sounds in the film as well as the things people are saying
- The complexity and pace of the flow of information they are describing, may mean that sometimes things need to be summarised (this can also happen with subtitles)
- Open captions that are well written should reference Deaf culture

Open captions are different from closed captions in that closed captions can be switched off.



Open Captions

Audio Description

Audio description introduces a new voice into the sound track of a film. This voice describes what can be seen in the film when characters, or sounds important to the story, are not being heard. In order for the voice to be clear the volume of the

soundtrack of the films is lowered slightly when the voice is speaking. Typically, the voice is neutral in tone to allow the listener to use their own imagination.

Wide Angle Film Festival audio description comes through the speakers when the media file is playing and cannot be turned off. Usually audio description in a cinema comes through a device worn by the listener. On a DVD or Blue Ray the audio description switches off and on.

New Uses

Interestingly there is more demand for audio description than ever before. One reason for this is that more uses are being found for them. Here are some:

- Some people living with autism, who find it hard to read people's reactions, find the audio description useful to indicate characters' reactions
- People for whom English is a second language can find audio description useful