The W-ICAD model:
notes for practitioners

Alison F. Eardley1, Lindsay Bywood1, Hannah Thompson2, Vanessa E. Jones3 and Deborah Husbands1

1School of Social Sciences, University of Westminster, London, UK
2Department of Languages, Literature and Cultures, Royal Holloway, University of London, UK
3 National Portrait Gallery, Washington DC, USA

Contents

[**Running a W-ICAD session** 2](#_Toc182841698)

[Part 1: Summary of Sessions 3](#_Toc182841699)

[Part 2: Instructions for co-creators (bullet version) 5](#_Toc182841700)

[Part 3: Example ‘script’ for facilitators with notes 8](#_Toc182841701)

[**Turning conversation into museum AD** 15](#_Toc182841702)

[Positionality 15](#_Toc182841703)

[First impressions 15](#_Toc182841704)

[Telling a story 16](#_Toc182841705)

[Not creating a ‘mental image’ 16](#_Toc182841706)

[Guiding attention 17](#_Toc182841707)

[Spoken language, not written word 18](#_Toc182841708)

[Reducing visual terms 18](#_Toc182841709)

[Rich multisensory description 18](#_Toc182841710)

[You, we or I? 19](#_Toc182841711)

[When ‘experience’ clashes with ‘fact’ 19](#_Toc182841712)

# **Running a W-ICAD session**

This document is designed to be used in conjunction with the W-ICAD online training course. This document provides detailed information for facilitators about running a W-ICAD session. There are four sections:

Section 1 provides a summary of the W-ICAD sessions (link to section 1 [here](#Part_1)).

Section 2 provides a bulleted summary of the instructions for participants, taking part in a W-ICAD session (link to section 2 here).

Section 3 includes an example script for a W-ICAD session (link to section 3 [here](#Part_3).

Section 4 includes suggested timetables (link to section 4 [here](#Part_4)).

NOTE: these example instructions are based on a W-ICAD session describing one collection item. If you are describing more, you do not need to repeat the instructions, but you will repeat the sessions.

All sessions can be run by the facilitator, though different people can be brought in for the context sessions if appropriate.

If AD is to be generated after the session then it will be necessary either to have a scribe (with fast typing skills to try and capture as much verbatim as possible) or speech-to-text software, or a recording that can be transcribed afterwards.

### Part 1: Summary of Sessions

Introduction to the day, introduction of all those participating

A general introduction. Institutional housekeeping. Everyone introduces themselves (including self-descriptions and a brief description of the room). Facilitator gives general introduction to the day, including timetable.

*Question and Suggestion*

This is the main co-creation session. Starting with one participant - usually one who is partially blind - the attendees are asked to describe their experience of the artwork or object, beginning with what first attracts their attention. The group is encouraged to ask one another questions and to discuss their individual impressions and experiences. The conversation should grow organically and usually the facilitator is only minimally involved, if at all. If necessary, tombstone or label information can be given after all the participants have done their initial description of what first attracts their attention and when there is a lull.

*Context session*

This is an opportunity to answer any questions about the object or artefact that have come up in the earlier session - when you should politely decline to answer and explain that the information will come later. It’s also the place to give the information that you might typically find in an audio or written guide.

*Facilitator follow-up questions*

This is an opportunity to ask more directed questions of the group to fill in any gaps from the morning. We have suggested some questions, but there is no need to ask them all if you already feel you have enough information from the earlier session.

*Wrap-up*

Get impressions of the day. Share any information about follow-up if necessary - will you be using the AD? Will the group get to hear it before it is made public? Get feedback and allow everyone to be heard. Say goodbye.

### Part 2: Instructions for co-creators (bullet version)

[these bullets are designed to act as prompts for the facilitator when explaining the workshop to the co-creators]

(15 minutes before start) – arrival and coffee

#### **00:00 START; introduction to the day; introduction of all the participants (15 mins)**

* Welcome to the W-ICAD workshop!
* Introductions and visual descriptions; brief visual description of the room
* Background to WICAD model
* Interested in your experience as a group, based on describing through conversation
* Why this is different to standard AD

Traditional AD is sighted people describing for blind people
BUT AD is good for sighted people AND blind people
(vision is not as effective as we assume)
Problem with the idea of vision being ‘objective’

* No ‘right’ way to experience anything
* We all bring our opinions, our memories, our perspectives, our imaginations.
* That is what we are interested in!

**So, your unique experience as a group is what is important, because you will bring your own perspectives and ideas, and life experience**

* What we will ask you (co-creators) to do:
* Have a conversation and describe the object/artwork/space
* Three sessions: Question and Suggestion; Context, Some additional questions
* We will record the conversation (so we can create AD from it)

#### **00:15 Instructions before you (co-creators) start Question and Suggestion session (5 mins)**

* Key points:
	+ Describing based on your own personal experiences
	+ We will start with X person (person who is partially blind). You will describe your first impressions
	+ Then either X person can ask questions, or the group can ask X person questions
	+ You can then each describe your first impressions, and then think about what you notice next or what questions come out of what is being discussed
* Things to keep in mind:
	+ Describe colour beyond simple colour terms (compare it to something from a different sense e.g. twilight blue; fiery red colour; terracotta orange)
	+ As well as description, share your thoughts, feelings, any memories that come to mind, suggestions about what things might mean
	+ Try to describe size in relation to an object or thing in the real world
	+ Try to use all of your senses when you are describing, think about what you are describing in relation to smell, touch, sound, taste, movement, or other physical sensations
* Remember:
	+ There is no right or wrong way to experience (and therefore to describe)
	+ It is okay to have different opinions
	+ Your personal experiences, memories, ideas, suggestions can enrich the experience for others

#### **00:20 Question and Suggestion (50 mins)**

**IMPORTANT NOTES FOR FACILITATORS for Q&S**

* + - There are some example prompts in the script [here](#_00:15_–_Introduction).
		- You CAN repeat questions to try to dig for more description.
		- You SHOULD try to make sure they are describing, and not just ‘naming’.
		- IF something is easily recognisable through vision, make sure that it is named early for blind and partially blind members (who may not recognise it).
		- If nobody in the group recognises it, try to encourage them to explore through description (do not tell them before the context section).
		- If your blind participants do not have perceptual access to what is being described (e.g. no or limited usable vision) then start drawing in the narrative a little earlier, so they can respond to that, in addition to the description.
		- Do NOT ask people who have no usable vision to visually describe something. Instead, if they are not already asking questions of the group, prompt them by asking if there is any information they would like to know about the item, or if they have any questions
		- If it is possible to handle the primary item that is being described, then start with the totally blind participant.
		- If you have additional interpretation elements like touch, sound, smell in relation to what is being described, you can (should) ask participants to experience those AND describe them.

[Suggest a comfort break of 10 mins here]

#### **01:20 Context session (15 mins)Information for facilitator**

* Create written notes about the item in advance. Make sure they include any factual information you want to share, and a narrative around what is being described. This context/background information should be the types of things you would normally share with visitors to help them to engage with the item.
* Read out the information (or just talk, if you know it well enough).
* A curator can come in to do this session, if that works for you.

**01:35 Follow-up questions (20 mins)**
**Information for facilitator**

* This session enables you to make sure you have EVERYTHING you need to be able to create the description from the transcript. See [here](#_01:35_–_Follow-up) for some example questions. Remember you can ask the same question again, if they are struggling to answer it (which is common, description is hard). If they haven’t already, then ask them to:
	+ Draw on other senses to describe (sound, smell, taste, movement etc.)
	+ Compare size to physical objects
	+ Talk about any emotional response
	+ Think about how it is made/finished – does it tell you anything (e.g. functional, or very carefully finished etc/ brush strokes for art etc.)
	+ What it might mean to them/make them think of
	+ Any memories that come to mind
	+ How they would structure the AD (where would they start, what might come next)
* Make sure things you want described have been discussed
* Make sure they have given detailed descriptions

#### **01.55 Wrap up**

#### **02.00 END**

### Part 3: Example ‘script’ for facilitators with notes

(15 minutes before start) – arrival and coffee

#### **00:00 Start**

Okay, so let’s get on to the workshop. As you know, today is about exploring an artwork/object(s) as a small group, and about describing it to each other. We just want to make a few key points.

Firstly, we are really interested in how you are experiencing the object(s), through the information that is available to you. It doesn’t matter if you have little or no experience of museums or museum collections, or if you have come with a lot of experience or knowledge.

Audio descriptions/verbal descriptions have typically described visual information for people who are blind or partially blind, to provide access to museum collections that are displayed visually. However, today, we are using audio description to describe the experience, which can be thoughts, perceptual experiences, emotions, physical movement – anything that goes into how you as individuals, or together as a group, explore and experience the object(s)/artwork.

Museums recognise that each person will bring their own experiences and interpretations to artworks/objects/museum collections, and that there is never one way of experiencing. As such, there is never one ‘right’ way to experience anything. We all have different perceptions, memories, histories and personalities and that can mean that we can find new ways of experiencing and understanding from listening to each other.

The choices that people make when they describe an object, and the information they chose to include is always about opinion.

**ART:** This means that even the artist can’t say how a work of art ‘should’ be experienced, although they can provide a perspective on the ways in which it can be described or experienced.

**OBJECT:** This means that even the museum professionals can’t say how an object ‘should’ be experienced, or know everything there is to know about that object. They can only provide their perspective on the ways in which it can be described or experienced.

**So, your unique experience as a group is what is important, because you will bring your own perspectives and ideas, and life experience.**

So, what we are going to do is to ask you to describe an artwork/object(s). We will ask you to start describing without any background information about what it is. This is because sometimes, knowing information about a thing can change the way in which we experience it or describe it. This can be helpful or unhelpful. Sometimes, it means we experience something differently because we use that background understanding to make assumptions about something. It can also become harder to describe because we assume that other people will understand something in the same way we do because they have the same information we have. So, for this process, we will ask you to explore and describe, and then we will give you some of the background information, and we will ask you when you think we should work that information into the final description. Whatever and however you decide to describe the item/object we give/show you, it will be a description by blind, partially blind and sighted people FOR blind, partially blind, and sighted people.

We are going to ask you to explore X artworks/objects/rooms today.

We will record the conversation, so we don’t have to try to remember. The recording will only be used to generate the description and be deleted afterwards.

OR We are going to be taking detailed notes on the conversation, so that we can capture your words to be used in the final description.

ONE OBJECT/ARTWORK:

There will be three sessions. The first we call Question and Suggestion (to acknowledge there are no right or wrong answers). You will explore the object/artwork together, discussing it in a relaxed and conversational way. We will give you some background information on the object/artwork. Then we will ask you a few more questions, just to make sure we have all of the information we need to put it together into a description.

MORE THAN ONE OBJECT/ARTWORK:

You are going to explore 2/3 objects today. For each object, there will be three mini sessions. The first is called Question and Suggestion session (to acknowledge there are no right or wrong answers), you will explore the object/artwork together, discussing it in a relaxed and conversational way. We will give you some background information on the object/artwork. Then we will ask you a few more questions, just to make sure we have all of the information we need to put it together into a description. We will repeat that for each object/artwork.

#### **00:15 – Introduction to Question and Suggestion**

In this first session, which is called Question and Suggestion, we would like [name of partially blind participant] to start describing your experience of the object/artwork. The best place to start is what first grabbed your attention. Describe your experience, and then either you can ask questions, or the group can ask you questions, or it can be a bit of both! At this point, other members of the group might want to add in suggestions, opinions, or their own descriptions about what they are experiencing.

**(NOTE to facilitator: IF the artwork/object is likely to be immediately recognisable for most people, you should mention what the object/artwork is (for artwork, title and painter) AFTER the group have described their first impressions. This can be done when there is a pause in the conversation.)**

After you have all explored your first experiences and thoughts or questions, you will then be able to repeat this Question and Suggestion process as you consider the artwork/object. Describe where your attention is drawn next. In your conversations, you can also think about whether you have any connection to it.

* It might be emotional
* It might remind you of something,
* You might feel quite disconnected from it.

Remember, there is no one right way to explore the object/artwork, just follow the path that grabs your attention, and describe and discuss it, and don’t worry about trying to discuss all possible details. As a group, you might disagree, and that’s OK.

There are some things we would like you to think about as you describe:

* **What does it sound like/smell like/feel like,** if it is possible to get direct sensory experience beyond the visual?
* **How you might describe things by drawing on ideas from other senses.** So, for example, if you are describing a colour, try to include either an object (so, for example, terracotta orange instead of browny-orange), or perhaps something that you might be able to feel (like twilight blue; a soft peach-coloured skin). Or can you imagine dampness in sea mist, or could you imagine the smell of a forest, if there are many trees close together. Is there any movement in the scene that could be described (or is there a stillness)?
* **Can you describe size by comparing it to a physical object?** so saying something is like the palm of a hand, or saying something is as tall as two adults.
* **Do you experience any emotions with the object? Or do you perceive any emotions in it** (NOTE: more relevant for some things than others). If people disagree, that is totally fine; different ideas can be helpful for listeners.
* **Does the way it has been made communicate anything?**
* **Can you interpret any meaning from it?**
* **Can you imagine the person who made it?** (NOTE: Only relevant for some things)
* **IF IN GALLERY:** What space is it in? Does that add anything to what we might think about the object/artwork?
* **Do any personal memories come to mind**? As a response to what you are experiencing, or in response to things that the other group members have said, thought or felt about the object/artwork?

#### **01:05 – COMFORT BREAK (if needed)**

#### **01:15 - Context – discussion with the curator**

**(NOTE: EITHER discussion with curator OR read out a pre-prepared summary of information about the object/artwork; Doesn’t have to be long, feel free to use information from your website/on the label/ in a standard audio guide)**

I am now going to give you a little bit of background or context about the object/artwork. We have this written down so don’t worry about remembering it all, just enjoy listening, and do feel free to ask questions at any point.

(Can ask if they have questions, or what they think, or any thoughts that come to mind after hearing the background information)

#### **01:35 – Follow-up questions**

In this session, we are going to ask you for some further thoughts so that we have all the information we need to put together the audio description.

**NOTE TO FACILITATORS: GOALS for this session are to**

* Know how the co-creators would structure the description, what they would start with, what would come next; etc. (what is the narrative journey)
* Make sure that you have the personal ‘subjective’ memories/meanings/interpretations.
* Makes sure that you have multisensory descriptions (in particular in relation to colour); and some understanding of size.
* Find out when the co-creators would prefer the context to be introduced into the audio description.
* Make sure all of the bits you would like described have been described! (DON’T be afraid to ask the same question more than once, if they are struggling to describe something).

We are going to use all the notes that we made in the earlier session, but we also have some questions we would like you to think about. Some of these questions will ask you to think about various aspects in a little more detail. Some of the other questions we will have covered well in the first session, so we can go through those ones quickly, but we will ask them just in case any more ideas or thoughts come to mind.

**FOR FACILITATORS: Some example questions are**

* + We know what first grabbed [PB person’s name]’s attention but for the rest of you, was it the same thing, something different?
	+ Where does your attention want to go next? What is the journey you would take through the object/artwork? Which bits would you describe in which order?
	+ Did you have any thoughts about the object/artwork?
	Things it reminds you of? Any thoughts on the background information that we shared? Any memories, or associations? Any of your own similar experiences?
	+ What did you feel about the object/artwork?
		- Maybe there was something you particularly liked? Or anything you thought was beautiful? Or anything that you did not like or even hated? Or anything that you felt was problematic? Or any other emotions that you experienced in response to it?
	+ In thinking about these descriptions you all gave, we would like to enrich them with imagery from many senses. Are there any aspects of the artwork/object you think could be described in relation to smells, sounds, textures or possibly even tastes?
	+ When thinking about colours, we would like you to try to think about how you would describe the colours using non-colour terms, so for example, you might think about sunflower yellow, or terracotta orange. You might also want to think about things the colours remind you of in terms of memories, like the chestnut brown of a conkers just out of their seed pods that you collected as a child, or the dirty grey of the water on a muddy beach. How would you describe the colours?
	+ Thinking about the background information, are there any bits you would really like to hear interwoven with the description? Or would you prefer to hear all of it at the end? If there are bits you would like to hear worked in to the description (rather than waiting until the end), what would those be? Any thoughts of where?

#### **01:55 – Round-up session**

THANK YOU! So, how was that? How did you think it went? Did you enjoy it? (Remember to allow space for discussion here and also negative impressions and feedback).

#### **02:00 – END**Part 4: Suggested Timetable

Approximate timings for different numbers of objects/artworks/rooms.

**ONE Object**

9.45am arrival and coffee

10am – start; introduction to the day; introduction of the participants

10.15am – introduction to Question and Suggestion

10.20am – Question and Suggestion session

11.10am – Comfort break

11.20am – Context – discussion with the curator

11.35am – Follow-up questions

12.00 – End of session/wrap-up

**TWO Objects**

9.45am – arrival and coffee

10am – Start; introduction to the day; introduction of all participants

10.15am – Introduction to Question and Suggestion

10.20am – Object 1 Q&S session

10.45am – Object 1 Context – discussion with the curator/ Follow-up questions

11.05am – Comfort break

11.15am – Object 2 Q&S session

11.40am - Object 2 Context – discussion with the curator/ Follow-up questions

12.00pm – End of session/wrap-up

**THREE Objects**

9.45am – Arrival and coffee

10am – Start; introduction to the day; introduction of all participants

10.15am – Introduction to Question and Suggestion

10.20am – Object 1 Q&S session

10.35am – Object 1 Context – discussion with the curator/ Follow-up questions

10.50am – Comfort break

11.00am – Object 2 Q&S session

11.15am - Object 2 Context – discussion with the curator/ Follow-up questions

11.30am – Object 3 Q&S session

11.45am - Object 3 Context – discussion with the curator/ Follow-up questions

12.00pm – End of session/wrap-up

# **Turning conversation into museum AD**

Once the W-ICAD session is over, and you have the transcript or the scribed notes from the session, you will be able to start thinking about creating your audio descriptive interpretation.

Depending on the collection item, you may have a transcript based on over an hour of discussion, or you may have a series of shorter transcripts. You will have the Question and Suggestion session, the context session and the facilitator follow-up questions. The starting point for the audio description is always the first impression.

Before you get started, it is important to think about your own positionality.

### Positionality

Positionality describes both our identities and our background and considers the ways in which these impact on our thoughts, our ideas, our preferences, our choices, and our ways of being. As individuals, we all have multiple different identities. In W-ICAD we encourage our co-creators to bring their whole selves to the description process, including their memories and their lived experience. We also encourage those who write the final AD to consider how their own positionality might impact on what they expect or choices that they make when they put together the audio descriptions, as a way of trying to challenge biases and privileges. If you haven’t already, have a think about your different lived experiences and how those might influence who you are, the way in which you experience museums, and the assumptions you might make about what makes a good AD. When writing the AD, be aware that you might need to challenge some of your expectations, in order to accurately communicate the experience of the group. For more information, please see module 6 in the W-ICAD course.

### First impressions

The first impression is what grabbed attention first. What did your co-creators notice? You ideally want to start with a few sentences that capture those first experiences.

The W-ICAD model was based on working with co-creators who were blind, partially blind and sighted. If your group mirrors this, ideally start with the partially blind or blind co-creator’s experience. However, in some groups, you may find that neither the blind nor partially blind co-creators have any direct perceptual experience of the object, in which case you will need to start with the sighted person. If you are working with other groups, then there may be a different perspective or lived experience that it is important to prioritise.

The first impression shouldn’t describe the item in its entirety: just one aspect, one ‘glimpse’ of attention, whatever that is. This is designed to be similar to a sighted person’s experience of walking into a gallery or room and seeing something for the first time. Visual attention will generally be grabbed by an aspect or a feature, before any background information is given about the collection.

### Telling a story

Your co-creation group will have gone on a journey together, as they build their experience of the item through conversation. The goal of a W-ICAD AD is to tell the story of that shared experience. The group conversation will have a flow, and together they will build a narrative about the item. That narrative is not always linear. Your goal when creating the AD is to communicate the story of discovery and engagement that the co-creation groups went on. However, in order for the AD to be coherent, the narrative needs to have some direction. You need to take the group discussion and consider how that narrative will guide attention around the item or items that are being explored.

Within the follow-up questions, you will have asked the group about the journey they would like the description to take. Some groups struggle to answer this. You will also have asked them how they want to weave in context or background information. Again, some groups will find that an easier question to answer than others.

After the first impressions, your role is to try to determine the narrative, based on the information that you have from the co-creators. You may be able to do this by selecting the richest and most evocative descriptive elements and following the journey of description that the co-creators have taken. However, in other cases, you may need to think about a journey of discovery through the object that is more linear.

### Not creating a ‘mental image’

Before we talk about guiding attention, it is important to clarify what W-ICAD is not doing. Within traditional museum Audio Description, one of the goals of describing has often been to create a mental image in the mind of the listener. However, we believe that this is a reductive and sometimes ableist objective (whilst also acknowledging that some listeners enjoy this type of AD).

Our reason for rejecting AD as a ‘mental image’ is because it sits intertwined with the traditional view of AD as a ‘visual to verbal’ translation; it assumes that the purpose is to communicate visual information through words to be replicated as an image in someone’s mind.

This is potentially problematic on a number of levels:

1. It assumes that the beholder wants to create a ‘replica’ image in their mind (this is cognitively an effortful and challenging thing to do)
2. It assumes that the beholder can create that mental image. Researchers have now confirmed that some people have no conscious experience of mental imagery (an experience known as aphantasia), and of those that do, the vividness of images experienced vary.
3. We have already discussed that each individual experience is subjective; and so an image in someone’s mind, created through description alone, is highly unlikely to be a close replica of the visual experience.
4. Most often, it misses out the most important impacts of the experience (which might be something like wonder, awe, disgust, fascination, or other emotional or cognitive reactions).

### Guiding attention

One of the benefits of AD, different from a standard audio guide, is that it can guide the attention of the listener through the narrative journey. As we have said, this is different from the seeking to create a mental image in the mind’s eye.

When seeking to build a mental image, guidelines for AD generation will often stipulate moving in a logical, sequential order around the item that is being described. They will include the requirement not to jump around. These are not requirements of W-ICAD AD.

With W-ICAD AD, you will start with the first impressions. From there, you will consider what came next in the group’s voyage of discovery. These aspects may be directly linked as elements within an object or artwork, or they may ‘jump around’. The key requirement is that you create a pathway for attention, so people know where and how to focus. That focus may be physical – a gaze, or a hand movement, or a physical movement – or it may be about hearing the words and representing it in one’s mind (with or without imagery).

It is likely you will need to include some linking phrases or description that the co-creators may not have made explicit. This could be describing the process of the group. Using spatial location can help, so for example – describing moving physically closer to an object, or describing whether hands move up or down, or describing moving attention from a feature in the centre to the top left corner (as an example).

 Here are four examples:

**‘Getting close to him, it becomes clear that as he holds the flower with his left hand,** and his fingers are facing towards us…’

‘**Looking down the torso to the other hand, seeking the other hand**, perhaps it is by his side? Maybe in his pocket, we can’t find it at first. We then find it, at his right side’.

‘**We focus back onto the light in the painting that is hitting the little girl on the left**. Behind her there may be a rainbow…’

‘[previously talking about her hands] Her skin is porcelain. **Moving up to her face, getting closer**, she has plump lips, morello cherry red...’

Identifying an overall journey or narrative through the description will be easier with some transcripts, compared to others. However, a single unified linear path is not necessary (unless that is the experience that your co-creation group had). In our experience, your co-creators may include more of their own linking information when collection items are experienced in a purely visual way, and when you have a large amount of information from the group (although then making choices about which bits of description you keep, and which bits you lose, can be difficult). We have found that when you have smaller items that can be touched, description builds in a more turn-taking way, as people feel and describe an object, and then hand it on to the next person.

### Spoken language, not written word

AD is traditionally a written piece that is read. Done well, it is written in a way that can be listened to; however, conversation is often more fluid, less precise, often spoken in partial sentences. Conversations are also often easier to understand than a piece of written work read out loud. Within W-ICAD we have tried to preserve the spoken words of the co-creators; in some instances, this has included preserving co-creators' comments that are grammatically incorrect, as long as the resulting text remains understandable.

### Reducing visual terms

Terms like ‘see’ and ‘look’ are often used in ways that do not directly refer to a visual experience (e.g. ‘I saw my friend today’ most often does not mean that you simply physically caught sight of them, but rather that you met them and spent time with them). However, within the W-ICAD descriptions, we would suggest that you try to minimise the visual language (even where it is used by your participants). For example, not saying things like ‘looking at the flower, we wonder…’, or ‘we see…’. This might mean editing the expressions used by the co-creators.

### Rich multisensory description

Where possible, we would encourage the use of rich multisensory description. This is different from reproducing a mental representation. Multisensory description, like multisensory experience, can enrich the connections made with an item, which can enhance memorability. Sometimes this description comes through prompting at the first point the group reaches the particular thing they are describing. Sometimes it comes through discovery, as they re-experience a particular part of the object through discussion. Sometimes it will come through the follow-up questions. Once you have decided your narrative structure, if you need to re-position aspects of description to fit the structure, that is absolutely fine.

### You, we or I?

In our audio descriptions, we have (mostly) opted to use ‘we’. For example, ‘To the left of his hand, we find a flower’, rather than ‘To the left of the hand, you find a flower’. This is because we wanted to explicitly describe the subjective experience of the group, to embrace that subjectivity, and to own the fact that it is the perspective of the co-creators (which at this stage, includes the person writing the AD). Using ‘you’ makes assumptions about the experience of the person or people you are describing for. The question of ‘I’ is more complicated. The way in which these ADs are created means that the group becomes one voice. Within the transcripts, speakers are not generally named, and it is therefore very difficult to know consistently which thoughts or opinions belong to which individual.

 There could be a benefit to being able to include individual ‘I’ voices, to somehow replicate that conversation experience. If it is possible in your workflow to have different voices record the AD, that is something you might want to think about.

In W-ICAD, we have explored various ways of trying to co-create the final AD. Writing the AD as a group did not work nor did asking individual co-creators to write their own AD (see our open-access article Eardley, Jones, Bywood, Thompson, Husbands, 2025 for more details, <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/share/E59UDXFCM2ZTD3QC2TCW?target=10.1111/cura.12649> ). However, we have had some success with group editing once the initial AD draft has been produced.

So, we have settled on the ‘we’ voice. Going back to co-creator groups and asking them to read the AD draft before it is finalised would be a positive way of ensuring that they feel like they are present within that ‘we’. We did not do this in our projects because of time pressure.

### When ‘experience’ clashes with ‘fact’

The core purpose of the W-ICAD AD is to share the journey through the collection item that the co-creation group have gone on. We tell the groups that there is no one right way to experience something. There is no one way to explore, and no one way to describe. In other parts of the course we have talked about context information, about ‘truth’ and about ‘fact’. We have explicitly taken the decision that where co-creators describe something in a way that might be inaccurate, if it is background information, or if it is not central to the nature of the experience, then that inaccuracy should be preserved within the AD. This is because firstly, interpretation and ‘fact’ can sometimes change, as understanding and opinions change. Secondly, co-creators are describing their experiences. As discussed elsewhere in the course, this is something that will be a decision for you and your institution.