

Creating Accessible Content

Quick Guide for Educators & Content Creators

Why Accessibility Matters

- **Equity:** Every student deserves full access to learning.
- **Legal Compliance:** Meet ADA & Section 504 standards.
- **Better Outcomes:** Students who can access materials independently succeed more.
- **Professional Quality:** Accessible resources reflect excellence and thoughtfulness.

Common Barriers to Avoid

- ✗ Screenshots of text or tables (screen readers can't read them)
- ✗ Locked or scanned PDFs
- ✗ Color-only information
- ✗ Complex, multi-column layouts

Easy Fixes & Best Practices

- Use Text-Based Files.** Word, Google Docs, PowerPoint—no images of text.
- Organize with Headings & Lists.** Headings (H1, H2) make navigation easier. Use bullets or numbered lists instead of screenshots of lists.
- Add Alt Text to Images.** Briefly describe graphs, charts, or decorative images. Convey essential information, not just “image of chart.”
- Ensure High Contrast & Clarity.** Dark text on light background (or vice versa). Don't rely on color alone to convey meaning.
- Accessible PDFs Only.** Use **tagged PDFs** readable by screen readers. Avoid locking or password-protecting in ways that block access.
- Offer Multiple Formats.** Provide Word/Google Doc versions alongside PDFs. Optional: audio or large-print versions for students with low vision.
- Test Your Materials.** Tools: WAVE Accessibility Checker, Adobe Acrobat Accessibility Checker. Ask a colleague or student using assistive technology to try your materials.

Fix for Existing Content

- Convert scanned PDFs using OCR.
- Replace screenshots with editable text.
- Add alt text to all images and charts.
- Reformat multi-column layouts into single-column for easier reading.

✓ **Bottom Line:** Accessible content is not optional, it's essential. Small adjustments make a huge difference and show commitment to inclusion.