Make It Accessible

A Course on Increasing 508 Compliance in Our Schools

Overview

- Foundation and Basic Principles of 508 Compliance
- Introduction to Upcoming Canvas Course

Module 1: Introduction

Foundations and Basic Principles

Topics Covered in this Module

- Foundations
  - Definition
  - Fundamental Principles
- Accessibility In Action
  - Examples
  - Common Barriers
- Implementing 508
  - Planning
  - Basic Elements
- Tutorial
  - Compliant PowerPoints

Learner Objectives

- Define what 508 is and why it is important
- Identify basic 508 principles, guidelines, and criteria
- Assess content for 508 compliance
- Create and revise content to meet 508 compliance best practices

Success Criteria

- Can explain what 508 is and why it is important
- Can identify the basic 508 principles, guidelines, and criteria
- Can evaluate content to see if it meets 508 compliance
- Can create compliant PowerPoint presentations

Foundations

What is 508 Compliance

508 Compliance Statutes and Laws

Rehabilitation Act of 1973

- Requires access to programs and activities that are funded by Federal agencies and to Federal employment
- You might be more familiar with Section 504 (504 plan). This is a part of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

- Requires agencies to ensure information and communication technology is accessible to people with disabilities

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Definition

- 508 Compliance:
  - Is a Section of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
  - Refers to digital materials, software, and hardware
  - Requires digital materials meet accessibility standards
  - Ensures equal access by conforming to the intention of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Requirements

- Section 508 requires federal agencies' information and technology communication (ICT) be accessible to individuals with disabilities
  - ICT includes websites, multimedia, documents, etc.
  - 508 extends to federal and state funded programs through other laws and state policies
- Section 508 requires that ICT comply with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)

Compliance

- Web Content Accessibility Guidelines
    - Published by the Web Accessibility Initiative of the World Wide Web Consortium
        - Main international standards organization for the Internet
    - Developed to help content creators meet requirements
    - Outlines several layers of guidance:
        - Four Fundamental Principles
        - 12 Guidelines
        - 78 Success Criteria
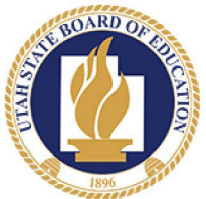
Four Fundamental Principles

- The first layer are the four fundamental principles are:
  - **Perceivable**—Users can identify content through (some of) their senses, i.e., sight, hearing, or touch
  - **Operable**—Users can manipulate and control interactive elements; content is compatible with keyboards, voice control, mice, etc.
  - **Understandable**—Users can predict, navigate, and comprehend the content
  - **Robust**—Content can be interpreted and accessed by a wide-range of users across various browsers, assistive technologies, mobile devices, etc.
- Referred to as **POUR**

Guidelines and Criteria

- **12 Guidelines** support POUR principles
  - More concrete, but aren't testable or measurable
- **78 Success Criteria** tests guidelines.
- Criteria can be met on **3 conformance levels**:
  - **Level A: The Baseline**—Fulfills the basic accessibility considerations for the broadest group of people
  - **Level AA: Baseline Plus**—Goes beyond the basics to provide access to users in a wider-range contexts
  - **Level AAA: Meets all 78**—Comprehensive, but not realistically achievable or applicable for most creators or organizations

Conformance for 508

- 508 requires that materials **at least** meet a Level A

- Does **not** require higher than Level AA
  - Digital materials don't need to be comprehensive (Level AAA) to meet 508 Compliance

- Disability is a spectrum, and so is accessibility

Accessibility in Action

Impact and Examples

Accessibility Impacts

- Accessibility affects a broad spectrum of people, including:
  - People who are visually impaired
  - People who are auditory impaired
  - People who are color blind
  - People who struggle with reading
  - People with a traumatic brain injury (TBI) or concussion
  - People in the back of the room

Current Impacts

- There are many current examples of information and communication happening in accessible ways.

- Let's look at some you might use every day!

Speech and Text

- Many applications offer accessible tools for text and speech:
  - Closed Captioning
  - Subtitles
  - Speech to Text
  - Text to Speech

English CC

[whispers] Thank you.

Subtitles

Gracias.

SDH

[susurra] Gracias.

Descriptive Audio

- Tools and techniques that describe important visual elements, like:
    - Game announcers on the radio
    - Descriptive video services at the movies

Descriptive Video Services

The Fidelio™ narration system describes important visual elements of the film when there are breaks in dialogue. Before showtime, chat with a Team Member to request your device.
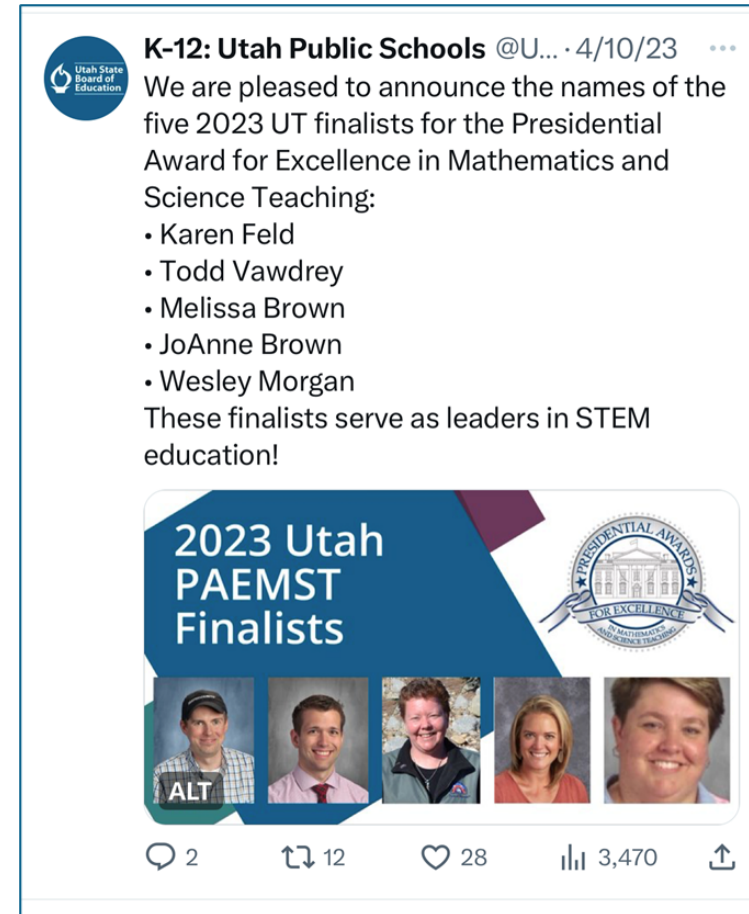
Differentiators

- Using more than one technique or element to convey information. Differentiators can include:
  - Color (verify color contrast)
  - Shape
  - Texture
  - Order (traffic lights)
- Example: Red cards in soccer

Alternative Text for Images

- Alternative Text or Alt-Text:
  - Conveys same information provided in or by the image
  - Relates it to the overall content of a document or webpage

- Example: Images on Social Media

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Common Barriers

- Common practices that create accessibility problems:
  - Not using colors with enough contrast
  - Using of layout tables
  - Using color as the only differentiator
  - Underlining and/or using blue text for non-hyperlinked content
  - Using text boxes in Word
  - Not using the accessibility checker

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Overcoming Barriers

- Meeting 508 Compliance and overcoming common barriers means implementing:
  - Best Practices for Composition
  - Basic Elements of Accessibility

Implementing 508

Making Digital Content and Documents Compliant

Best Practices for Composition

- Identify the basic components of your project. Ask:
  - What you are sharing **(Content)**
  - How you are sharing it **(Genre & Medium)**
  - Who you are sharing it with **(Audience & Use)**
  - Where and When you are sharing it **(Situation & Context)**
  - Why are you sharing it **(Purpose & Outcome)**

Rhetorical Situation

- The five elements identified in the previous questions make up the **Rhetorical Situation**
- The Rhetorical Situation determines:
  - Scope
  - Use
  - Design

Example of a Rhetorical Situation

- A presentation to support a lesson plan (purpose and genre)
  - Digital presentation (medium)
  - To visually support lecture and in-class activities (audience use)
- Means:
  - A slide deck
  - Limited by:
    - Lesson plan content (Scope)
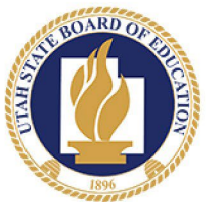   - Templates and application (Design)
    - Time (Scope)

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Basic Elements of Accessibility

- Creating an accessible content means considering how it is presented **in four main categories**. These are:
    - Structure and Reading Order
    - Images, Graphs, and Tables
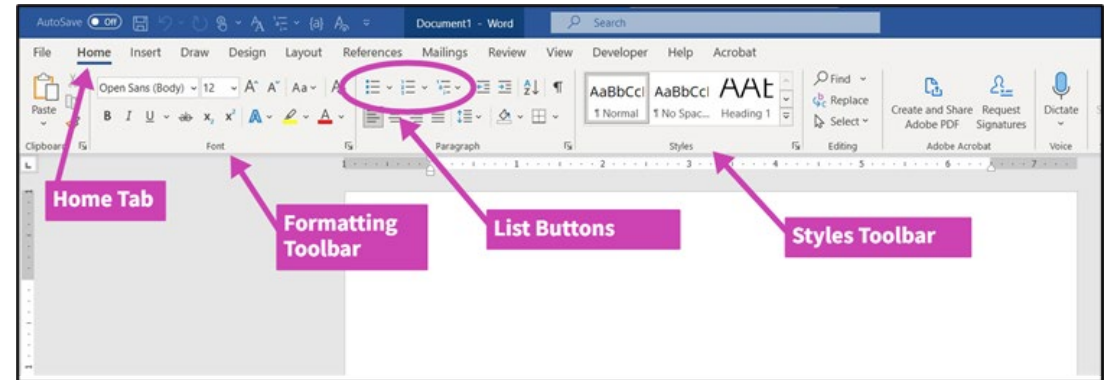   - Layout
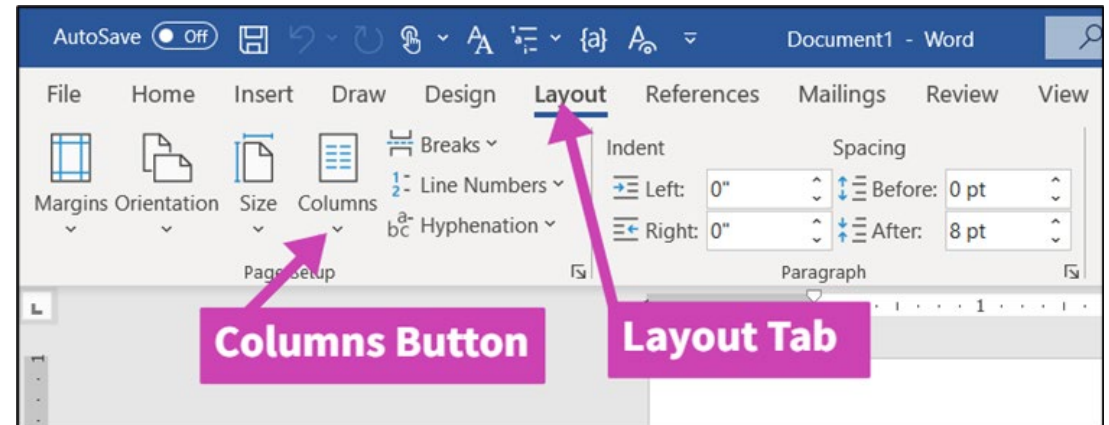   - Design

Structure and Reading Order

Headings

- Use to create meaningful structure and order

- Make using Styles NOT formatting toolbar

- Put heading levels in a logical order

- Do not skip over a heading level

Lists and Columns

- Create using the built-in list and column buttons
- Do not create using the spacebar or tab

Columns Button

Layout Tab

Images, Graphs, and Tables

Alt-Text

- Used for meaningful images, figures, graphs, and other visual elements
- Conveys same information as the image
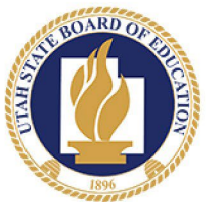- Decorative images are marked—no alt-text

Tables

- Data Tables vs. Layout Tables
- Identify the header row and repeat it across page breaks
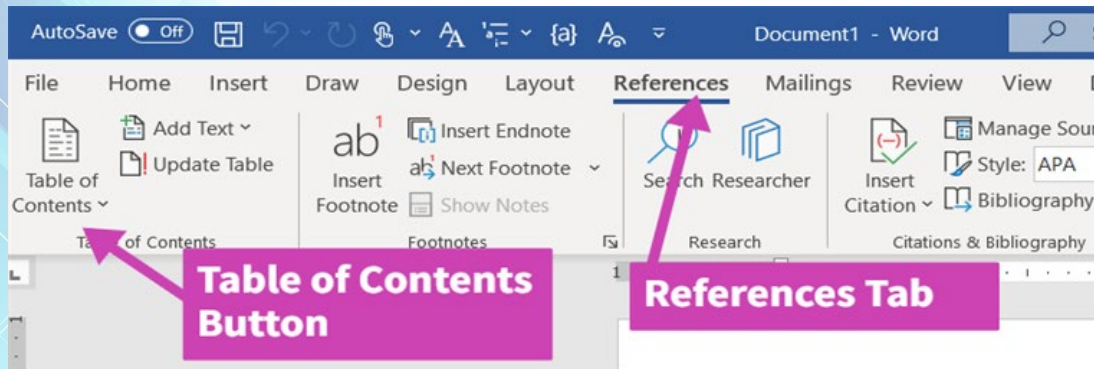- Do not merge or split table cells

Layout

Headers and Footers

- Limit content to running titles, page numbers, and logos
- Do not use to relate title, author, version, or contact information
- Do not use for vital information

Table of Contents

- Do not use a list to make a Table of Contents (TOC)
- Generate a TOC using automated button

Hyperlink

- Use underlining and blue font ONLY for hyperlinks
- Use descriptive text not URLs
  - Example: [Click here](#) for Appendix 1 vs. Click here for [Appendix 1](#)

Design

Color

- Do not use color alone to convey information
  - Use differentiators
- Color contrast between text and background should have a ratio of at least 4.5:1
- Use the WebAIM Contrast Checker tool to check contrast ratios

Spacing

- Consider general use of negative space
  - Balance of white space
- Margins:
  - In documents 1" all around
  - At least 0.5" in other mediums
- Spacing
  - At least a space-and-a-half within paragraphs
  - At least 6 pt spacing after paragraph

Font and Font Size

- Font
  - Use **Sans Serif Font** (vs. **Serif Font**)
  - 508 compliant fonts: Arial, Calibri, Open Sans, Montserrat, Century Gothic, Tahoma
- Font Size
  - Size Matters (24 pt) . . . Size Matters (18 pt) . . . Size Matters (12pt)
  - For Word, at least 11 pt, but ideally 12 pt body text
  - For PowerPoint, at least 18 pt body text

Tutorial

Making a Pre-Existing Presentation Compliant

Q&A

Coming Soon!

- **2024 Canvas Course on 508 Compliance**
  - Module 1: Introduction
  - Module 2: Microsoft Office Templates and Design
  - Module 3: Text Documents
    - Word, Google Docs, etc.
  - Module 4: Presentations
    - PowerPoints, Google Slides, Prezi, Nearpod, etc.
  - Module 5: Adobe PDFs
  - Module 6: Social Media and Graphics
    - Canva, Instagram, etc.
  - Module 7: Other Mediums

Resources

- [WebAIM Color Contrast Checker](#)
- [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)](#)
- [Section 508.gov Training and Tools](#)
- Adobe's help page: [Create and Verify PDF Accessibility](#)
- Microsoft 365's help page: [Make Your Content Accessible](#)
- The [Chax Podcast on "What Makes a Document Accessible or Compliant?"](#)

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Thank You