

Low Effort, High Impact Accessible Content Tips for All Learners

Wisconsin Charter School Summit - 2026



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Facilitator



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CESA 9, Wisconsin Virtual School

Curriculum

Wisconsin Virtual School

Wisconsin Virtual School

- Statewide supplementary online learning program for Wisconsin, authorized by a regional cooperative educational service agency ([CESA 9](#))
- Partner with over 200+ districts to offer online and blended solutions for students. We served over 12,900 unique enrollments last year.
 - K-12
 - Part time or full-time online learning
 - Blended access is available through district's own teachers
 - WVS Plus (K-8) with live instruction



TM

Outcomes

- Participants will be guided through a focused set of tips that provide low effort, high impact accessibility practices that benefit all learners.
- Participants will apply accessibility practices to a provided Google Doc.

Standards (NSQ & QM)

Course Standard E: Accessibility & Usability

E1) Online course navigation is logical, consistent, and efficient from the learner's point of view.*

E2) The online course design facilitates readability.*

E3) The online course provides accessible course materials and activities to meet the needs of diverse learners.*

E4) Course multimedia facilitate ease of use.*

**Used with permission for NSQ standards from the Quality Matters™, K-12 Rubric, Fifth Edition*

Teacher Standard F: Diverse Instruction

F4) The online teacher creates alternative formats of course materials, if needed, in order to meet the needs of diverse learners and accommodate alternative means of access.

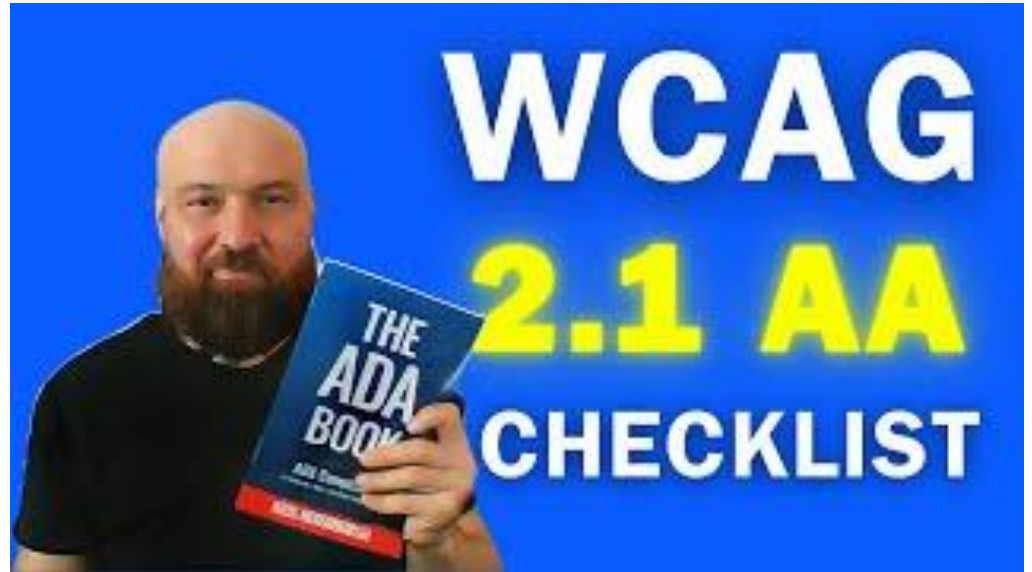
F5) The online teacher recommends assistive technologies where appropriate to meet mandated needs and address learner preferences.

Title II ADA- Accessibility

- The focus on accessibility within the Title II ruling includes:
 - Follow [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(WCAG\) Version 2.1, Level AA](#) as the technical standard.
 - text, images, sounds, videos, controls, animations, and electronic documents
 - ensuring the accessibility of mobile apps

Video all on WCAG 2.1

From [Accessible.org](https://www.accessible.org)
[Podcast version](#) from
Notebook LM

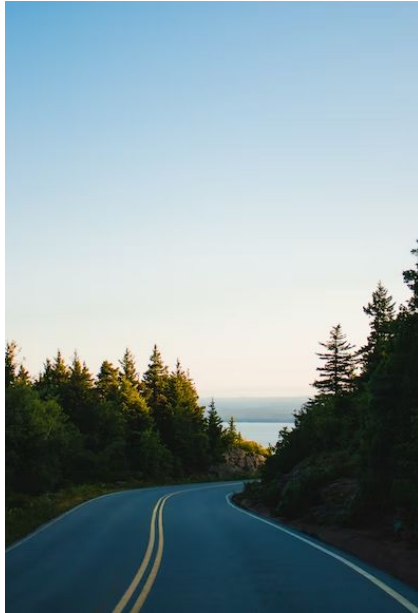


Poll

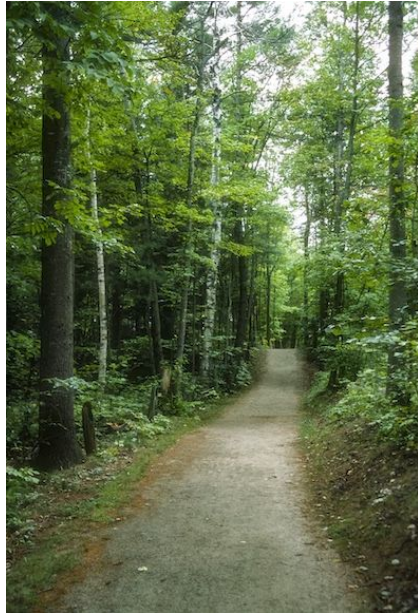


What is your familiarity/comfort level with accessible design? Let's see where you are at!

1



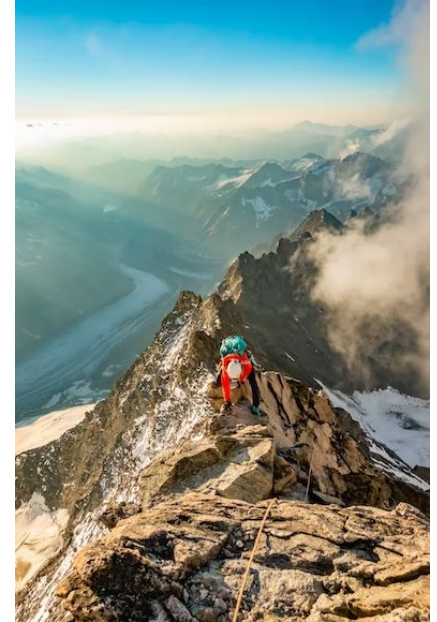
2



3



4



What is “accessibility”?

- Accessibility **gives all people the same access to learning, services, and information. This applies to any individual whether they have a disability or not.**
- Another important element is the ease of access for students who need these features and accommodations.
- Benefits for ALL students when we proactively design learning environments that are accessible



Digital Accessibility

“Web accessibility means that websites, tools, and technologies are designed and developed so that people with disabilities can use them.” [Web Accessibility Initiative \(WAI\)](#)

Can this technology or content be used **as effectively** by people with disabilities as by those without disabilities?



Designing for ALL Learners

Embracing accessible design where possible is good for all learners. Consider benefits that come from:

- Chunking distinct units of information
- Consistent formatting
- Consistent navigation/clear pathways
- Reduced number of steps
- Reduced choices
- Clear/specific directions
- Step-based instructions

Fila, Jon. Presentation at DLAC 2021: "[Create Engaging Learning Experiences using Open Educational Resources.](#)"





Let's go!

Low Effort, High Impact Tips

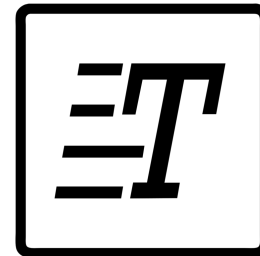
Accessibility Tips For...

1. Text
2. Links
3. Images
4. Chunking

There are low-effort but highly effective and impactful strategies you can use right away, whether you are **editing existing resources** or **creating new resources!**



Accessibility: Text



1. Paragraph Styles/Headers
 - Set [default Google Doc styles](#)
 - "Normal" paragraph text should be at least 12 point
 - Choose 1 or 2 fonts for consistency (sans serif preferred)
2. Colors
 - Use high contrast colors and avoid using color as only way to convey meaning
3. Emphasis
 - Use **bold**/*italics* sparingly and effectively, avoid underlining
 - Use "Important" or "Note" head's up

More about [fonts](#), [color contrasting](#), and [document accessibility](#).

Accessibility: Links



1. Avoid using full URL as part of an online document or page
 - Sometimes this may not be possible if there are limitations to text editor options
2. Descriptive, unique link text
 - Document title is a good place to start
 - Avoid using "Link to..." or "Click here..."
3. Set links to open in a new window

More about [hyperlink accessibility](#).


Google Docs Tip: Descriptive Hyperlinks

- **Late Assignments** - I do not take off points for late assignments
- **Redo's** - Upon request, I will allow a redo on assignments *redoing an assignment that you plagiarized, you can only earn up to a 70% assignment with a redo allowed, that means I p*
Academic Integrity Policy here:
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1rz4eM_9oMIKxus

The screenshot shows a Google Docs document titled "WVS Academic Integrity a...". The document content includes a section titled "Academic Integrity (Plagiarism)" with a WVS logo and text explaining the school's policy. Below the document content, the Google Docs interface shows the owner "Joan Hilgendorf" and a "Changes by Julie Sowinski" notification. At the bottom, there is a blue bar with three buttons: "Replace URL", "Chip", and "Link".

In Google Docs, click anywhere in a URL, and you can replace it with...

Chip: adds icon and "button" appearance

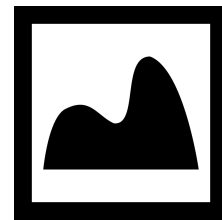
ou plagiarized, you can only earn up to a 70%. Review
 **WVS Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Policy**
0% assignment with a redo allowed, that means I p

Link: just text

ou plagiarized, you can only earn up to a 70%. Review
re: [WVS Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Policy](#)
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Accessibility: Images



1. Add simple alternative text to describe the image
 - Don't need to clarify "Image of..." or "Picture of..."
2. Alt text is not necessary for decorative images
3. Avoid using images as the only way to convey information where possible (lower effort to avoid this upfront, more medium effort to fix later)

More about image [alt text](#).

Accessibility: Chunking



1. Natural breaks in content to reduce cognitive load
2. Use bulleted lists where helpful
3. [Title/Header formatting styles](#) can help!

More about using [lists](#) and [cognitive web accessibility](#).



Now You Try It!!

Tweaking a [Google Doc to improve accessibility](https://bit.ly/4dc1mUi)
(<https://bit.ly/4dc1mUi>)

Group Share

How did you do?

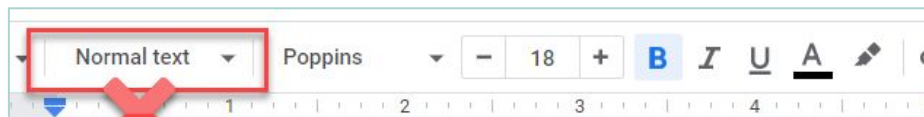
What jumped out at you right
away?

Was anything more challenging
to notice?



Improvement #1

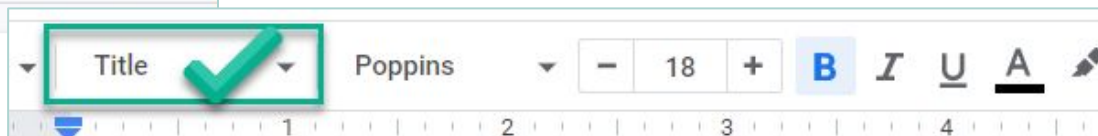
Use paragraph styles for titles and headers



Course Expectations

Working On Your Course

Follow your **Due Dates** in your "Grades" screen and **feedback** on your recent assignments. You can go to my Activity Stream to review feedback from me. I will grade your work **within 24-48 hours in most cases**. Many classes use a "discussion-based assessment" (**DBA**) in each class. This gives you a chance for us to check-in before you take the



Course Expectations

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Improvement #2

Use bullet points where possible to “chunk”

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Improvement #3

Use high contrast colors

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Quizzes, Tests, and Notes - Oh My!



- I highly recommend that you **take notes** on each lesson. You can use those notes on your lesson activities and assessments! You will be allowed to use any hand-written notes on the final exam, too.
- Use the "**Save**" option if you start a quiz or test but then run out of time that day to complete it.

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Improvement #4

Use consistent and minimal # of font types

We will connect over the phone or via Zoom. Check with your local coach regarding specific **overall course grade** expectations for you to pass our class. Typically, it's 60% or higher to earn a passing grade.

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- **There are times when technical problems will not allow you to complete a test or quiz. Please email me, tell me what happened, and I will reset your score if there were circumstances beyond your control.**

Redo's / Late Work Policy

- **Late Assignments** - I do not take off points for late assignments.
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Improvement #5

Use bold/italics sparingly and effectively - avoid underlining

can use those notes on your lesson activities and assessments. You will be allowed to use any hand-written notes on the final exam, too.

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Improvement #6

Use other ways to emphasize key text versus just relying on color.

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https://docs.google.com/document/d/1rz4eM_9oMIKxuSywlr9s8SjqB_XORDCmN8dISVOOW3O/edit
- **0% assignments** - If you see a 0% assignment with a redo allowed, that means I probably can't see your work. Usually this is an easy fix! Check my feedback and resubmit the assignment in Buzz as

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Improvement #7

Use descriptive hyperlinks

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Improvement #8

Avoid putting important info *only* in an image

Redo's / Late Work Policy

- **Late Assignments** - I do not take off points for late assignments.
- **Redo's** - Upon request, I will allow a redo on assignments that you plagiarized, you did not do, or you did not turn in. See my Academic Integrity Policy here: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1rz4eM_9...
- **0% assignments** - If you see a 0% assignment with your work. Usually this is an easy fix! Check my feedback as soon as possible so I can grade it.
- **Missing assignments at the end of your course** - If you are missing any assignments at the end of your course End Date, then I will enter 0% for the missing assignments and a retry. Your local school/program may require you to redo these.

Missing any assignments 1 week before your course end date, then I will enter 0% for the missing assignments and a retry. Your local school/program may require you to redo these.

- **Stuck on something?** We can always connect over email, phone, or during Connect Time if you have questions about the content. 

Welcome again, we're going to have a great class!



Stuck on something? We can always connect over email, phone, or during Connect Time if you have questions!



Welcome again, we're c



What do YOU think?

If the tip is “Add alt text for non-decorative images,” would you add alt text to this Bitmoji image? Why or why not? What would your alt text be, if yes?

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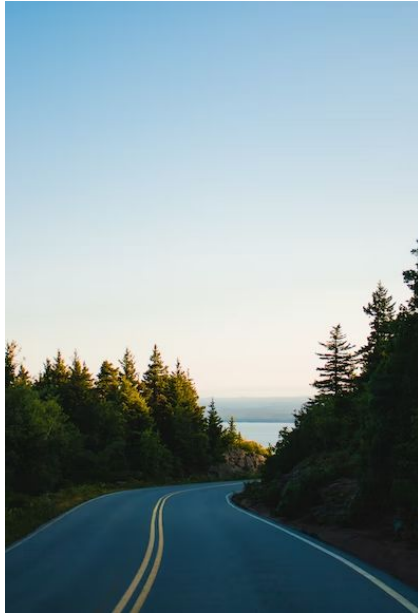


Poll

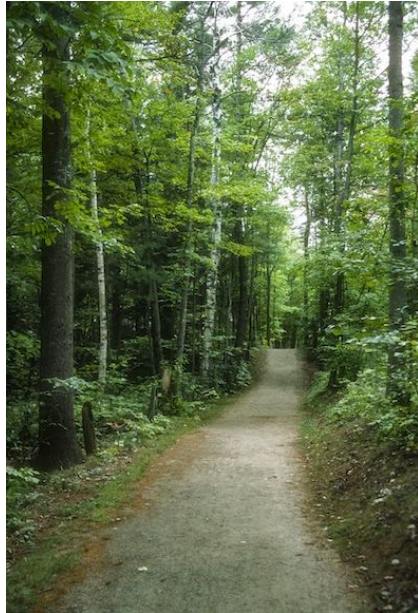


Based on the activity, how would you rate your own understanding and application of accessible design choices?

1



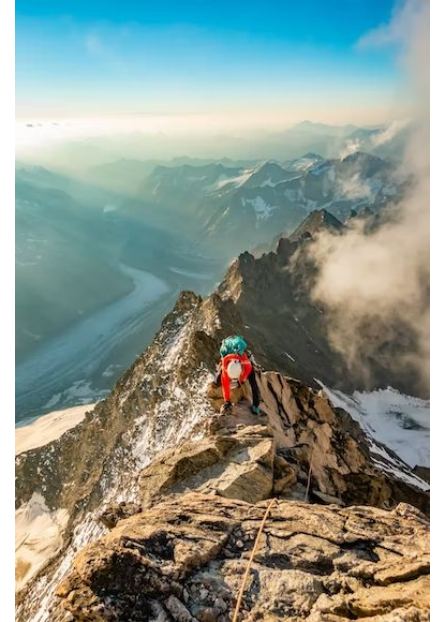
2



3



4





More Resources

Universal Design for Learning connections

- [The UDL Guidelines](#) (CASTT)
- [UDL vs. DI: Dinner Party Analogy](#) (Katie Novak)
- [UDL and Digital Accessibility](#) (Educause)

Accessibility

- [508, ADA, WCAG: What's the difference?](#)
- [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines](#) (WCAG)
- [Designing for Accessibility with POUR](#) (AEM Center)
- [WebAIM Contrast Checker](#)
- [Course Design for Digital Accessibility: Best Practices and Tools](#) (Quality Matters)
- [10 Tips for Creating Accessible Online Materials](#) (QM Workshop)
- [Make your document or presentation more accessible](#) (Google)
- [Course Development Training- Accessibility](#) (NC Virtual)

Questions?

Steve Duffrin - sduffrin@cesa9.org

