Please complete the CFE attendance form

https://forms.office.com/r/xQbbFvTtK3

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Making Your Word Documents Accessible

Caitlin Bartholic, February 13th, 2026

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At the end of this workshop you will be able to:

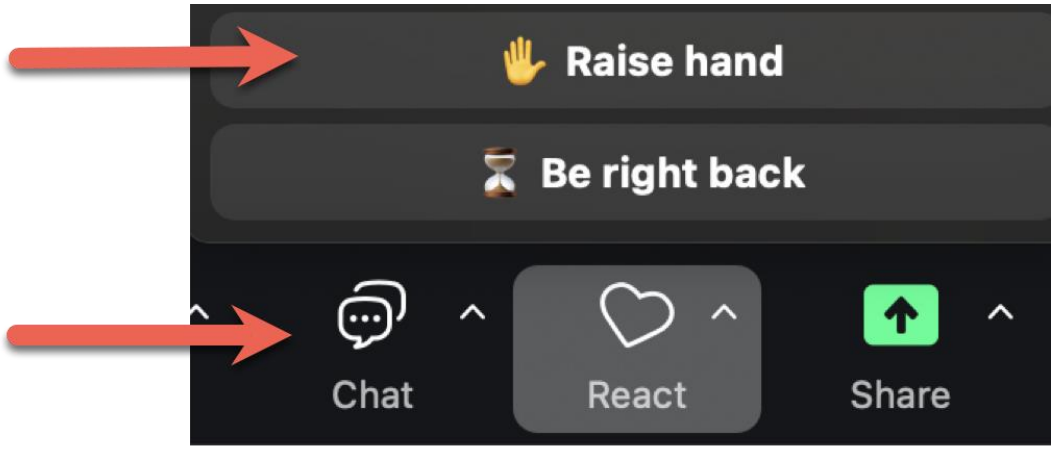
- **Make quick improvements to your documents** by fixing common issues with headings, color contrast, alt text, hyperlinks, and font readability.

- **Edit Microsoft Word documents using simple accessibility techniques** that make your content clearer and easier for all learners to navigate.

- **Apply practical, everyday accessibility habits** you can use immediately in your teaching, communication, or course materials.

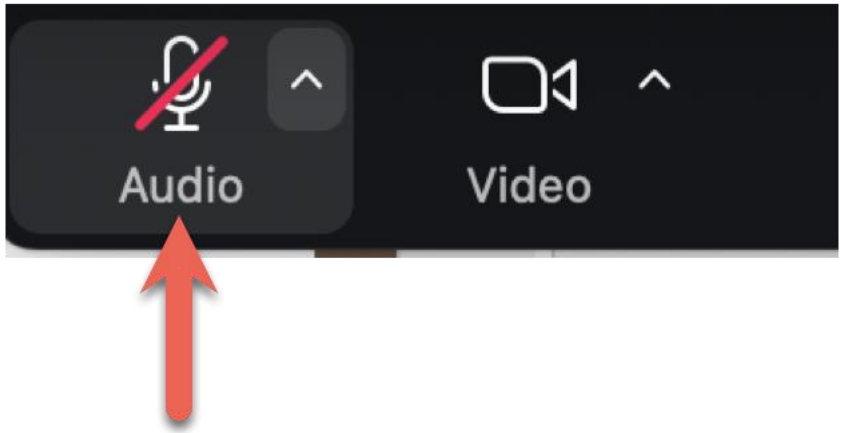
Ways to interact during the workshop

- Select the “raise hand” icon on Zoom



- Enter questions/comments in the chat

- Unmute and talk



Warm-Up Poll

Use the Zoom poll, or enter the number in the chat that corresponds to your answer:

"What's your current comfort level with digital accessibility?"

1. Very comfortable

2. Somewhat comfortable

3. New to this

Why WCAG?

(Web Content Accessibility Guidelines)

Equity & Universal Design - better for all learners, not only those with disabilities.

Student/Learner Experience - smoother navigation, reduced cognitive load, better retention.

Institutional Responsibility - WCAG 2.1 AA is the current compliance target for higher-ed digital environments.

Everyone should be able to access your incredible content!

WCAG Success Criteria in Plain English

Which is easier to read?

Accessibility Services at BGSU Libraries

BGSU Libraries are committed to providing access to information for everyone who is part of the University community.

Retrieving items from Jerome Library

Patrons can request books and other items marked "Available" directly from the BGSU Libraries Catalog by using the Request button. The books will be retrieved within 72 hours and held at the circulation desk in the Jerome Library.

Alternatively, present a list of books with author, title, and call numbers to the Circulation Desk or email the list to the Circulation desk email: circdesk@libanswers.bgsu.edu.

To obtain a copy of an article in a print journal or a chapter from a p rint book, please place a request through Interlibrary loan (https://www.bgsu.edu/library/services/interlibrary-loan.html). Staff will scan the article or book chapter and you will receive an email with a link to download the pdf within 72 hours. Please provide the full citation for each item to be scanned. Note that copies of items held by Jerome Library will not be made for undergraduate students unless they have an accessibility need or are distance education students, so indicate on in the notes field of your request if this is your situation.

If you need assistance retrieving periodicals, please ask at the Research and Information Desk. We will endeavor to give immediate assistance whenever possible, but you may be asked to leave a list of needed items. They will be retrieved within 24 hours and held at the Research and Information Desk for pickup. Alternatively, you may email a list to askus@libanswers.bgsu.edu.

Retrieving items from Special Collections

The BGSU Libraries Special Collections include

the https://www.bgsu.edu/library/crc.html, https://www.bgsu.edu/library/music.html, https://www.bgsu.edu/library/cac.html, and the https://www.bgsu.edu/library/pcl.html

Alternative or enhanced access to items from **CLOSED COLLECTIONS** can be arranged based on patron needs. If you need accommodations to interact with any of our materials, please contact the appropriate collection to make those arrangements.

Research assistance

Library research assistance is available at the Research & Information Desk in Jerome Library, or at any of the service desks in our special collections.

Accessibility Services at BGSU Libraries

BGSU Libraries are committed to providing access to information for everyone who is part of the University community.

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Alternatively, present a list of books with author, title, and call numbers to the Circulation Desk or email the list to the Circulation desk email.

To obtain a copy of an article in a print journal or a chapter from a print book, please place a request through interlibrary loan. Staff will scan the article or book chapter and you will receive an email with a link to download the pdf within 72 hours. Please provide the full citation for each item to be scanned. Note that copies of items held by Jerome Library will not be made for undergraduate students unless they have an accessibility need or are distance education students, so indicate on in the notes field of your request if this is your situation.

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Color Contrast

Key WCAG Success Criterion
1.4.3 Contrast (Minimum)

Normal Text: 4.5:1 ratio
Large text: 3:1 ratio

This is 1.08:1 Color Contrast

This is 2:1 Color Contrast

This is 3.4:1 Color Contrast

This is 4.54:1 Color Contrast

This is 7.5:1 Color Contrast

This is 1.08:1 Color Contrast

This is 2:1 Color Contrast

This is 3.4:1 Color Contrast

This is 4.54:1 Color Contrast

This is 7.5:1 Color Contrast

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BGSU Brand Colors

White: FFFFFF
BGSU Teal: 1c626d
6.95:1

White: FFFFFF
BGSU Brown: 4f2c1d
12.27:1

BGSU Brown: 4f2c1d
BGSU Rose: e3a492
5.48:1

BGSU Tan Tint: eae1d8
BGSU Teal: 1c626d
5.38:1

BGSU Tan Tint: eae1d8
BGSU Brown: 4f2c1d
9.5:1

BGSU Brown: 4f2c1d
BGSU Tan: eae1d8
9.5:1

BGSU Brown: 4f2c1d
BGSU Coral: f37b6c
4.59:1

BGSU Brown: 4f2c1d
BGSU Seafoam:80baac
5.57:1

BGSU Brown: 4f2c1d
BGSU Gold: f5c163
7.41:1

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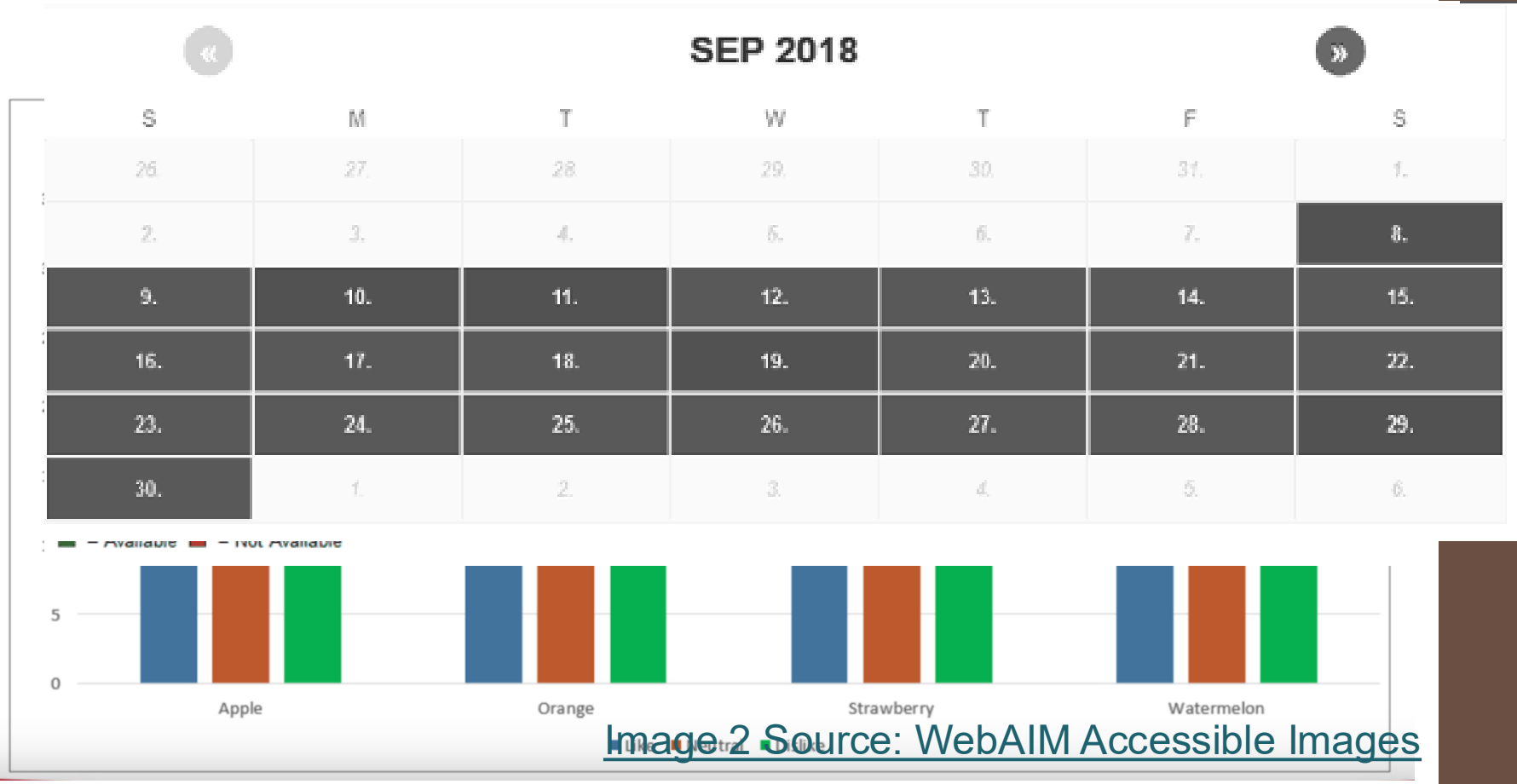
Black text can also be used instead of BGSU brown text for better contrast.

Color Contrast Key Points

- Color alone cannot convey meaning (1.4.1 Use of Color)
- Check contrast e



[WebAIM Color Con]

Image 2 Source: WebAIM Accessible Images

Image 1 Source: Venngage “Convey Meaning Without Relying on Color”

Heading Hierarchy

Key WCAG Success Criterion
1.3.1 Info and Relationships

Structure must be programmatically determinable (semantic headings, not visual styling)

Heading 1 **Use “Heading 1” for the Title.**

Heading 2

Heading 3

Paragraph Text

Heading 2

Heading 3

Paragraph Text

Only use “Title” if there is a separate cover page with duplicate Title.

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Heading Hierarchy Key Points

- Headings create structure, not just visual formatting
- Must follow sequential order: H1 -> H2 -> H3
- Benefits:
  - Screen reader navigation
  - Cognitive ease for all users
  - Clear outline for editing and writing

Breakout Room 1

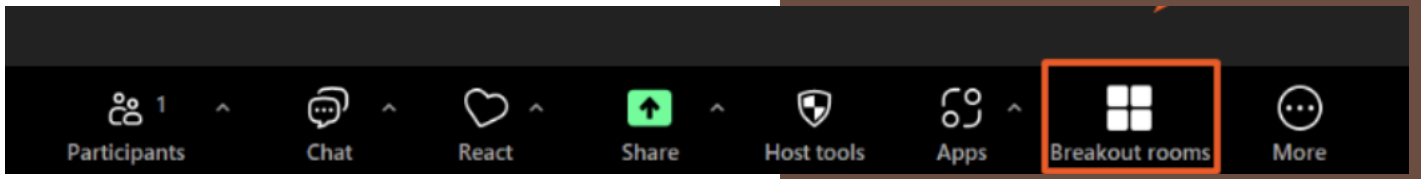
Open your own document and experiment with heading hierarchy.

Caitlin Bartholic

Breakout Room 2

Download the provided demo document and experiment with heading hierarchy.

Chelsea Chandler



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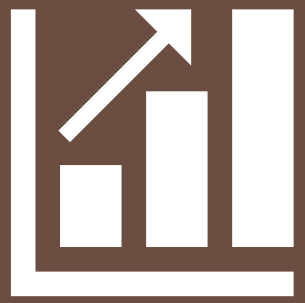
Alternative Text

Key WCAG Success Criterion
1.1.1 Non-Text Content

All meaningful images require text alternatives; decorative images must be marked as such

100-150 characters
25-30 words
(Graphs and charts may have more)



Alternative Text Key Points

Provide alternatives for meaningful images.

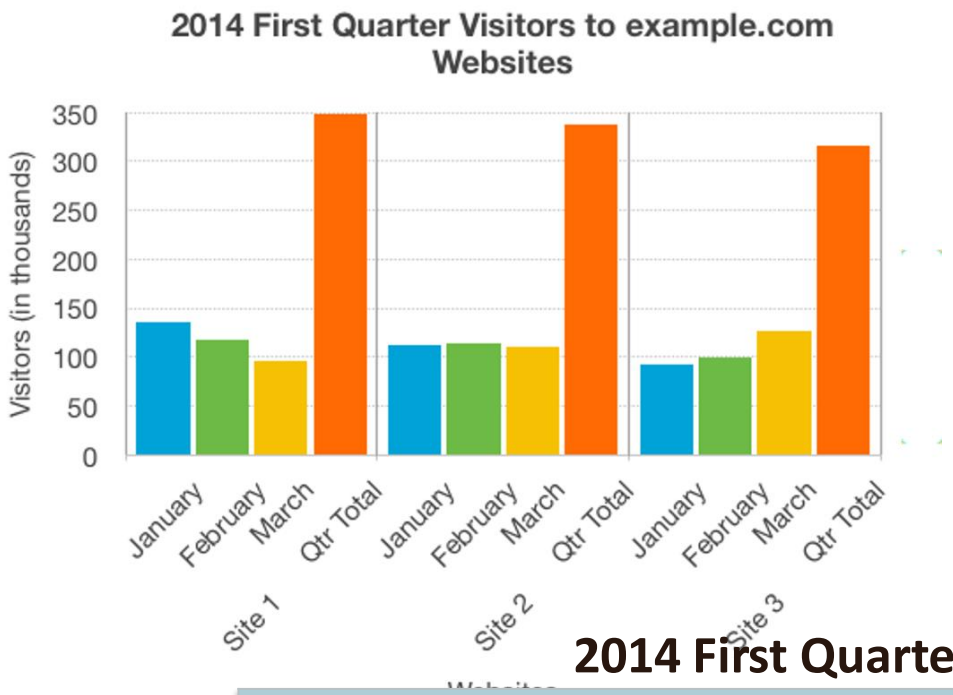
Dependent on context

Describe purpose, not appearance.

- What is this?
- Why is it here? (Pedagogical intent)
- What would a learner miss if it wasn't there?

WebAIM Alt Text Context Practice

Alternative Text – Graphs & Charts



Alt Text: Bar graph showing 2014 first quarter visitors to example.com by month

Best Practice: Provide an accessible table or list as an alternative.

2014 First Quarter visitors per site (in thousands)

Period	Site 1	Site 2	Site 3
January	135	112	92
February	117	114	99
March	96	111	126
Quarter Total	348	337	308

Figure 1/Ir . It shows tha rs is decreasing creasing month on

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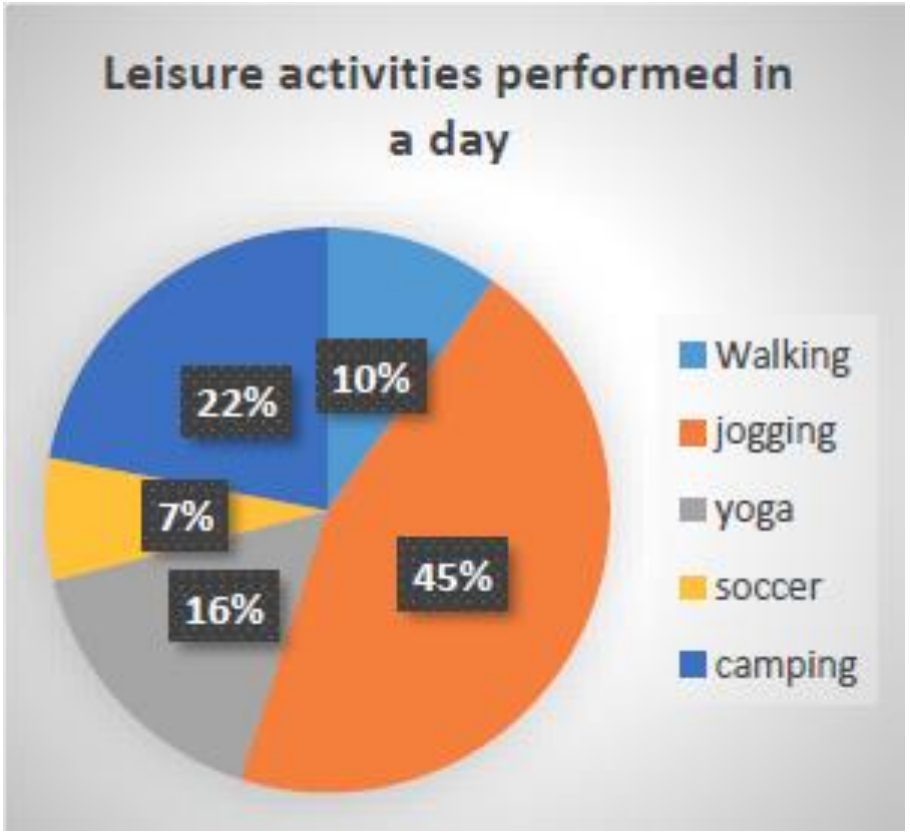
Image Source: W3.org Complex Images

Alternative Text – More Graphs & Charts



Alt Text: Pie chart displaying the percentage of various leisure activities performed by respondents in a day.

Figure 2/Image Description: Jogging occupies 45 percent, camping occupies 22 percent, yoga occupies 16 percent, walking occupies 10 percent, and soccer occupies 7 percent.

Image Source: Diagram Center

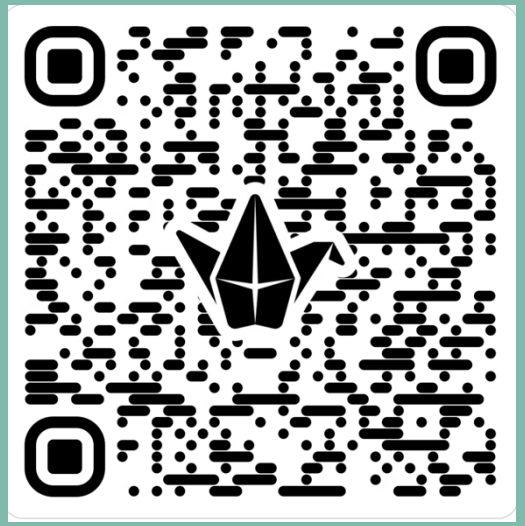
Label three images:

One should be marked as decorative.

One is a photo that needs alt text.

One is a chart that needs alt text.

Padlet Practice



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Descriptive Hyperlinks

Key WCAG Success Criterion
2.4.4 Link Purpose (In Context)

The purpose of a link must be clear from its text alone (or its surrounding context).

Descriptive Hyperlinks Key Points

Avoid non-informative text:

“Click here”

“Read more”

Raw URLS (https://www.thisisareallylonglinkforascreenreader183.com)

Descriptive links communicate destination or action.

Example:

“Download the Biology Syllabus” vs “Click Here”

Fonts & Readability – Institutional Best Practices

- Use readable, accessible Sans Serif fonts: **Calibri, Aptos, Verdana**
- Avoid decorative fonts for paragraph text
- Avoid all caps, tight spacing, justified text
- Left align text when possible
- Headings in Word should be 20-24pt, Text should be 12-14pt
- Ensure adequate font size in slides (20-22pt)

This text is size 26
This text is size 22
This text is size 14

This text is size 26
This text is size 22
This text is size 14

Putting it All Together

- Start with headings (structure first)
- Check hyperlinks (descriptive text)
- Evaluate images (add/mark alt text)
- Review contrast (use WebAIM checker)
- Final pass (readable font + spacing)

Padlet Reflection and Q & A

What is one accessibility practice you feel comfortable beginning to implement after today's session?

What is one question you still have about implementing accessibility into your digital content?

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Thank You!

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Please complete the CFE reflection form

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