



Reading Room for the Blind, Library of Congress, District of Columbia. Washington D.C, ca. 1920. Photograph. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2005694707/>.

Accessibility for Journals

September 29, 2025 | 10 AM EST



Accessibility policies & what they mean for your journal:

- Ensures readers of all abilities can access materials—“open access”
- Upcoming Title II revisions
 - April 2026
 - UF General Counsel
 - “It includes websites, documents, media, texts, and applications from vendors and by the public entities.”
 - Need to provide accessible formats
 - **Not** retroactive
- Accessible PDFs or HTML galleys (preferred)
 - Recommended to use both formats!



What makes a PDF accessible?



A Picture Story-Book, with Four Hundred Illustrations. London: George Routledge and Sons, c. 1873. <https://ufdc.ufl.edu/UF00027019/00001>.

- ❑ Can be read by an assistive device.
- ❑ Hierarchy of headings.
- ❑ Lists, tables, and paragraphs are tagged and marked.
- ❑ Informative alternative (alt) text for important images.
- ❑ There is a correct tab order for keyboard-only users.
- ❑ There is accurate metadata.



All tools

- Export a PDF
- Edit a PDF
- Create a PDF
- Combine files
- Organize pages
- Send for comments
- Scan & OCR
- Protect a PDF
- Redact a PDF
- Compress a PDF
- Prepare a form
- Fill & Sign
- Add comments



LIBRARIES ARE FOR EVERYONE

Figure - Accessibility icon in blue.

THEW W. DALEY / WEB DESIGNER, LTS
DANIELA SUZARTE / COLLECTIONS SERVICES ASSISTANT, SASC

AN ERA OF RAPID TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENTS AND AI, LIBRARIES ARE TRANSFORMING FROM QUIET REPOSITORIES INTO VIBRANT HUBS OF LEARNING AND DISCOVERY.

With this evolution comes an important responsibility: ensuring access for all, regardless of location, background, or individual abilities. This aligns with Universal Design principles, where solutions designed for specific needs often benefit everyone—like curbs cuts originally made for wheelchairs that also assist parents with strollers and delivery drivers. By prioritizing accessibility in all aspects of their work, libraries can set a powerful example for academic institutions worldwide.

Physical spaces are just as vital. The Libraries provide study areas with adjustable tables, sensory-friendly zones, a Mindfulness Studio, lactation rooms, and a Wudu station, creating welcoming environments for all. Adaptive equipment and personalized support ensure that users can fully engage with library resources without barriers.

Innovation continues to drive progress in accessibility. For instance, the Arizona State University Image Description Generator has proven invaluable—not just for creating alt-text but also for transcribing cursive text in archival images. Tools like this highlight how accessibility initiatives can address broader challenges while advancing library services and benefiting diverse users.

Back from the community is a corollary of these efforts. By listening to users and staying informed about emerging research, the Libraries continually adapt their services to meet evolving needs. Workshops and information sessions keep the academic community informed and ensure that users know how to access available resources.

Through this comprehensive approach—leveraging digital tools, thoughtfully designed spaces, personalized support, and a commitment to continuous improvement—the George A. Smathers Libraries ensure that all members of the UF community can fully participate in academic life. By breaking down barriers, they redefine what it means to serve as a center for learning and discovery, demonstrating how accessibility fosters progress, creativity, and a thriving academic environment.

Figure - Accessible Books Consortium

Figure - A diverse group of students

Up Culture 2019

Accessibility tags

Tags

<Document>

Reading Order

Draw a rectangle around the content then click one of the buttons below:

Text/Paragraph	Figure
Form Field	Figure/Caption
Heading 1	Heading 4
Heading 2	Heading 5
Heading 3	Heading 6
Reference (q)	Note (z)
Table	Background/Artifact

Table Editor

- Show page content groups
- Page content order
- Structure types
- Show table cells
- Display like elements in a single block
- Show tables and figures

Clear Page Structure... Show Order Panel

Help Close



Store and share files in the Document Cloud

Learn More



Quick Tips for PDF Accessibility

- ❑ Create an accessible source document.
- ❑ Retain tags and accessibility formatting when exporting to PDF.
- ❑ Double-check accessibility in Adobe Acrobat.
 - ❑ Tags
 - ❑ Reading order
 - ❑ Alt text



Navigation

Search document

Headings Pages Results

- Heading 1: Title
 - Heading 2: Section Title
 - Heading 3: Subsection Title
 - Heading 2: Section 2 Title
 - Heading 3: Subsection 2 Title

Heading 1: Title


Body text

Heading 2: Section Title

Body text

Heading 3: Subsection Title

Body text



Right-click and add alt text to your image ^

Heading 2: Section 2 Title

Body text

Heading 3: Subsection 2 Title

Body text

Navigation

Search document

Headings Pages Results

- Heading 1: Title
 - Heading 2: Section Title
 - Heading 3: Subsection Title
 - Heading 2: Section 2 Title
 - Heading 3: Subsection 2 Title


Heading 1: Title

Heading 2: Section Title

Body text

Heading 3: Subsection Title

Body text



Right-click and add alt text to your image ^

Heading 2: Section 2 Title

Body text

Heading 3: Subsection 2 Title

Body text

Accessibility Assistant

Looks good! No issues found.

Color and Contrast

Hard-to-read text contrast

Media and Illustrations

Missing alt text

Tables

Missing table header

Use of merged or split cells

Document Structure

No headings in document

Document Access

Restricted access

Give Feedback

Learn about accessibility

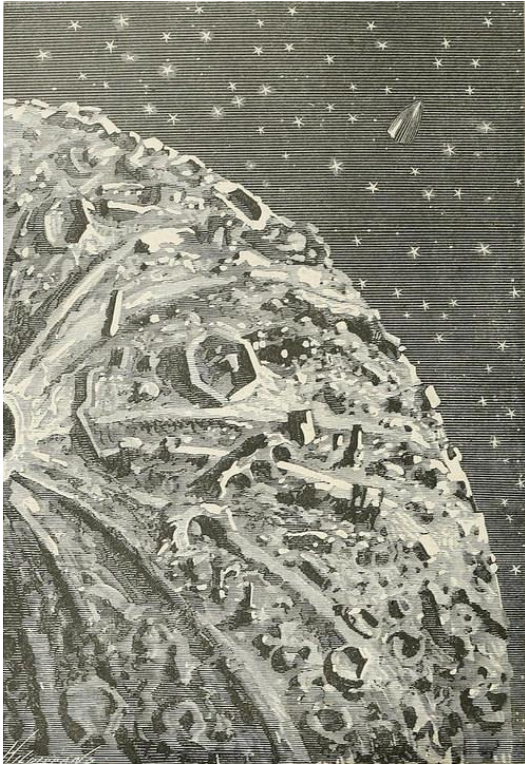
Settings

MacKenzie, Frederick. *Library of Winchester College*. c. 1816.
Watercolor, 26 × 21.8 cm. Art Institute of Chicago.
<https://www.artic.edu/artworks/39011/library-of-winchester-college>.

HTML:

The Ultimate Accessible Galley





Bayard, Émile-Antoine. *He Could See It All*. 1870.
<https://pdimagearchive.org/images/87656e07-401c-4b50-be0e-793bfaff941d/>.

Intro to HTML & Considerations

- ❑ Tagged, reflowable, customizable.
- ❑ Easily opened on any device and browser.
- ❑ More complex and laborious.
- ❑ OJS has built-in styling of basic HTML.
- ❑ Resources:
 - ❑ W3Schools
 - ❑ University of Alberta Libraries HTML template
 - ❑ Alec Smecher, Multimodal Journal Publishing video, PKP



```
<div class="sidenav">
  <a href="#abstract">Abstract</a>
  <a href="#1">Background</a>
  <a href="#2">Findings</a>
  <a href="#3">Conclusion</a>
  <a href="#ref">References</a>
</div>
```

`<a href>` is a link.
Here, the `#heading` is linked to the heading text.

```
<div class="main">
  <h1>Article Title</h1>
  <p>Author 1<br />
  <i>Affiliated Institution</i></p>

  <a id="abstract"><h2>Abstract</h2></a>
  <div class="abstract">
    <p>Abstract Text</p>
  </div>
```

`<div>` is a container.
This `<main>` container includes bibliographic information: title, author, institution, etc. The internal elements are tagged with `<h1>` heading tags and `<p>` body tags.

```
<!-- Paste Article Text Here --!>

<br /><br /><br /><br />
<p class="caption">Journal Name, Volume,
  Issue</p>
</div>
```

`<!-- >` is a note.
Here, you would insert your article text using `<p>` tags, which are for body text.

```
</body>
</html>
```



- Abstract
- Background
- Findings
- Conclusion
- References

Article Title

Author 1
Affiliated Institution

Abstract

Abstract Text

Journal Name, Volume, Issue



Example of “filling” out of the University of Alberta Libraries’ HTML template.

Note the nested
structure!

```
<div class="main">
```

```
<h1>Here's Where the Title Goes!</h1>
```

```
<p>Kat Nguyen<br />
```

```
<i>LibraryPress@UF, University of Florida George A. Smathers  
Libraries</i></p>
```

```
<a id="abstract"><h2>Abstract</h2></a>
```

```
<div class="abstract">
```

```
<p>Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do  
eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim  
ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exercitation ullamco laboris nisi ut  
aliquip ex ea commodo consequat. Duis aute irure dolor in  
reprehenderit in voluptate velit esse cillum dolore eu fugiat nulla  
pariatur. Excepteur sint occaecat cupidatat non proident, sunt in culpa  
qui officia deserunt mollit anim id est laborum.</p>
```

```
</div>
```

```
<h2>The standard Lorem Ipsum passage, used since the 1500s</h2>
```

```
<p>Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod  
tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim  
veniam, quis nostrud exercitation ullamco laboris nisi ut aliquip ex ea  
commodo consequat. Duis aute irure dolor in reprehenderit in voluptate velit  
esse cillum dolore eu fugiat nulla pariatur. Excepteur sint occaecat cupidatat  
non proident, sunt in culpa qui officia deserunt mollit anim id est  
laborum.</p>
```



- Abstract
- Background
- Findings
- Conclusion
- References

```
<h1>Here's Where the Title Goes!</h1>
```

Here's Where the Title Goes!

Kat Nguyen
LibraryPress@UF, University of Florida George A. Smathers Libraries

Abstract

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exercitation ullamco laboris nisi ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat. Duis aute irure dolor in reprehenderit in voluptate velit esse cillum dolore eu fugiat nulla pariatur. Excepteur sint occaecat cupidatat non proident, sunt in culpa qui officia deserunt mollit anim id est laborum.

```
<a id="abstract"><h2>Abstract</h2></a>  
<div class="abstract">  
  <p>Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, [etc...]</p>  
</div>
```

The standard Lorem Ipsum passage, used since the 1500s

```
<h2>The standard Lorem Ipsum passage, used since the 1500s</h2>
```

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exercitation ullamco laboris nisi ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat. Duis aute irure dolor in reprehenderit in voluptate velit esse cillum dolore eu fugiat nulla pariatur. Excepteur sint occaecat cupidatat non proident, sunt in culpa qui officia deserunt mollit anim id est laborum.

Section 1.10.32 of "de Finibus Bonorum et Malorum", written by Cicero in 45 BC

Sed ut perspiciatis unde omnis iste natus error sit voluptatem accusantium doloremque laudantium, totam rem aperiam, eaque ipsa quae ab illo inventore veritatis et quasi architecto beatae vitae dicta sunt explicabo. Nemo enim ipsam voluptatem quia voluptas sit aspernatur aut odit aut fugit, sed quia consequuntur magni dolores eos qui ratione voluptatem sequi nesciunt. Neque porro quisquam est, qui dolorem ipsum quia dolor sit amet, consectetur, adipisci velit, sed quia non numquam eius modi tempora incidunt ut labore et dolore magnam aliquam quaerat voluptatem. Ut enim ad minima veniam, quis nostrum exercitationem ullam corporis suscipit laboriosam, nisi ut aliquid ex ea commodi consequatur? Quis autem vel eum iure reprehenderit qui in ea voluptate velit esse quam nihil molestiae consequatur, vel illum qui dolorem eum fugiat quo voluptas nulla pariatur?



Fisk, Harold. 1944. Ancient Courses: Harold Fisk's
Meander Maps of the Mississippi River, Plate 22, Sheet 6.
Office of the President, Mississippi River Commission.
[https://pdimagearchive.org/images/078b4af8-41d7-4f88c-
-a3f2-d74a69e616a2/](https://pdimagearchive.org/images/078b4af8-41d7-4f88c-a3f2-d74a69e616a2/).

**Don't worry about
perfection!**



LP@UF Journal Accessibility Page



<https://go.ufl.edu/jaccess>

Resources & Tools

RESOURCES

- A11Y Project: Check your WCAG compliance. <https://www.a11yproject.com/checklist/>
- A11Y Project: Resources. <https://www.a11yproject.com/resources/>
- Accessibility Fundamentals Overview, W3C, 2023. <https://www.w3.org/WAI/fundamentals/>
- **Accessibility Toolkit for Open Educational Resources (OER): PDFs, CUNY Library Services, 2024.** <https://guides.cuny.edu/accessibility/pdf>*
- Advocates for Accessible Digital Library Resources, Library Accessibility Alliance. <https://www.libraryaccessibility.org/>
 - Resources, Library Accessibility Alliance. <https://www.libraryaccessibility.org/resources>
- Choosing an Accessible Font, Recite Me. https://downloads.reciteme.com/hubfs/accessible_fonts_guide.pdf
- **Creating Accessible Content: A Guide for Journal Editors and Authors, Public Knowledge Project (PKP) Docs.** <https://docs.pkp.sfu.ca/accessible-content/en/>*
- **Creating Accessible PDFs, Harvard.** <https://accessibility.huit.harvard.edu/pdf>*
- **Creating Accessible PDFs, LinkedIn Learning, 2021.** <https://www.linkedin.com/learning/creating-accessible-pdfs-14445392/the-ultimate-guide-to-accessible-pdfs?u=41282748>*
- DAISY Accessible Publishing Knowledge Base. <http://kb.daisy.org/publishing/docs/>
- DAISY Consortium's free webinars on accessible publishing and reading. <https://daisy.org/webinar-series/>
- General Principles for Creating Accessible Content, PKP Docs. <https://docs.pkp.sfu.ca/accessible-content/en/principles>
- HTML Techniques, WCAG 2.2. <https://www.w3.org/WAI/WCAG22/Techniques/#html>
- Library Accessibility Alliance. <https://www.libraryaccessibility.org/>
- Library Accessibility Toolkit, 2020. <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Z0Pc6clz1jTUAYSWkm16TKk-dQXDZ03NAOMGSMpoZQ/edit?usp=sharing>
- **PDF Accessibility, University of California San Francisco.** <https://it.ucsf.edu/how-to/pdf-accessibility>*
- **PDF Accessibility, WebAIM, 2023.** <https://webaim.org/techniques/acrobat/>*
- **PDF Techniques, WCAG 2.2.** <https://www.w3.org/WAI/WCAG22/Techniques/#pdf>*
- WCAG 2 Overview, W3C, 2024. <https://www.w3.org/WAI/standards-guidelines/wcag/>
- Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.2, W3C, December 12, 2024. <https://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG/>

TOOLS

- **PAVE:** Free software that automatically corrects PDFs for accessibility (5MB max).
- **WAVE (Web accessibility evaluation tool):** A suite of evaluation tools designed for evaluating the accessibility of web content. Paste a web page address (URL) to evaluate its accessibility.
- **WebAIM Contrast Checker:** Used to check the contrast ratio of two colors for optimal readability. Great for designing journal branding materials, such as cover images, logos, etc.

