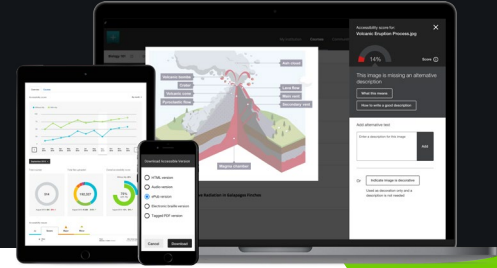


Instructor Package: Resources and Support



Info to help you become an Ally to inclusive learning. This instructor package contains:

New to Ally: Overview Documents

Become familiar with Ally's mission, key features, and getting started.

[Ally Basics](#)
[Ally Instructor Feedback](#)
[Course Accessibility Report](#)
[Accessibility Checklist](#)
[Four Learning Benefits of Alternative Formats](#)
[Discover Alternative Formats](#)
[Choose an Alternative Format](#)

Ally Micro-Learning

Learn about Ally one fix at a time. Walk through accessibility scenarios, and see how Ally feedback helps you improve inclusive learning in your course.

[Ally Accessibility Indicators](#)
[In-Browser Document Preview](#)
[Add Alternative Descriptions to Image Files](#)
[Remove Potentially Harmful Content](#)
[Scanned PDFs: An Enemy to Accessibility](#)
[Add a Library Reference](#)
[View All File Accessibility Issues](#)
[Add Alt Description to Power Point Images](#)
[Add Headings to a Word Document](#)
[Add Headers to your Data Tables in Word](#)
[Export a Word Doc as a Tagged PDF](#)

Basics

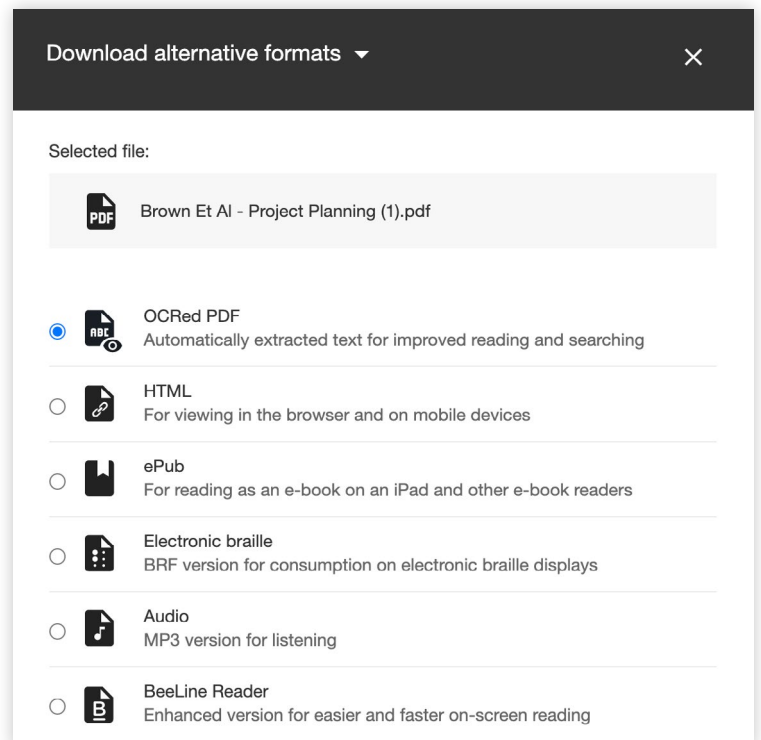
Accessible content is better content

Supporting Diverse Student Needs

Your class is full of diverse students with unique learning abilities, needs, and devices. Course content created with inclusion in mind can benefit not only your students with disclosed disabilities such as visual impairments and dyslexia, but improve the learning experience for all your students. Ally's Alternative Formats and Instructor Feedback help make your course more inclusive for all!

Alternative Formats

Ally automatically generates eight unique "Alternative Formats" of your course files and HTML content, and makes them available for download to you and your students. Formats are designed to work better with assistive technologies, mobile devices, and study tools. Select the "A" icon or anywhere you see "Alternative Formats" in your course to open the modal (pictured right). Based on the original file, you will see your list of available options. Choose the option you want and click "download." Your original file will not be affected by the alternative formats.



Accessibility Indicators

Addressing accessibility issues with your course content can improve the quality of the Alternative Formats for your students. To help you address those issues, Ally provides accessibility feedback within your course workflow. Log-in to your course site, and you will find the Accessibility Indicators (pictured below) next to files (Word Docs, PowerPoints, PDFs, Imagers). If you have no course files yet, upload one, and an indicator will appear next to the file name after a few minutes. Select the indicator to view the Instructor Feedback. Follow along step-by-step to address the issues identified.



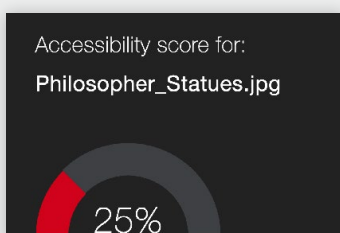
Needs help!



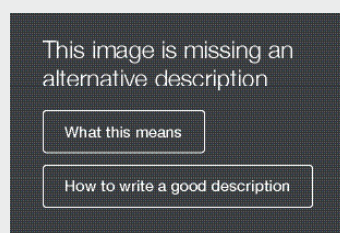
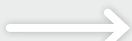
A little better



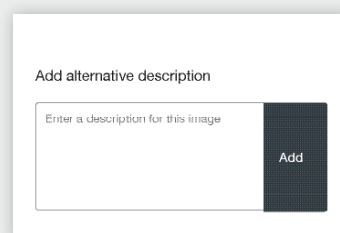
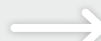
Almost there



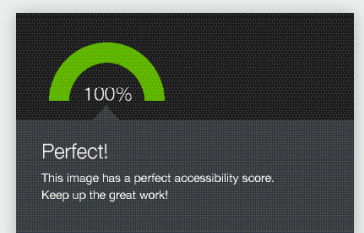
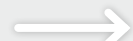
Click the Indicator



Read the Feedback



Improve your file



Increase your score

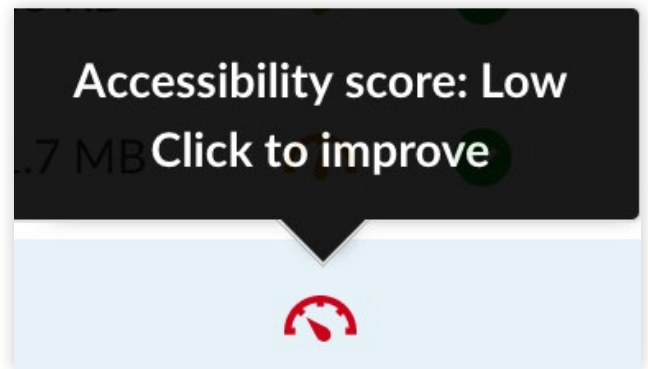
Instructor Feedback

Learn how to fix accessibility issues with your course content

Not sure about how to identify and correct accessibility issues with your course content? Not to worry. Ally provides you detailed feedback and support to help you become an accessibility pro. Learn about accessibility issues, why they matter, and how to fix them. Green is the goal! 🟢

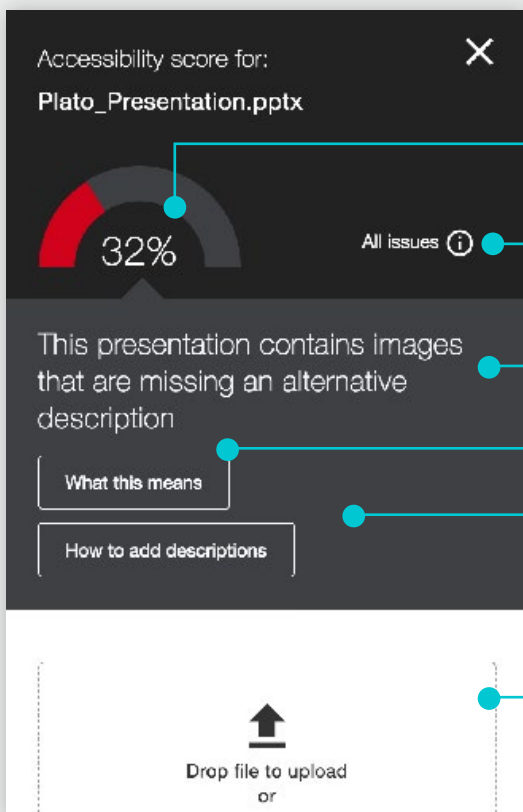
Find the Ally Indicators

Your course files and content will now have color “dials” next to them. They indicate the file’s level of accessibility, and are there to help you prioritize which files you want to fix first. Don’t worry, your students can’t see them. If you hover over the indicators, you’ll see if the accessibility score is “low,” “medium,” or “high.” Select the indicator to see the percentage score, specific issues affecting the file, and instructions for improving the file.

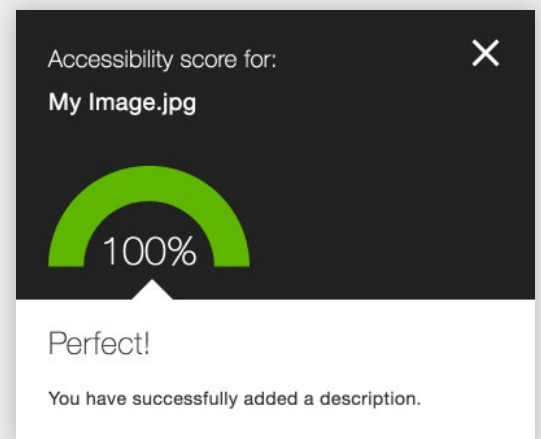


Navigating Ally Instructor Feedback

What’s the issue? → How can I fix it? → Success



- 1 Score shows level of accessibility
- 2 View all the file’s accessibility issues
- 3 Description of the most important accessibility issue
- 4 Explains how the issue affects inclusive learning
- 5 Detailed steps how to fix the issue
- 6 Add your changes in the dialogue box or upload new files



100% means Ally hasn’t detected any more issues, and your students will have a more accessible version to download Ally alternative formats. Congratulations! You’re on your way to a more inclusive learning environment for your students.

Course Accessibility Report

Strategize and prioritize how you fix your course content

Home

Announcements

Assignments

Discussions

Accessibility Report

Getting Started

Looking through your course files, you notice the Ally accessibility indicators and want to start fixing your content, but where to start? The instructor-facing course report helps you determine a pathway to more inclusive education that works for you. Use the report to tackle accessibility issues file by file, prioritize specific issues based on severity, or focus on the easiest issues first. Find your “**Accessibility Report**” in the left navigation menu of your course.



Course Score and Content Breakdown

In the top-left, find your Course Accessibility Score, which represents the average accessibility score across all your files and content. Each content item is checked against the WCAG 2.1 AA standards and scored based on the severity of issue or issues.

View a breakdown of the types of content and files in your course to analyze the diversity of your learning materials.

3 Pathways to Inclusion

Ease or impact?

Content with the easiest issues to fix

2

Start

Fix low scoring content

2

Start

If you're just getting started or trying to make some quick fixes, choose the easiest issues to fix. Or focus on your lowest scoring content and aim for impact.

Issue Severity

Severity	Issue	
	The document is malformed	2
	The document is missing a title	25
	The document is scanned and OCR'd	7

Focus on specific issues or tackle the most severe issues first. Use this table to address the most severe, major, and minor issues affecting your content and files.

File Score

	Plato'sRepublic.pdf	6	43%
	AncientGreece.pdf	6	80%
	Plato_Introduction.pdf	4	3%

View a list of your course files by accessibility score and number of issues. Launch the feedback directly from your Course Report to begin addressing the issues.

Accessibility Checklist

A quick-start reference to creating more accessible course content

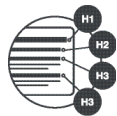
Accessible course content makes it easier for everyone to read and access your materials and can help improve overall quality and usability. There are many low-effort adjustments you can make to start creating more accessible content.



Use a font size of at least 12px.



Ensure that there is sufficient contrast between text and background. The [Paciello Group Contrast Analyzer](#) is a great tool.



Ensure that proper heading styles are used.



Ensure that a logical heading structure is used.



Ensure that images have an alternative description that can convey the full meaning of the image.



Ensure that tables are used for tabular data only.



Ensure that all tables have column headings.



Ensure that all lists use built-in list functionality.



Ensure that all links have text that describes the target.



Ensure that built-in PowerPoint slide templates are used.



Don't use scanned PDFs.



Ensure that all PDFs are tagged.

Four Learning Benefits of Alternative Formats

Learning Content that Works for You

Looking for course content that fits your learning needs, your busy schedule, and your multiple devices? **Alternative Formats** transform your course files into different formats to help you learn better. Next to your course files, click on the down arrow and select “**alternative formats**” to see your options. The file may take a few minutes to download. Remember, the quality of the alternative formats can depend on the original, so check the original file if something doesn’t look right.



Find a Higher Quality Alternative

The readability of your course materials can affect your comprehension and study practices. If you notice the original course file is a scanned PDF that you can’t highlight, copy-paste, or keyword search, try the **OCRed PDF** for an editable, easier to read document. Or if the font of the original is hard to read, try the **ePub** format to customize the font and contrast.



Enhance your Understanding

Did you know when you engage different senses- like reading a text and listening to a text- that you activate different parts of the brain, which can enhance your understanding? Try reading the **Tagged PDF** first and then listening to the **Audio MP3** for review. Or, if you are struggling to understand the text, you might try listening and reading at the same time.



Improve your Time Management

With your busy schedule, maximizing your time on task and study opportunities can help you reach your learning goals. If you’re reading on your mobile, try the **HTML** format for a file that’s responsive to your screen size so that you can read faster and with less distractions. Or listen to the **Audio MP3** when you’re on the go for extra time reviewing your materials.



Become a Better Learner

Think about the best format for your learning context and objective, and include multiple formats in your study process. Keep a journal of the formats you use leading up to an exam or paper to discover how you learn best. For more information on the alternative formats, check out:

<https://tinyurl.com/AltFormatsStudents>

Discover Alternative Formats

Find the Icon, Choose your Format

You can find Alternative Formats of your course content and files throughout your course by locating the icons (pictured below) or the phrase “Alternative Formats.” Here are a few ways you can download your content in file formats that works best for you.

Download course content where you see the

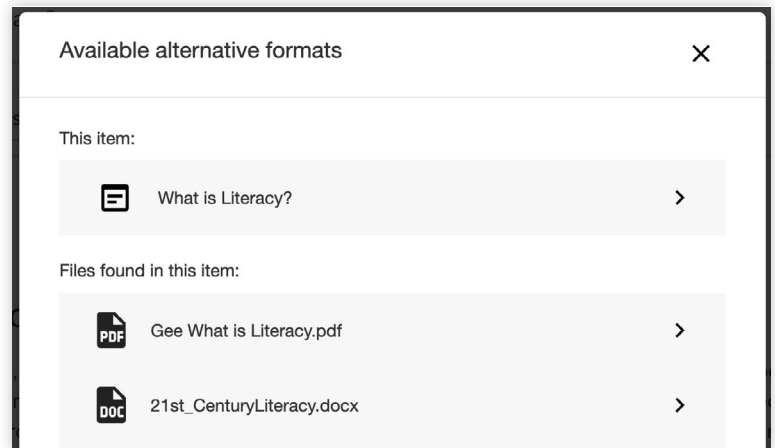
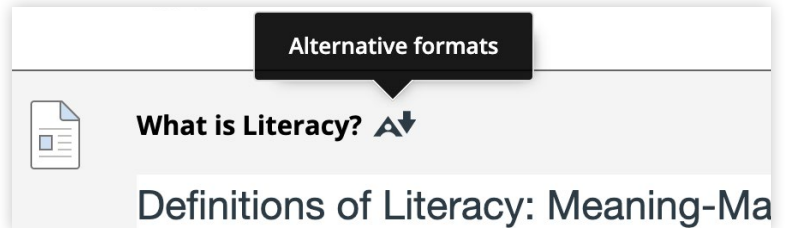


You can download content created by your instructor in your course as an Alternative Format by selecting the icon.

If there is only web-based content in your selection, you will see the menu of available formats, such as ePUB, BeeLine Reader, and MP3. Choose your desired format and select “download” to access.

If there are files such as PDFs, PowerPoint, Presentations or Word Docs attached to the content, select what you want to download from the list of available Alternative Formats. Once you select an item from the list, you can access the formats available for that item. Remember, your available options will depend on the type of file or content.

Alternative Formats need to be downloaded individually for each content item or file. Select the icon again after the first format has finished downloading to download another format.



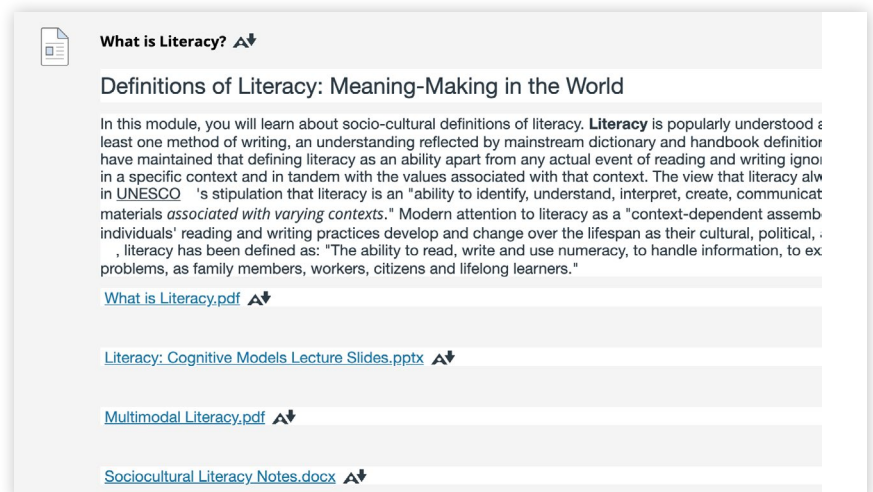
Download course files where you see the



If you want to download a course file attached to the course content directly, you can select the icon next to the file name.

If you're instructor has uploaded just a file, you select the icon to download an Alternative Format for that file.

Remember some file types and content may not be available as an Alternative Format, so you if you don't see an icon, select the original file.





Download an Alternative Format

Find file formats that support your learning

How do you prefer to engage with digital learning content? Do you read on your phone or tablet, use a screen reader, like to annotate and highlight, or listen to an audio version?

Ally automatically generates “Alternative Formats” from your instructor’s original course content and files, and makes them available for download so that you can engage with course content in a way that works best with your devices and study tools.

Know your options. Choose a format that’s right for you.

Format		Format Advantages
	OCRed PDF Automatically extracted text	Improved scanned documents Better reading and text search
	Tagged PDF Structured PDF for assistive technology	Improved structure for navigation Essential for screen readers
	HTML For browser and mobile	Customize your text Adapts text to mobile screen sizes
	ePub Reading on tablets and e-book readers	eBooks on tablets Annotating and highlighting
	Electronic braille BRF file for electronic braille displays	Tactile Reading Relief from screenreaders
	Audio MP3 recording of text	Listen and learn on the go Engage different modalities
	BeeLine Reader A machine translated version of the doc	Improved on-screen reading Read faster and with greater focus
	Translated version (opt-in format) A machine translated version of the doc	Translate text to a different language Access 50 different translations

Click “Download.” Your file may take a few minutes to generate

For more info on alternative formats, visit: <https://tinyurl.com/AllyAlternativeFormats>

Accessibility Indicators

Feedback on the accessibility level of your course files

Ally Micro-Learning

Ally provides you feedback on the accessibility of your course files with the colored dials that appear next to your file names (Red, Orange, Light Green, and Dark Green). These indicators are only visible to you and other instructors with access to your course. Ally checks most file formats, but there may be some files in your course that don't have an Ally indicator next to them. Remember, Green is the Goal!

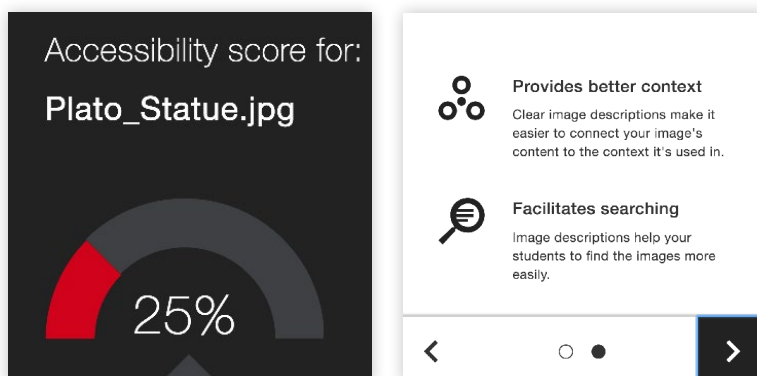
Scenario: You see a red indicator “dial” next to a file

1



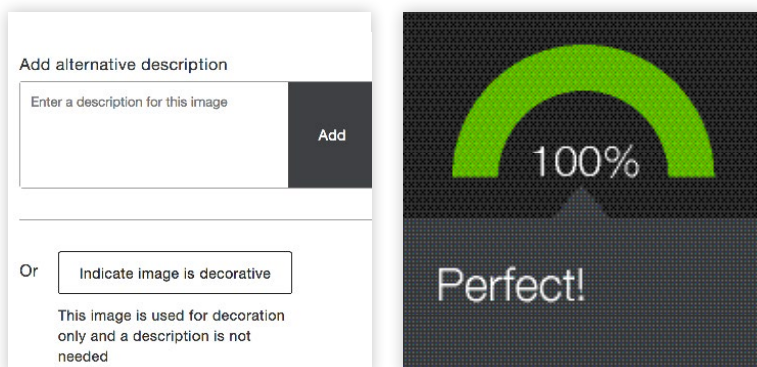
You notice the red indicator appear after adding a new file to your course. Or, your institution just added Ally, and now you see a red indicator next to your course file. You mouse over to the red dial and see the “accessibility score” when you hover over the indicator.

2



When you click the indicator, Ally walks you through a series of steps to make the file more accessible. Ally organizes this feedback in a decision tree, so all you need to do is read the directions and respond to the prompts. Learn what the issue is, why it matters, and how to correct it appropriately.

3



In some cases, Ally will allow you to make the fix directly, such as adding an alternative description to an image file. In other cases, Ally links you to resources to help solve the problem in the tools you're using to create content. Upload a new file directly to Ally, and watch your score improve.

In-Browser Document Preview

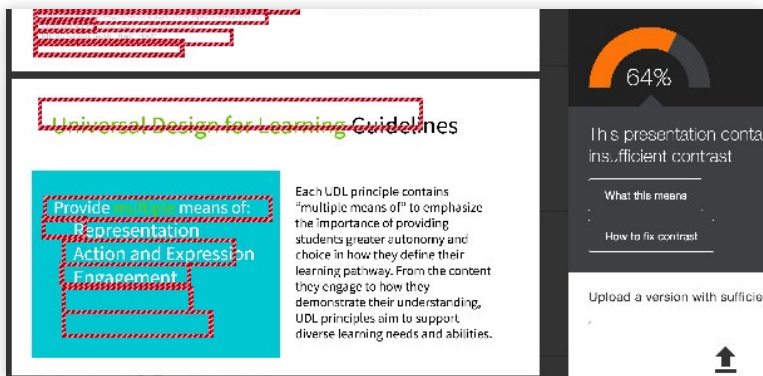
Identify where the accessibility issues appear in your files

Ally Micro-Learning

When attempting to fix accessibility issues with course files, it can help to know exactly where certain issues appear in the document. When you launch Ally's instructor feedback by selecting an indicator next to your course file, a preview of your document will appear next to the feedback panel. For contrast issues, images missing a description, and tables missing headers, Ally will highlight where those issues appear in the document with a red box outline to help you make your fixes when returning to your authoring tool.

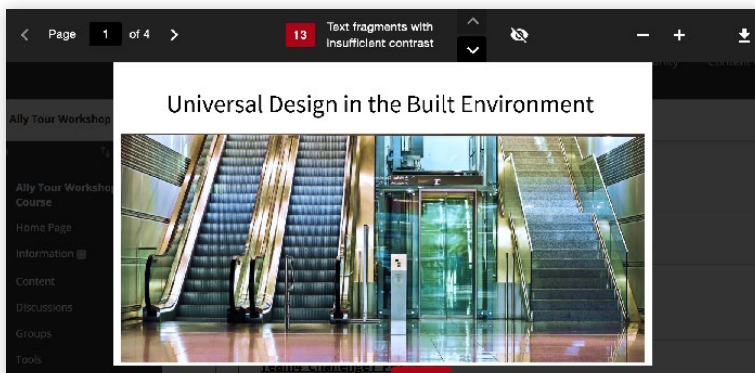
Scenario: You have a Power Point file with contrast issues

1



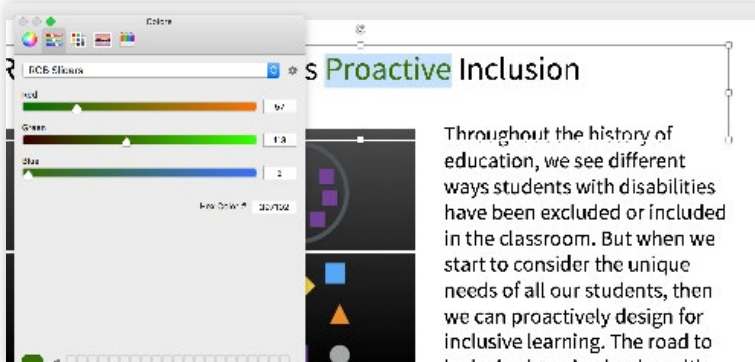
You click the orange indicator next to your PowerPoint presentation. You notice the file has multiple issues, so you select “All issues” and notice the file has “contrast issues.” You select “Fix.” In the document preview to the left of the feedback, you see a red box appear around part of your slide.

2



You can scroll through your document in the preview or use the navigation bar at the top of the preview. The solid red square reports the total number of times contrast issues appear in the document. You can use the up/down arrows to navigate issue by issue, or the page arrows to move page by page. You can toggle the red box outlines on/off by selecting the ‘eye’ icon.

3



Select the down arrow in the top-right corner of the navigation bar to download the file if you don't have access to it. Use a contrast checker like the “Colour Contrast Analyzer” from the Paciello group to ensure your color combinations meet accessibility standards. In Power Point, highlight the text and set the RGB values or hex code to select the desired color. Then upload your fixed file.

Add Alternative Description for Image Files

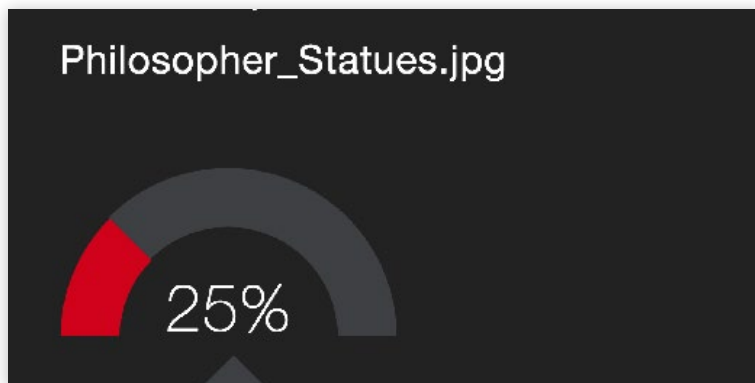
Add a rich description to images and graphs to improve comprehension

Ally Micro-Learning

Images can be a great way to engage your learners with different modes of learning, and can help communicate complex ideas to students. For students with visual impairments, “alternative descriptions” that explain the content of an image are crucial for their learning. For all students, text descriptions can provide deeper context to aid their comprehension.

Scenario: You add an image file to your course for students

1



If your image lacks a text description, the Ally indicator will appear “red.” Selecting the indicator will reveal that the file is only 25% accessible because it lacks an alternative description. Click the “What this means” button for an explanation, and “How to write a good description” for some quick tips.

2

When you’re ready, simply add your alternative description to the text field in the Ally feedback window. You can also edit existing text in the box. When you’re done, select “Add.” Make sure your description is more than just the title of the file, or Ally will report an accessibility error. Describe the image and what’s important, and mention any text in the image to improve your score.

3

Decorative images

In some cases, the image may be non-informative or doesn't represent relevant content. You don't have to describe these images, but you do have to indicate that they are decorative by using the 'Indicate image is decorative' button.

Example

Accessibility score for:
Philosopher_Statues.jpg

100%

Perfect!

You have successfully added a description.

If your image is only for visual effects, and does not contain info relevant to the learning content, you can also mark the image as “decorative.” This means no alternative description is necessary, and your accessibility score will improve. This helps assure students of the purpose of those files.

Remove Potentially Harmful Content

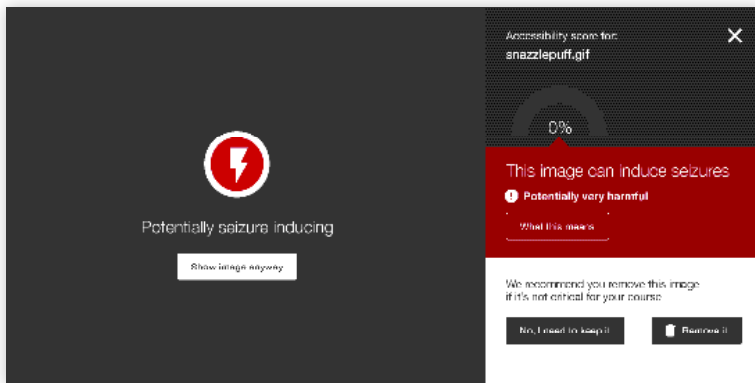
Digital media can trigger unexpected responses from students

Ally Micro-Learning

The Internet is full of fun content, and adding creative media elements to your course can boost student engagement. However, GIFs and other visual media with rapid movement, flickering, or dizzying complexity have the potential to trigger seizures or other harmful responses in students. Ally identifies these files, and scores them as “Red, 0% accessible.” Follow the instructions to help ensure all students can safely interact with your course content.

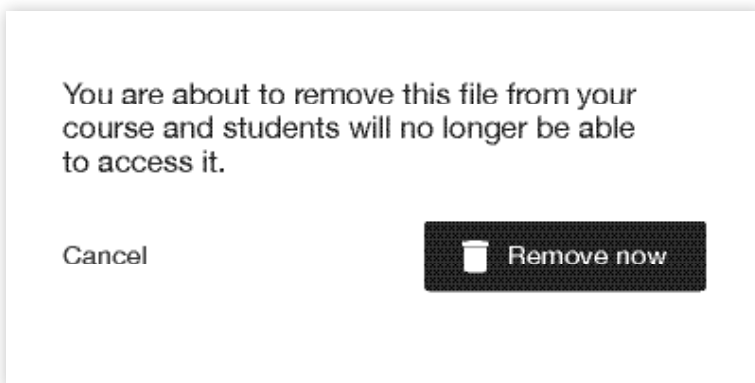
Scenario: **You click a red indicator, its “potentially harmful”**

1



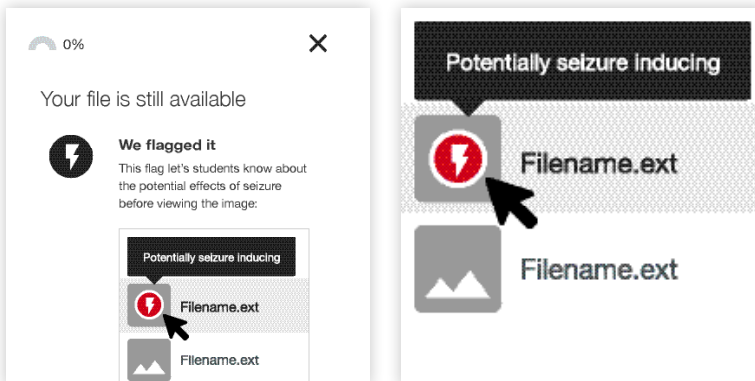
You’re adding some visual media to your course to embed later in a discussion, and you notice a red Ally indicator next to the file. You select the indicator, and see that Ally has marked the file as “potentially harmful.” You have two choices:

2



The recommended choice from an inclusion perspective is to remove the file, and replace it with something similar and less harmful. This will ensure that all your students can engage with the content safely.

3



If the content is essential to your course, Ally will flag the content and alert students before opening the file. In case the students are susceptible to seizure from flashing or visually complex images, they will receive a warning from Ally before opening.

Scanned PDFs: An Enemy to Accessibility

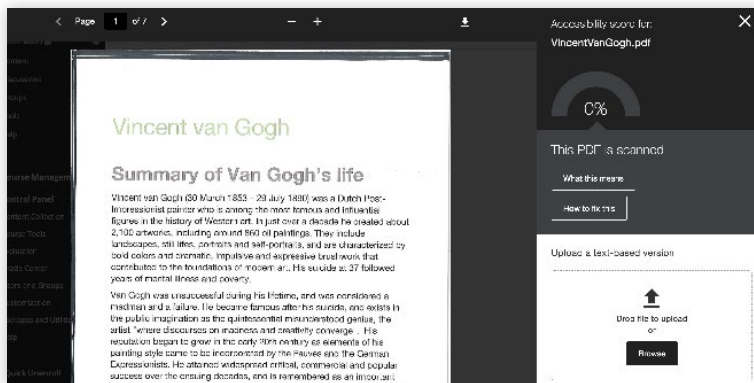
Scanning pages from old text books results in inaccessible documents

Ally Micro-Learning

Preparing to teach a course is a lot of work, and sometimes you might be left with a scanned copy from a book in your files. Unfortunately, scanned texts are very inaccessible, and create lots of challenges for all students to read and study effectively. When you come across a scanned PDF, do your best to replace it with a proper digital text document.

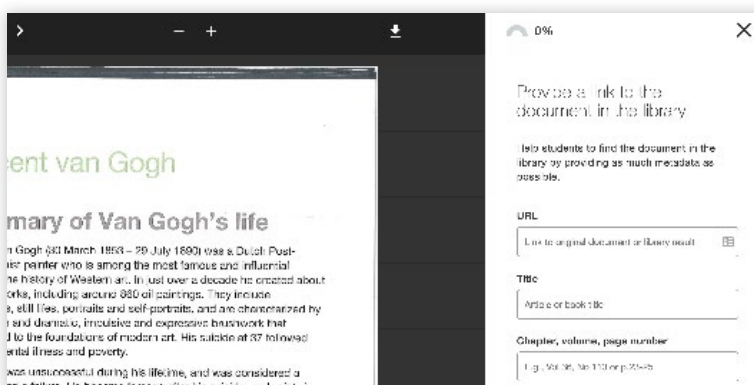
Scenario: A red indicator informs you of a scan. What now?

1



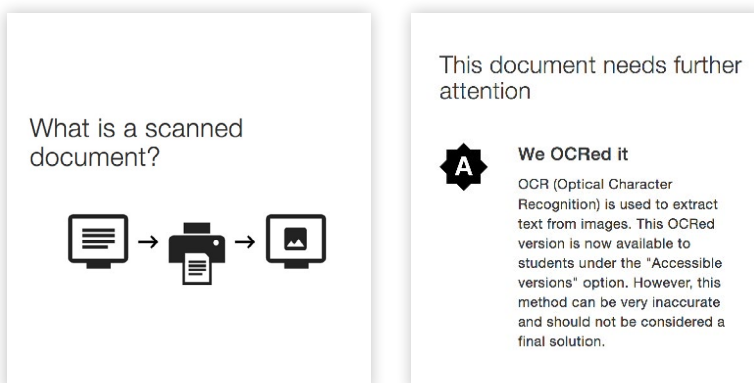
Uh oh. You see a red indicator and its a poor score. You click the indicator for the Ally feedback, and realize it is a scan with 0% accessibility. Yikes! First thing: Can you find a text version online through search? Upload a digital text to Ally to improve your score.

2



It might still be difficult for you to find a digital text version. Reaching out to your library or accessibility services before the start of the term can help make sure students who need those formats don't fall behind. You can also add a "Library Reference" to Ally to help your students.

3



As a last result, Ally will perform "Optical Character Recognition" (OCR) to try to better identify text elements. Unfortunately, this is not a final solution so it won't improve the score, and you will still want to replace the scanned version when possible.

Hint: You can use Alternative Formats to fix a scanned document. Learn how in this video tutorial: <https://tinyurl.com/DefeatScanMan>

Add a Library Reference

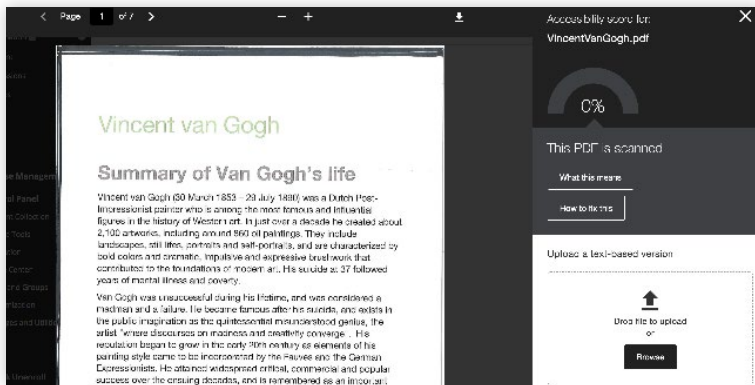
When all else fails, add bibliographic info to help students

Ally Micro-Learning

There may be times when you simply cannot find a fully accessible version of your course file. As a last best effort, Ally will allow you to add some more bibliographic information to the file. Adding this info will help students work with your campus office to find or create an accessible version of the file.

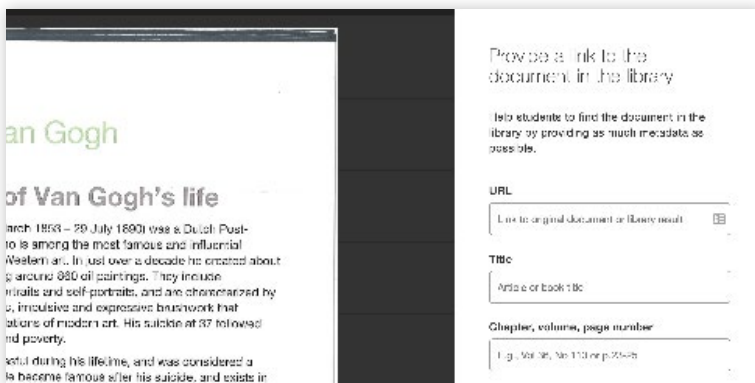
Scenario: About to launch your course and Ally flags a file

1



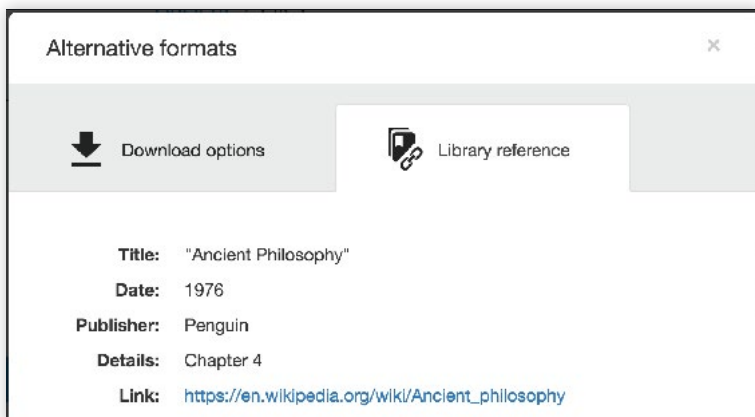
While embedding a PDF link in your course Discussion, a red Ally indicator appears. You click the indicator, and realize the PDF is scanned. You see the option to upload a digital text version, but you do not know where to access a digital text version.

2



Ally will ask you if the document can be found in the library. If you think it can be, click “Yes” and add whatever info you have about the document in the form, including a link to the document in your library catalogue. This will help students work with the accessibility office to find a suitable version.

3



Once you add the Library Reference, students can access the document info by going to the file, and selecting “alternative formats” from the drop-down next to the file name. This will open the Ally alternative formats window, where students can access the library reference info from the “Library Reference” tab.

View All File Accessibility Issues

Choose which issues to address first with “All Issues” tab

Ally Micro-Learning

Creating accessible digital learning content can be a challenge, and a single course file may contain multiple issues impacting its accessibility for students. Ally gives you options for fixing those issues, allowing you to craft an accessibility strategy suitable to your course needs. Prioritize high-impact issues, or focus on quick fixes first with Ally “All Issues.”

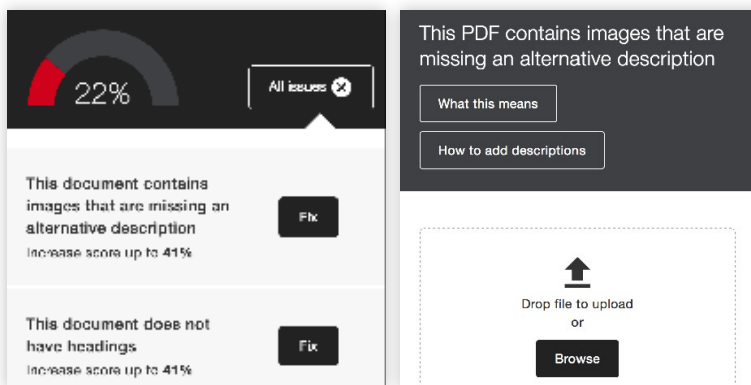
Scenario: A course file has multiple issues to address

1



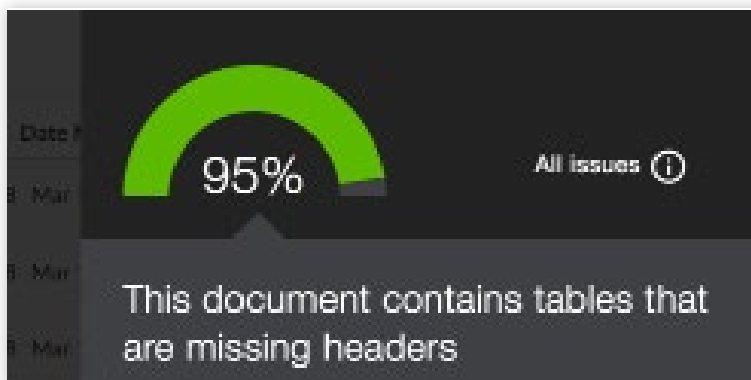
When you select an Ally indicator, the instructor feedback window will let you know the most pressing accessibility issue to correct. It also provides an option to view “All Issues” when the file has multiple accessibility issues to address.

2



From the “All Issues” tab, you can see a list of all the accessibility issues Ally has identified in the file. Ally lets you know how much each issue fix will improve your accessibility score.

3



Choose how you want to proceed in addressing each issue. Select “Fix” to view step-by-step details on how to correct each issue. Upload or add your changes with each issue, or address them all at once. The closer to 100% the score means the closer you are to a more inclusive learning environment for your students.

Add Descriptions to Power Point Images

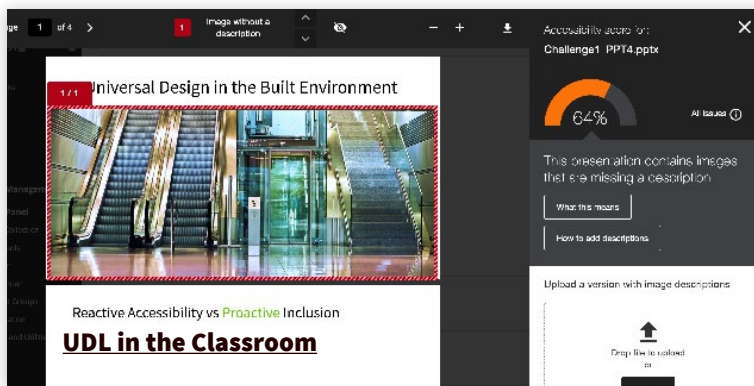
Images in presentation documents need alt text

Ally Micro-Learning

Sharing presentation slides with students can provide them useful review and study materials. Since many presentations include images, it is important that the images contain an alternative description, to help both in labeling document images as well as for students with visual impairments.

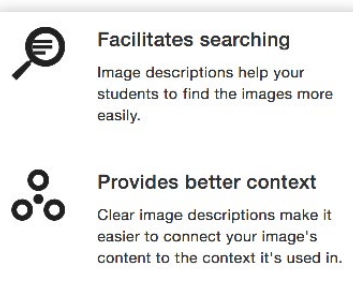
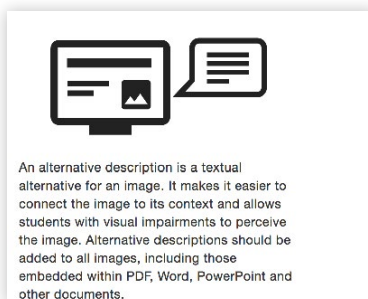
Scenario: Your favorite presentation has an orange indicator

1



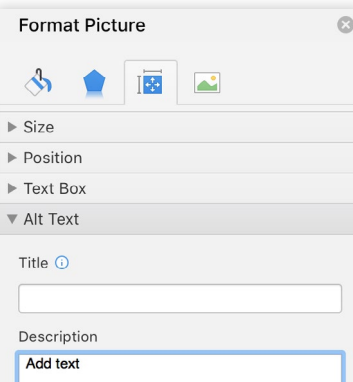
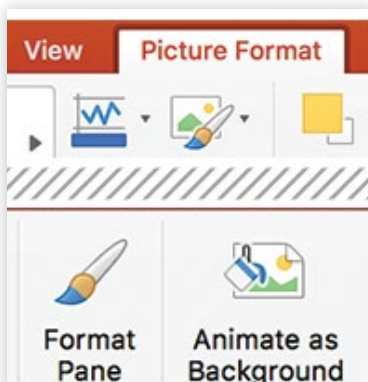
When you select the orange indicator next to your Power Point file, the Ally instructor feedback informs you that the presentation has images missing descriptions. You'll need to fix this issue in Power Point, and upload a new file to Ally when you're ready. Use the in-browser document preview to the left of the feedback to see which images are missing descriptions.

2



Ally will describe to you how to write effective alternative descriptions if you are unfamiliar. You can download the file from your course to work on it if you don't already have it on your computer. Open the file in Power Point to add your alt descriptions.

3



In Power Point , you can add alternative descriptions to an image by:

1. Select the Image.
2. Choose the "Picture Format" tab and locate the "Format Pane" button.
3. Select "Size and Properties" tab, and then alt text from the drop-down.
4. Add your text in the description field, don't worry about title. Save your file.
5. Back in your course, select the Ally indicator for PPT file, and upload your new saved file into the upload area.

Add Headings to a Word Document

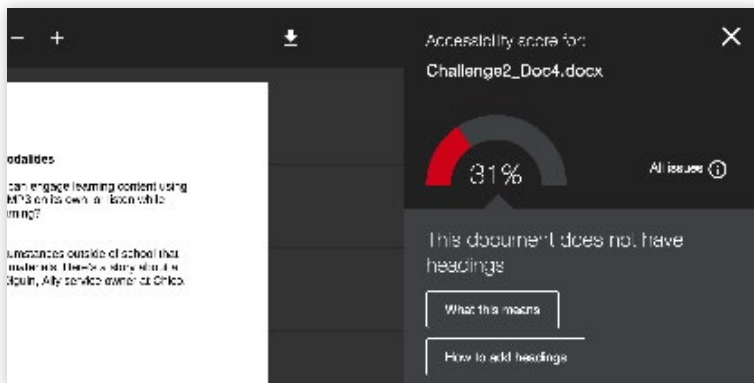
Headings make navigating documents easier for all

Ally Micro-Learning

Reading long, dense text documents can be a daunting task for learners. Well-structured documents help students organize and process texts. By using headings in your Word document styles, you can design sections and sub-sections for your documents. Headers can help students navigate and comprehend texts, and are essential for screen readers.

Scenario: Ally tells you your Word Doc is missing headings

1



You add a MS Word document to your course site, and notice a red Ally indicator, so you click it. Ally tells you that your document is missing headings. You'll need to download the file, open it up in MS Word to make your changes, and then upload your new version of the file to improve your score.

2

A 'heading' isn't always a heading

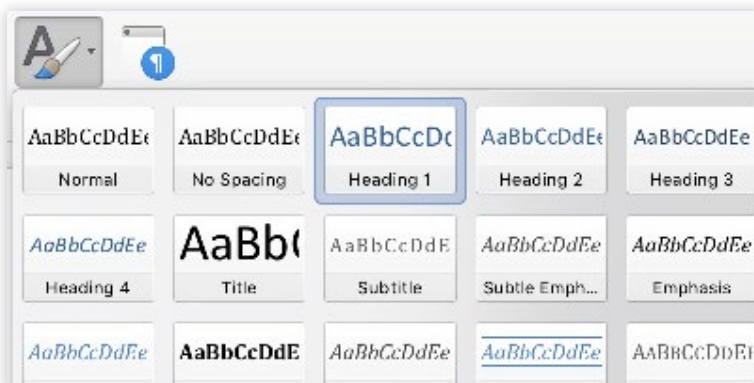
Do not only use visual appearance such as text size, bold or underline to mimic a heading. Always use the program's native heading styles to ensure headings are properly marked as headings.

Why use headings

- Facilitates searching**
 Headings can provide structure and clarity. This can help students better understand the content and facilitate reading.
- Essential for students with visual impairments**
 Headings help people using a screen reader navigate a document. Imagine reading a book without any chapters or

Check out the Ally feedback to learn more about why headings are important, how to use headings effectively, and where to find tutorials to help you add headings to the document. Think of headings like the outline of a paper and remember headings should provide a clear, consistent structure for students to follow throughout the doc.

3



If you're using MS Word, first highlight the text you want to change into a heading. Then, find "Styles" and select the appropriate heading type. You can adjust the font and color of the heading if you don't like the default. Use a logical heading order, and try not to exceed 6 levels. Once you've corrected the heading structure, save the Word file and upload to Ally.

Add Headers to your Data Tables in Word

Headers make navigating tables easier

Ally Micro-Learning

Using tables in your documents can be a great way to help organize complex information for students. To create accessible tables, only use tables for data, and not for visual layouts. This means you should avoid blank or merged cells, and ensure that the content in rows and columns align. By adding headers to your tables, you will improve how your students navigate tables, especially if they use a screen reader.

Scenario: You upload a Word Doc with tables

1

When uploading a Word document to your course, you notice a light green indicator. You select the indicator and discover that Ally reports tables in your document are missing headers. In the preview to the left, you see red outlines around the tables missing headers. Select “What this means” in the sidebar to learn more about accessible tables.

2

Why use table headers

Easier formatting
When a table has a header assigned, it makes it easier to format the table afterwards.

Essential for students with visual impairments
Students with visual impairments need table headers to be able to interpret the table properly. Without table headers, each cell is read out without referring to the column or row that the cell belongs to.

To correct the issues, download the file and open it in MS Word or your authoring tool.

Add headers in Word by:

3

- Highlight the first row in your table that explains what’s in each column
- From the “Table Design” tab at the top, check the box for “Header Row”.
- Next, right select your highlighted row, select “Table Properties”, and check “Repeat as header row”
- Once you’ve corrected the heading structure, save the Word file. Then select the Ally indicator for the Word File you fixed, upload your saved file by dragging into the box or selecting ‘browse’ at the bottom of the Instructor Feedback.

Export a Word Doc as a Tagged PDF

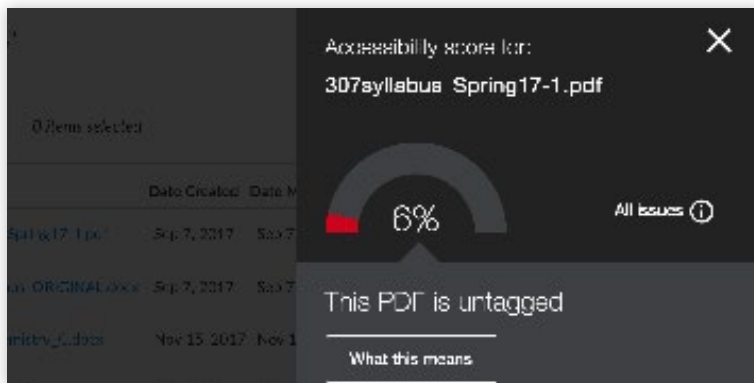
Ensure that your Word Doc stays accessible when converting to PDF

Ally Micro-Learning

Although keeping your documents as a .doc or .docx file is the best way to ensure the document remains accessible, many instructors prefer to export their Word docs as PDF. When exporting as PDF, it is important that you check your export settings to make sure that the PDF will be tagged, as this will make sure the document is easy to navigate.

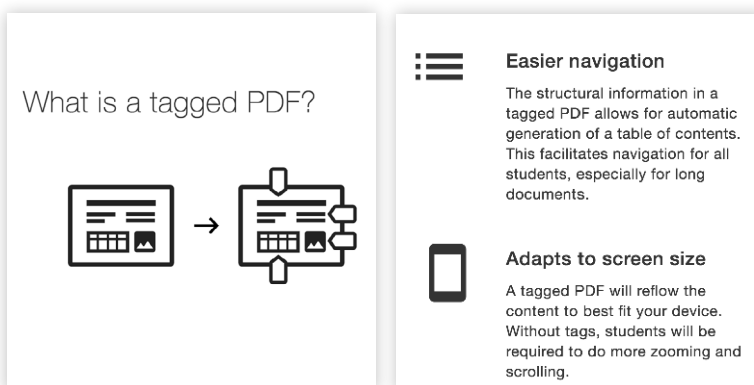
Scenario: You upload an untagged PDF of your syllabus

1



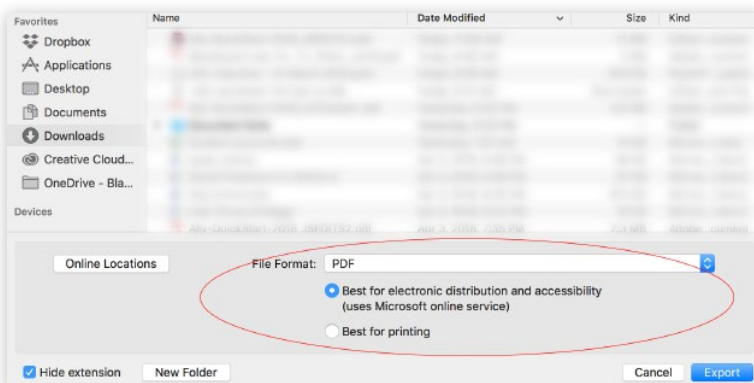
You created your syllabus in a Word doc, exported it as PDF, and added it to your course. A red Ally indicator appears next to your file, and informs you that your PDF is untagged.

2



A tagged document provides readers with improved navigation, helps keep texts organized, and is essential for students who use a screen reader. You can upload the Word file to maintain accessibility, or your Word doc as a PDF with the correct settings.

3



To export a Word document as a tagged PDF, go to "File," select "Save As" then select PDF from the drop-down. You will notice a dialogue box, check "Best for electronic distribution and accessibility." Then upload your newly tagged PDF to Ally.