Accessible Word Document Checklist

Styles

- » Edit Styles in order to format the document.
- » Style elements have a different look from the others (i.e. Heading 1 looks bigger than Heading 2, etc.).
- » Headings levels are correctly ordered (i.e. Heading 1 is displayed above Heading 2, etc.).
- » Do NOT use font formatting to style text; use the Styles pane to manage styles.

Fonts

- » Use a sans serif font - such as Arial, Helvetica, or Verdana.
- » Be consistent with the font used in the document.
- » Use 12 point or larger.
- » Using italics or upper-case letters for emphasis is not recommended.
    - » Use bold with a larger font and/or color to create additional emphasis. Most screen readers lack support for emphasis.

Colors

- » Use appropriate color contrast for foreground to background color (e.g. black and white).
- » Use the Color Contrast Analyser tool or similar software to measure color contrast for regular and large text.
    - » WCAG 2.0 level AA requires a contrast ratio of at least 4.5:1 for normal text (14 point - typically 18.66px and bold) and 3:1 for large text (18 point - typically 24px or larger).
    - » If your materials are being recorded online, increase your color contrast ratio by .5%. Example: Minimum color contrast is 4.5:1; to ensure the video will remediate correctly with regular text, contrast should be 5:1 and large text 3.5:1.
- » Make sure that all information conveyed with color can also be conveyed without color.
- » For print documents, use a matte/non-glossy finish to avoid reflections from lights.

Spacing

- » To start a new page, use the Insert tab then Page Break. Don't press Enter repeatedly to start a new page.
- » Space between the lines should be at least 25 to 30% of the point size. Adjust spacing using the Paragraph formatting menu.
- » Do not use tables for controlling layout. Only use tables for data.

Images

- » Set wrapping style of non-text elements as "In line with text".
- » Add alternative text to graphics and images and limit to 125 characters for better screen reader compatibility.
- » If you have multiple elements making up an image, combine them into one image using the Group feature, then assign the alternative text.
- » Avoid text boxes, Word Art, Smart Art, and watermarks as they're inaccessible to screen readers.
- » Avoid using watermarks and background images as they can make documents illegible.

Columns

- » To properly insert a column, use Page Layout tab then Columns.
- » Avoid using spaces and tabs to create columns; they will not be recognized as a column by assistive technology.

Tables

- » Use the Insert tab then Table to properly insert.
- » Use proper Table Headings and check the Header Row check box.
- » If a table is longer than a page, heading rows must be repeated at the top of the table on each of the following pages.
- » Avoid copying and pasting tables from other sources into Word.

Hyperlinks

- » Ensure that the Hyperlink has context and describes where it leads.
    - » Example: More information on California Adult Education.
- » Avoid using "Click here" or "More info" as a link title.

Graphs and Charts

- » Add a short caption preceding the chart or graph that describes their content.
- » Provide an alternative presentation of any findings. For many charts, the best alternative format in which to present data is a table with the original figures.

Headers and Footers

- » Do not manually type the page numbers. Use the Insert tab then Page Number.

Accessibility Checker

- » Click on the Review tab and choose Check Accessibility.
- » Fix any errors and address any warnings using the above rules.

Accessible PowerPoint Presentations Checklist

Fonts

» Be consistent with the fonts used in the document and strive for 2-3 typefaces.

» Use a sans serif font – such as Arial, Helvetica or Verdana - that is large enough for both projectors and online viewing.

» Ensure font size is no less than 24-points.

» Avoid using text shadow or glow effects for any text as they may not be accessible by screen readers. **This also will make it extremely difficult to remediate the final PDF file.**

» Using italics or upper-case letters for emphasis is not recommended. Use a bold face or larger font size to create emphasis.

Colors

» Use a tool such as the Color Contrast Analyser to to measure color contrast for regular and large text. See **Colors** section in **Accessible Word Document Checklist** for more details.

» Determine the presentation environment lighting then use either a dark background with bright text in your slides for a dark room or a lighter background with dark text for a lit room.

» Make sure that all information conveyed with color can also be conveyed without color.

» For print documents use a matte/non-glossy finish when possible to avoid reflections from lights.

Spacing

» Avoid cramming a lot of information onto a slide as it can be confusing and unreadable.

    » Limit the number of bullet points to 4-5 per slide.

    » Strive to limit the number of words per bullet point to 5.

    » Space between the lines should be at least 25 to 30% of the point size. Use the Line Spacing tool.

Images

» Add alternative text to graphics and images and limit to 125 characters for better screen reader compatibility.

» Avoid text boxes and Word Art as they may be inaccessible to screen readers.

Slide Animations and Transitions

» Avoid automatic slide transitions.

» Avoid slide transitions and animations. Spirals, wipes, and other types of transitions can be visually confusing, particularly when they freeze or stagger on slow connections.

» Consider incorporating slide transitions that include sound. This allows audience members who are blind or visually impaired to know when you are moving to a new slide.

» Open the Transitions menu and select None.

» In the right-hand menu, select Sound > Click.

Graphs and Charts

» Add a short caption preceding the chart or graph that describes their content.

» Provide an alternative presentation of any findings. For many charts, the best alternative format in which to present data is a table with the original figures in the following slide.

Tables

» Use the Insert tab then Table to properly insert.

» Use proper Table Headings and check the Header Row check box.

» If Adobe Acrobat Pro is not understood or available to remediate the final PDF, avoid tables.

Hyperlinks

» Ensure Hyperlinks have context and describe where they lead.

    » Example: More information on California Adult Education.

» Avoid using "Click here" or "More info" as a link title.

Outline and Notes Panels

» Place the slides in a logical order in the Outline Panel.

» Avoid placing image or chart descriptions in the Notes Panel. This information may not be accessed by a screen reader, so use with caution.

Embedded Audio or Video

» If your presentation has embedded audio or video, you should include text transcripts and/or captions.

Screen Reader Content Order

» Ensure all items are in logical order for screen readers using the Selection pane found under the Home tab, Arrange menu.

» The content on the slide will be information spoken by the screen reader. Consider what order will be most helpful.

    » Slide Number, Title, Text, Image, Footnote.

Slide Titles

» Give each slide a unique title. Add numbers for topical sequences.

Accessibility Checker

» Choose File, Check for Issues, Check Accessibility.

» Fix any errors and address any warnings using the above rules.