

## Canva Design Kit for Accessibility

**What do I need to keep in mind when designing in Canva?** Increasingly, Canva is being used to design newsletters and flyers for publishing departmental announcements and events. There are a few design strategies that can be implemented in Canva to make these documents accessible to our campus community's diverse user needs.

Keep in mind that the goal of accessible design is to create media that are easy to use and navigate.. Implementing the following three simple design strategies will improve the accessibility of your documents immediately. First, start by using bigger bolder sans serif fonts to make your text easier to read online. Next, use fonts and background colors that are high in contrast to each other. Finally, use short meaningful hyperlinks to improve navigability and your user's experience overall.

### 1. Use a sans serif font whenever possible.



Avoid serif fonts like this. This serif font (with little feet) is difficult for some persons with visual impairments to read.

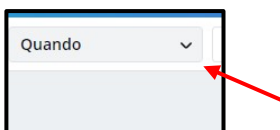


Use sans serif fonts instead. This sans serif font is easier to read, especially when it is used on a computer monitor.

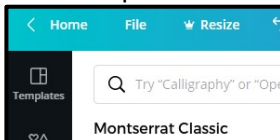
### 2. Change out the template's serif fonts to sans serif fonts. A good font to choose in Canva is Montserrat Classic.



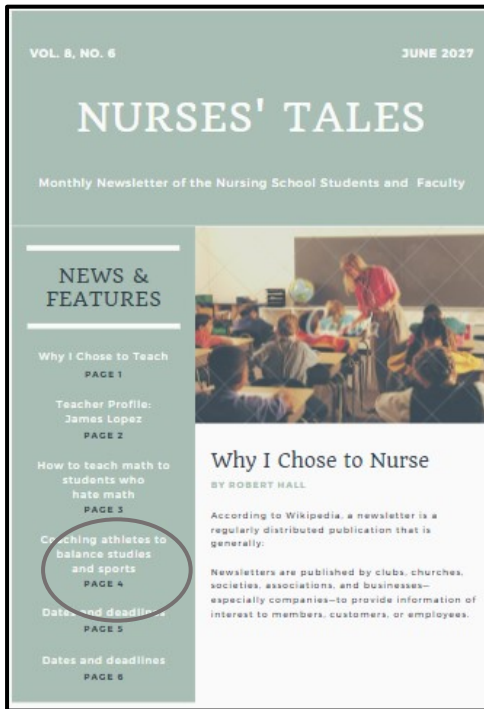
Highlight the text you want to change in the template. A window appears above your document pane identifying the font face you're currently highlighting.



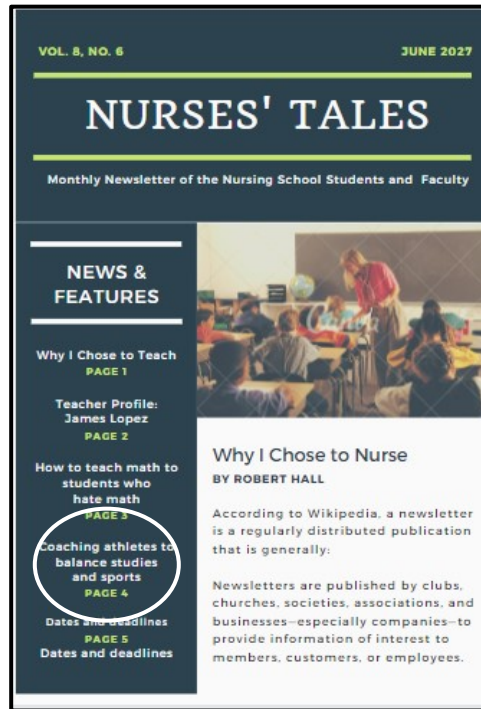
In the dropdown font menu, select a new sans serif font, like Montserrat.



- Take a look at your template more broadly now. Make sure all of the colors used are high contrast, allowing white and black lettering to stand out more boldly against background colors.



(Not enough color contrast here, and font is too small).



Change element colors to increase contrast. (Good color contrast here, and an increased font size allows for improved readability).

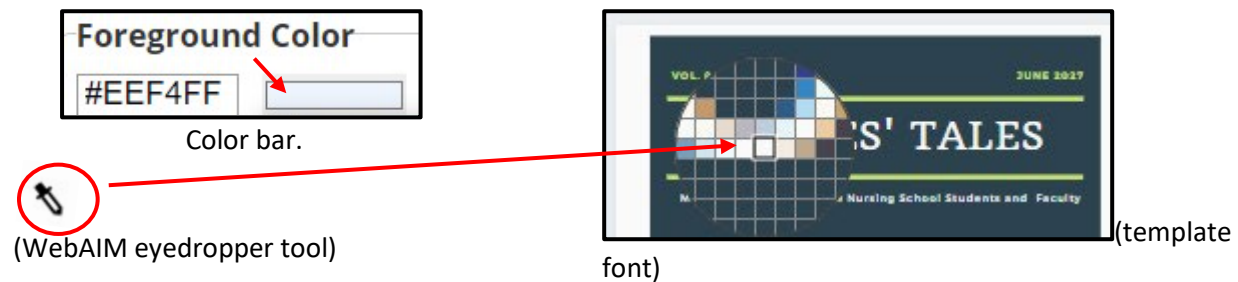
- If you're unsure about whether there's enough contrast in your document, a site like [WebAIM](#) provides simple tools for checking contrast and other accessibility issues (no account needed).

Here, WebAIM reports the color choices in the original template design do not pass visual accessibility standards. We will learn how to perform this contrast check next.



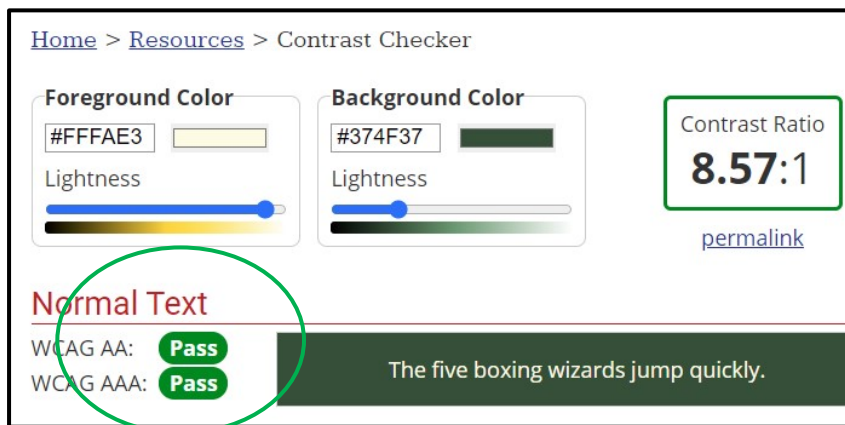
- Open a session of WebAIM contrast checker, and slide that window to one side of your monitor screen. Open your Canva template, and slide it to the opposite side of your monitor so that both windows are situated side-by-side.

- Next, in WebAIM, click on the Foreground Color\ bar to make an eyedropper tool appear underneath the bar. Click and drag the eyedropper tool over to a line of text in your template. The tool magnifies pixels for you. Click on the pixel that is lightest in your text.



- Now repeat that process with the WebAIM Background color bar, and when the eyedropper tool appears, drag it over to a darker background color situated near your text again, and click on it.

If there's sufficient color contrast between the foreground and background colors, WebAIM will indicate that the contrast check scores an accessibility pass.



**Why make your hyperlinks meaningful and concise?** A person using a screen reader may need to isolate hyperlinks from the rest of a document's text. If the link's text is meaningful, the listener can identify and select the link more quickly.

Ex. [Click to visit animals at the zoo.](#)

Vs.

[https://www.google.com/search?q=animals+at+a+zoo&rlz=1C1GCEU\\_enUS947US947&sxsrf=ALeKk02gWFTXBauH7gNxAd2hGZK2ffXEHA:1622813296360&source=lnms&tbn=isch&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjDqsPQiv7wAhWFyp4KHdgiDgUQ\\_AUoAXoECAEQAw&biw=2123&bih=850#imgrc=hwZExKoVYwOL2M](https://www.google.com/search?q=animals+at+a+zoo&rlz=1C1GCEU_enUS947US947&sxsrf=ALeKk02gWFTXBauH7gNxAd2hGZK2ffXEHA:1622813296360&source=lnms&tbn=isch&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjDqsPQiv7wAhWFyp4KHdgiDgUQ_AUoAXoECAEQAw&biw=2123&bih=850#imgrc=hwZExKoVYwOL2M)

Some individuals print out documents to keep them on hand as paper copies, and in this case, the URL address needs to be available for transcribing into a search bar. A shorter URL is easier to transcribe from paper into a browser's search bar.

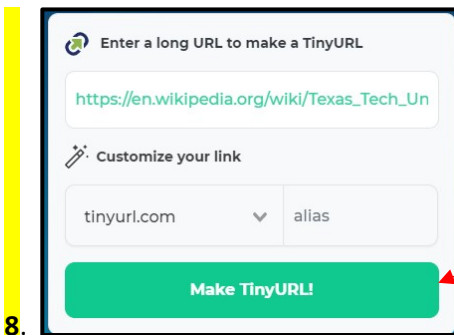
Ex.

<https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/nejmoa1507643> vs. <https://tinyurl.com/assignedarticle>  
(It's harder to type all this into a search bar!) (It's easier to type this in!)

TTUHSC approves the use of the site, TinyURL.com to shorten long URLs. While you do not need to have a Tiny account, if you use the site frequently enough, it will be beneficial for you to create one. Go to [TinyURL.com](https://tinyurl.com) to locate another set of easy to use tools that can make your links easier to use.\*

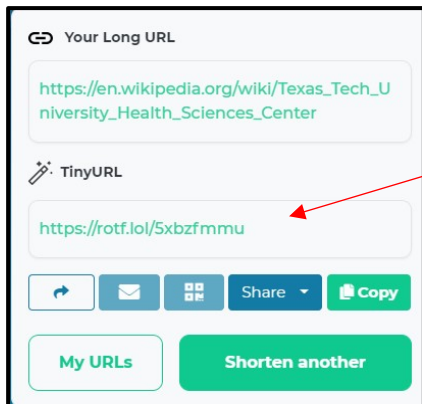
**\*Benefits:**

- Saves your links so you don't have to keep reentering them into form fields;
- Offers options as to how your links will be formatted.



Go to [tinyurl.com](https://tinyurl.com), and enter your long URL here.

Click here!

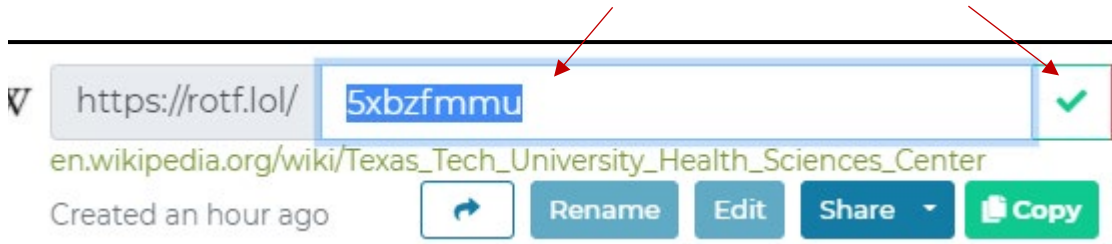


Next, this window pops up with your shorter URL. Either use this in your document or you can reformat it to make it more readable.

If you have an account, TinyURL makes your long URL easier to copy into a browser's search bar. In this example, I'm using a wikipedia page URL as an example.

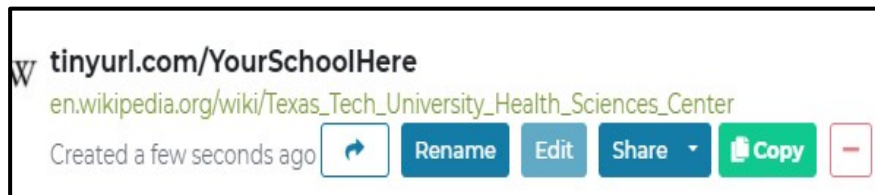
**9. Perform the prior steps outlined above to generate a shorter link. Then you can reformat the link if necessary.**

You can type a more unique name here. I tried YourSchoolHere and then clicked the check arrow.

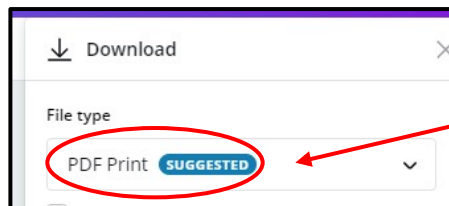


If TinyUrl can use the new name you've proposed, it will create the new link for you. If its not a link TinyUrl can reliably generate, this will be indicated with a red "X" instead of the green check mark shown above. Now I can use the link [tinyurl.com/YourSchoolHere](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Texas_Tech_University_Health_Sciences_Center) in my document instead of typing this long address into my search bar:

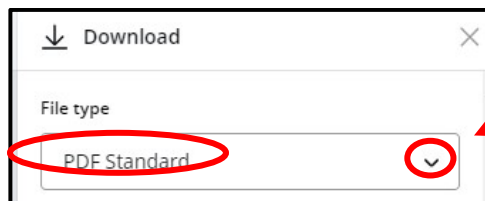
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Texas_Tech_University_Health_Sciences_Center)



A final accessibility measure that can be taken while designing in Canva pertains to the way in which documents are exported. If your document is going to be published to a website as a downloadable PDF, you should not accept the defaulted PDF Print download that Canva defaults to. Instead, in the file type dropdown menu select PDF Standard.

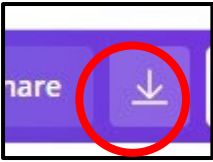


NOT THIS!!!!



Select PDF Standard instead from the dropdown!!!!

**10. To save the PDF to your file drive, mouse up to the corner of the purple Home bar again, and click the dropdown arrow. Your file will save to your downloads file. You can cut and paste it from there into your preferred directory folder.**

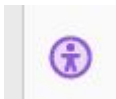


Now that you have implemented these few design strategies in Canva, your end-users will have a much easier time navigating and reading your document. There are, however, additional steps that you can take in Adobe Acrobat to further improve the accessibility of your document. The steps will improve the experience of users who are reliant upon screen readers in accessing textual information. Open your PDF document now in Acrobat.

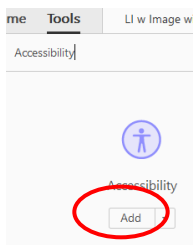
**What's Next? Run an accessibility check on your document.** There are a number of other design modifications you can implement in Acrobat to make your Canva documents more accessible. They pertain to the reading order of your document as well as to the practice of adding alternative text to your file's images and to the proper formatting of its lists.

With this set of Canva instructions, implementing an accessibility check and addressing problems with the reading order of your document will be addressed. The other issues (alt text and lists) are addressed in separate instructional files in the Instructor's Guides links.

**11. Open the Accessibility Toolbox located in your toolbox panel to the right of your document pane.**



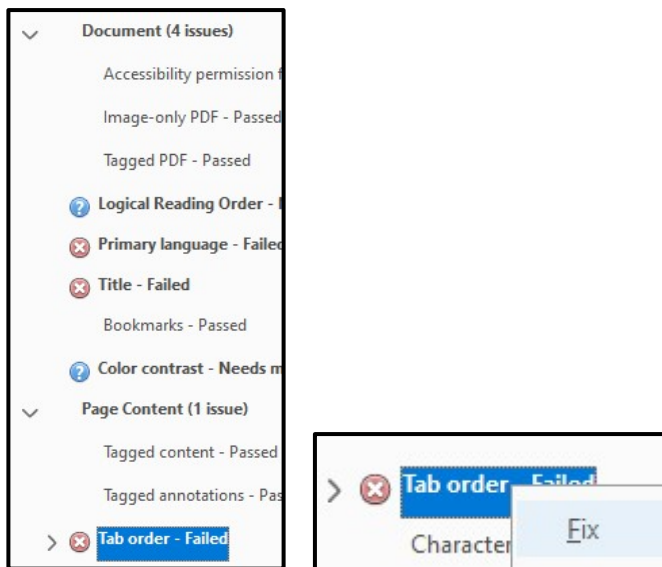
**If you don't see it in the panel, you may need to add it. In the Tools tab, in your home ribbon, type accessibility in the search bar. Click Add or Open in the pop-up window that appears below the search.**



12. Once the Accessibility Toolbox panel is opened to the right of your document pane, click on the Accessibility Check tool icon. An Options box will open, keep all the defaults in that box and click Start Checking.



13. To the left of your document pane, a window will open that details the results of the Accessibility Check. Twirl the arrows down to examine the reported issues. Many of the issues reported can be fixed by right clicking on them and simply following the logical Fix steps that are presented to you.



To address document issues relating to **list or table formatting**, please see other documents in this directory that relate to those specific issues. **For images and Alternative Text** issues, try following Acrobat’s pop-up step by step guide, or consult documents in the Instructor’s How To Guide.

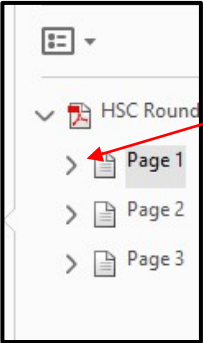
**What’s next? Why care about reading order?** Note the Logical Reading Order prompt has a question mark next to it. This is an indication of an element needing a manual check to be performed by its author. The Reading Order of a document by a screen reader depends upon the logical order of its formatting tags. Acrobat tags your PDF’s format so that it will both display properly on your monitor, and also, direct a screen reader to progress through your document in a logical sequential manner – usually left to right, top to bottom.

Close the Accessibility Checker Report. In the Navigation Pane, next to it, (open and close this pane with the arrow, circled below in red) you should see a set of buttons that look like a tag, a Z, and a content document. If you do not see them, you can add them by right clicking on the bar and selecting each in turn. Close any slide panels that open with them as you add them. Once your navigation bar looks like the image below, move on to the next step.

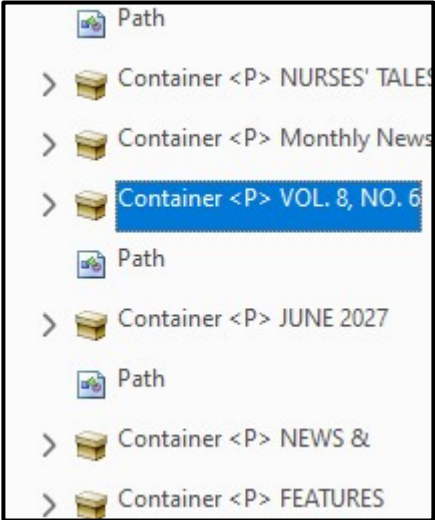


Now click on the Content button.

14. Clicking on the Content button will prompt Acrobat to open a display panel that lists your pages like this. Twirl down the Page 1 arrow and note it opens to a list of paths and container tags.



15. Click on the individual containers tags. Go down the list clicking on each one.

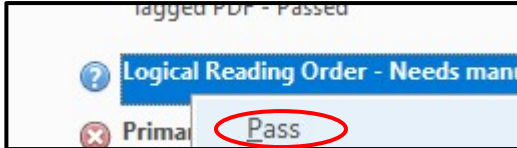




- 16. Notice that as you click on the individual containers, a corresponding text or image element in your document is outlined in purple.** The outline is an indication of where that element is located in Acrobat's internal logic. Drag the containers up and down the tree to put them in the correct sequential reading order, keeping in mind that screen readers read from top to bottom.

Once the containers are arranged in logical order from top to bottom, this portion of the accessibility project is completed.

- 17. Now that you've addressed the Reading Order issue presented in the Accessibility Checker Report, you can manually pass yourself on that particular issue.**



- 18. Save your document frequently as you make changes and adjustments to it.** You may need to save and close a PDF to affect and see your changes. Do this now, and run your accessibility checker again. If you still have a reported problem with adding alternative text, you can attempt to follow Acrobat's fix prompts to add the text, or you can open a set of instructions [here](#).
- 19.** Finally, be sure to save your document as an Acrobat PDF with all of the proposed Save As defaulted options ticked. It is now ready for posting as a linked attachment to a webpage.