



# ABOUT ACCESSIBILITY

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# Agenda

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Brief Overview

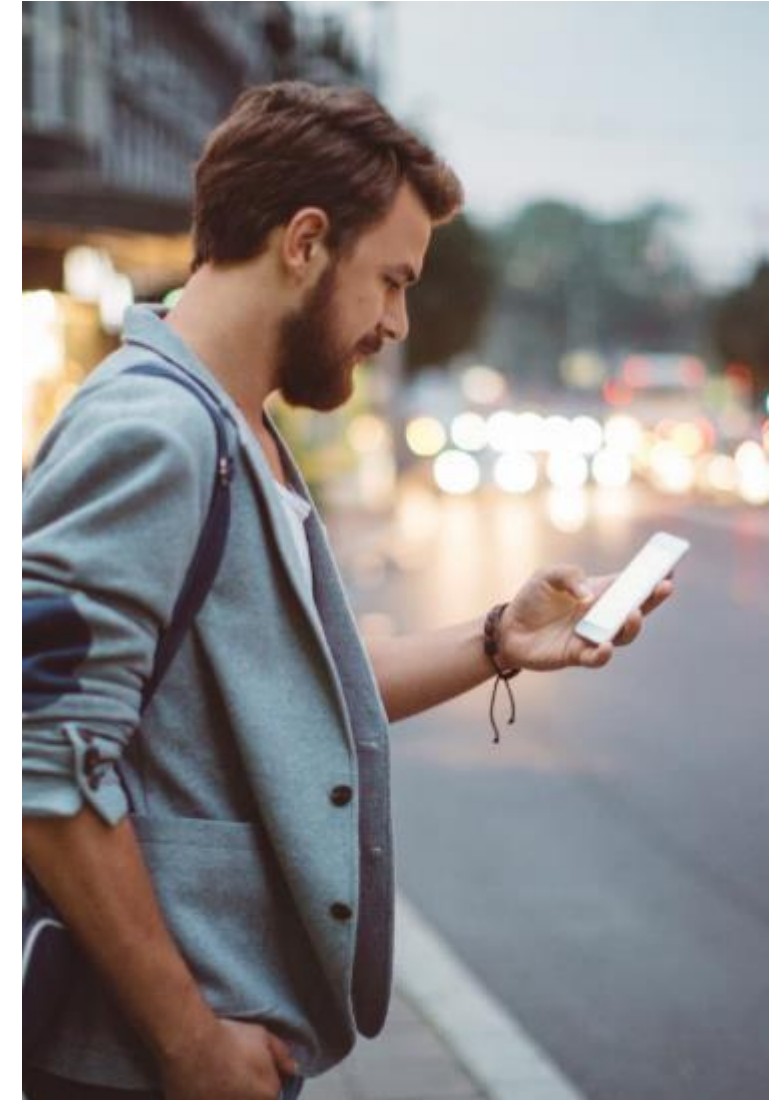
Guidelines and standards

Formats & Examples

About Alt-text

Resources

5 Things to Get Started





## What is Digital Accessibility?



Enabling people with a disability to experience web-based services, content and other digital products with the same successful outcome as those without disabilities.

# Accessibility Facts

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# 1 Billion people worldwide have disabilities

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Accessibility removes barriers and unlocks potential



Visual - people who have visual impairments rely on alt-text descriptions and reader/software platforms to engage with content



Hearing – people with hearing challenges rely on captioning for video presentations and visual indicators in place of audio cues



Motor impairments – often use alternative keyboards or other adaptive hardware to navigate on digital devices.



Cognitive challenges – design, consistency in experience and plain language are relevant and helpful for people with learning impairments.



# Standards, Compliance and Guidelines

**June 2025 – European markets will require eBooks (among other services) to be fully accessible.**

ADA (American Disabilities Act)

[European Accessibility Act](#)

[WCAG \(Web content accessibility guidelines\)](#)

ePub3 (reflowable)

GCA (global certified accessible publisher)

DAISY consortium (global .body for accessible publishing standards)

IDEA

ESSA

Section 504 and 508, etc.



# Delivering Digital Products

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**Digital products  
can be made  
available in  
multiple formats**

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**But that doesn't mean  
they're always accessible**

Reflowable  
ePub3

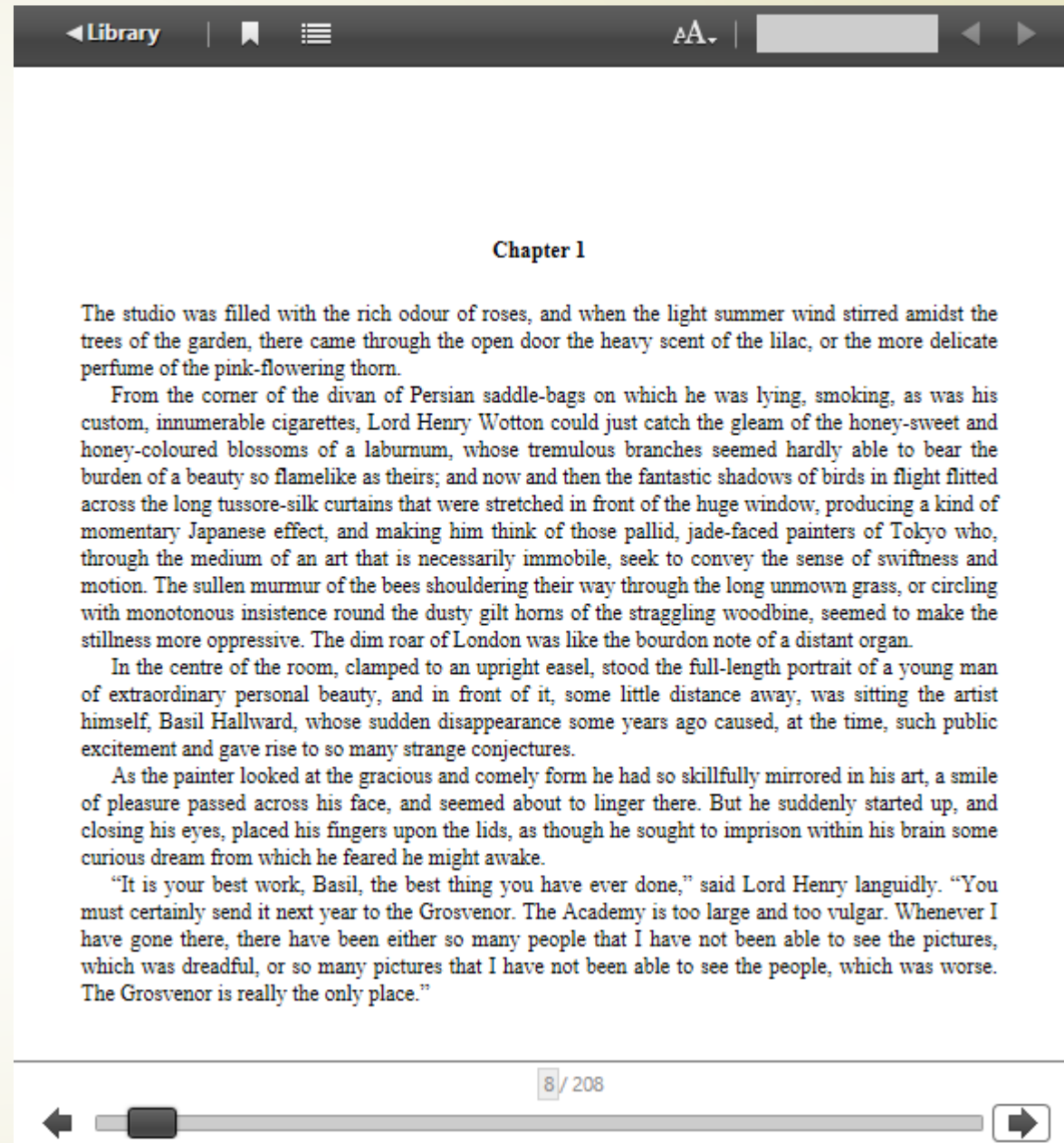
Fixed Layout  
ePub3\*

WebPDF



# Reflowable ePub3

- Works on any e-reader (Kindle, iPad, Nook, etc.).
- Allows reader to adjust font and font size.
- Supports alt-text.
- Typically less expensive than fixed.
- Good for trade, non-fiction, reference, children's Books (where illustrations appear in between text passages)

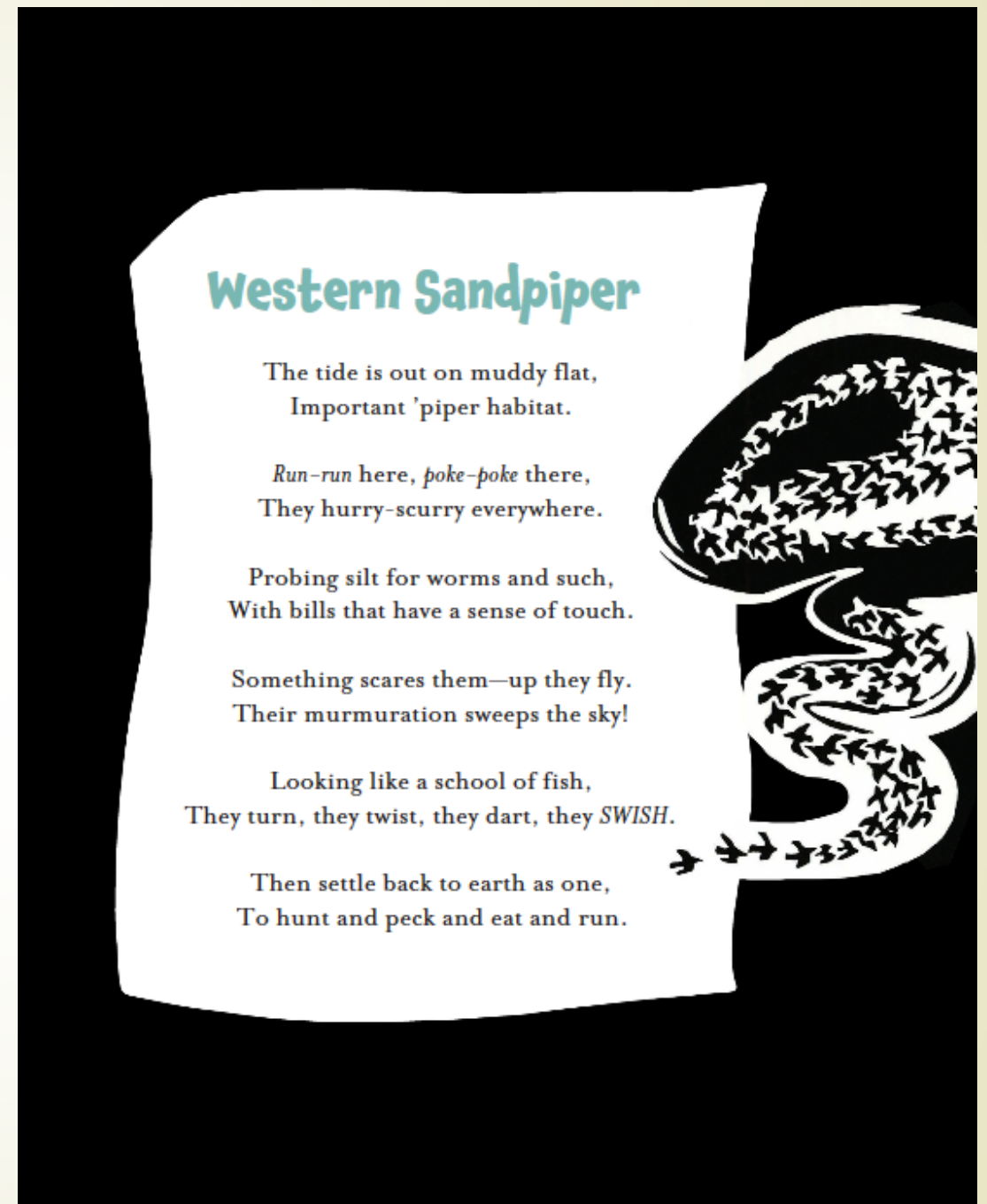


Sample from *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, by Oscar Wilde,  
published by West Margin Press

# Fixed Layout ePub3

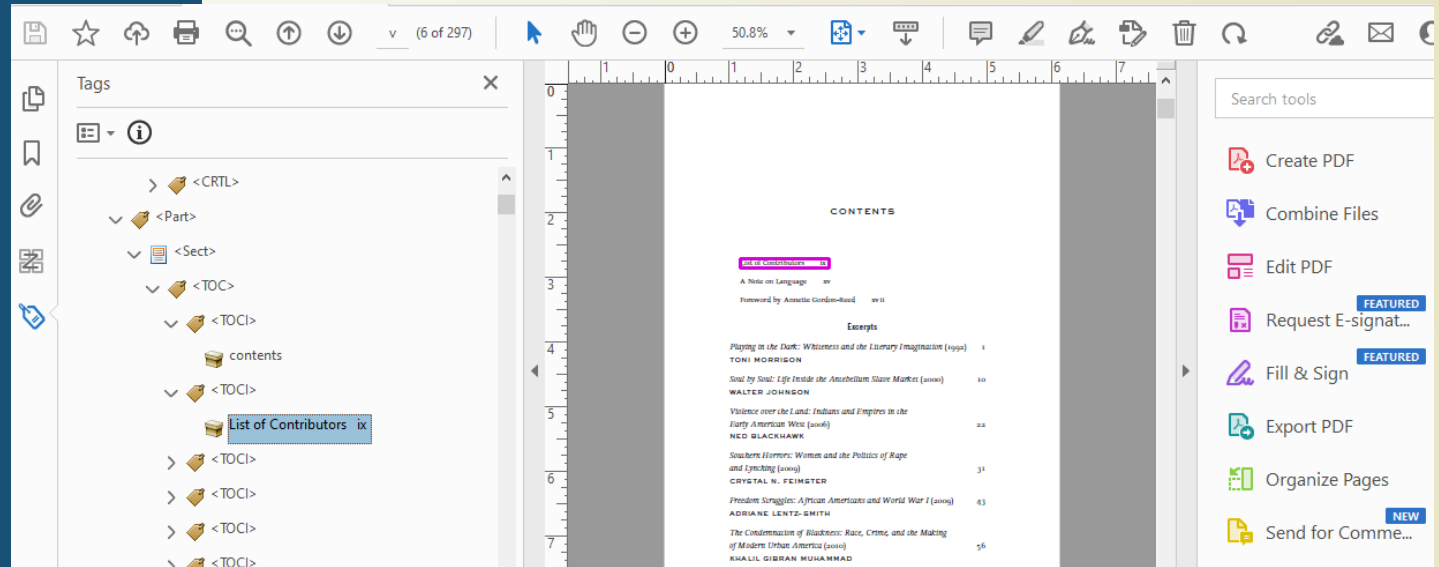
- Maintains page design.
- Works on iPads, Fire tablets, other high end readers.
- Not currently considered accessible\*.
- Great for graphic novels, heavily illustrated children's books, art & photo books.

\*[Work is being done](#) to help define how fixed layout can be made accessible

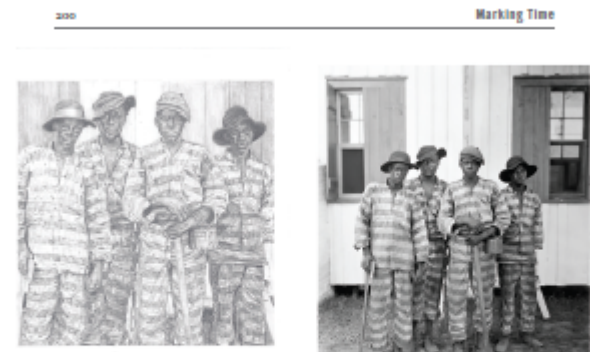


Sample from *Alaska is for the Birds*, by Susan Ewing,  
published by West Margin Press

# Web PDFs



- Maintains page design.
- Works on iPads, Fire tablets, other high end readers.
- Can be accessible (web, not eBook) – supports alt-text & tags, etc.



Left: Eddie Kates, Chain Gang, 2016. Graphite on paper, 8.5 × 11 inches. Right: A Southern Chain Gang, Detroit Publishing Company photograph collection (Library of Congress), circa 1900–1906. 1 negative: glass, 8 × 10 inches

# About Images and Alt-Text

Screen readers will announce alt-text in place of images, helping users perceive the intent of that image

On the web – it appears if an image fails to load.

Search engines use alt-text in factoring the page content relevance for search results.

Alt-text is more than a descriptor of the image.

Alt-text is a combination of art and function.

Alt-text needs to be relevant to context and function.

Guiding principles for Alt-Text:

- Accurate and equivalent in representing content and function.
- Succinct.
- Be aware of potential redundancy to the related content.
- Not include phrases like "image of" or "graphic of" screen readers typically announce that with the alt-text.
- If decorative (think separator line) no alt-text is necessary.

Guiding principles for images on the web:  
[Color, Controls, Presentation and Contrast](#)

# More Images and Alt-Text

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## Complex images

- Math equations
- Tables
- Charts
- Complex images (think paintings, art)
- Figures

All have recommended ways to present alt-text (or in the case of Math, MathML)



# ALT-TEXT examples



alt="halloween fall season pumpkin bucket and candy"

alt="A pumpkin bucket spilling halloween candy and spooky toys"

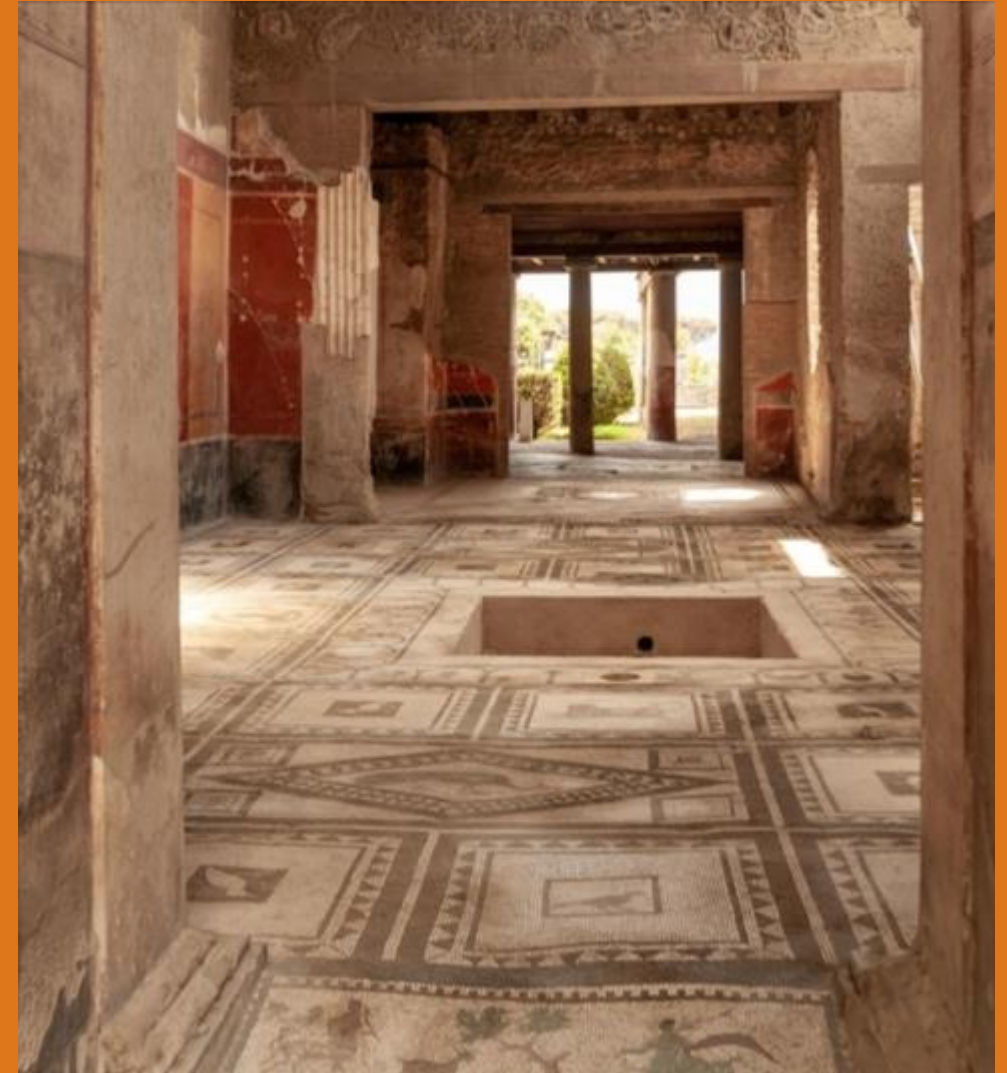
## Alt Text:

Beige atrium of an excavated Pompeiian villa with high ceilings and mosaic tile floor. Light filters in from a clerestory window.

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## Extended Description:

The tile floor composed of geometric mosaics interspersed with figurative scenes surrounds a square basin at the center. Peeling red frescoes adorn some walls, and textured mud brick is exposed on the upper portion of the structure. The far end of the atrium opens to an outdoor colonnade and garden.



Source: <https://www.scribelytribe.com/image-accessibility>



# Key Organizations for Accessibility





# Benetech

Non profit organization  
focused on equitable access



- Recognized as an authority on ePub accessibility.
- Developed GCA program.
- Certifies the accessibility of eBooks.
- Publishers have to demonstrate ability to produce files that meet WCAG AA and EPUB Accessibility 1.0.
- Manage Bookshare, an online library of donated accessible eBooks

# DAISY

Global non-profit organization

Supporting open standards and tools for developers  
to produce accessible content

Standards and Tools for creating, converting  
and validating accessible ePubs

- ACE – accessibility checker
- SMART – reporting tool



A group of diverse people in a meeting room, smiling and looking at a screen. A dark blue banner is overlaid on the bottom right with the text "5 Takeaways for you".

## 5 Takeaways for you

1. Use ACE by DAISY to check your ePub files.
2. Start talking about your workflow and how you can think about accessibility first, not last.
3. Think about your backlist and plan for conversion, keeping European 2025 timeframe in mind.
4. Become familiar with the Alt-text guidelines and discuss how alt-text development will fit into your workflow.
5. Talk with your compositor or digital conversion partner to help create your plan.

# Resources

Accessibility Publishing.ca- ePub semantics, Aria roles and metadata

<https://www.accessiblepublishing.ca/epub-semantic-aria-roles>

Accessibility Publishing.ca- Guide to image descriptions.

<https://www.accessiblepublishing.ca/a-guide-to-image-description/>

DAISY – The DAISY Consortium

<https://daisy.org/>

Benetech –

<https://benetech.org/>

W3C – Web tutorials, complex images -

<https://www.w3.org/WAI/tutorials/images/complex>

WebAIM – Alternative Text (ALT Text) -

<https://webaim.org/techniques/alttext/>

Crash course in eBook accessibility (Youtube series -

<https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLQHK1Nw6GF4vnhgPLRxMbOIs-xv0IS8JG>

WCAG Overview-

<https://www.w3.org/WAI/standards-guidelines/wcag/#for>

# THANK YOU!

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