**National Center on Accessible Educational Materials**

# Getting Started with Presentation Accessibility

To help you remember the best practices for presentation accessibility, use the mnemonic **SLIDE**, which stands for:

- **Slide titles** are descriptive and unique
- **Links** are meaningful
- **Images** have text alternatives
- **Design** is perceivable and predictable
- **Empathy** drives design

## Slide titles are descriptive and unique

Unique, descriptive slide titles help screen reader users know where they are as they navigate a presentation. For other learners, descriptive slide titles can help them quickly skim the presentation to get a sense of its big ideas and concepts.

**Best Practice:** Enter your descriptive slide title in the appropriate "Title" placeholder for each slide layout. In PowerPoint, you can use the Outline View (**View, Outline View**) to confirm that each slide has a descriptive slide title.

## Links are meaningful

Screen reader users will often scan a list of links to get a sense of the resources shared in a presentation. Link text should be unique and descriptive to ensure it makes sense when accessed in this way, without the rest of the slide for context.

**Best Practices:**
- Instead of "click here" or "learn more" select meaningful text (text that is descriptive and unique) and make that text the link.
- Unless it is short and descriptive, avoid including a full web address on a slide.

## Images include text alternatives

Screen readers can only describe an image to someone who is blind if a text alternative is provided. Text alternatives can also make complex images easier to understand for other learners.

**Best Practice:** After considering the purpose of the image and the context for its use, provide a concise description that focuses on the information the image conveys. If the image is only used for decoration, mark it as decorative (if your authoring tool has that option) or use "decorative" as the alternative text.

## Design is perceivable and predictable
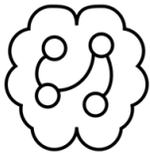
Through good design, you can reduce the amount of effort it takes your readers to process the information in a document, allowing them to focus on the meaning conveyed by the content rather than its presentation.

**Best Practices:**
- Ensure sufficient contrast between text and the background. This can be confirmed with the free Colour Contrast Analyser tool for Mac and Windows.
- Choose sans-serif fonts (those without extra ornamentation) and simple backgrounds to minimize distractions.
- Ensure a logical reading order. The Selection Pane (**Home, Arrange, Selection Pane**) in PowerPoint provides a helpful tool for ensuring a logical reading order (just remember, the items at the bottom of the Selection Pane are read first).

## Empathy drives design

As you work on your presentations, think about how your choices impact on others - approach your design with empathy and ask yourself questions such as:

- Is everyone able to perceive the information? Does my content require only one means for accessing information (e.g. seeing, hearing, etc.)?
- Is everyone able to navigate and interact with the content? Does my content require only one means for interacting with the information (e.g. mouse, keyboard, touch gestures)?
- Is everyone able to understand the content? Does my content include definitions of key terms and other language supports? Is my content written in plain language?