Transcript for PowerPoint (November 30, 2023)
BCcampus Accessibility Bites Series event hosted November 30, 2023
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JOSIE GRAY:
Hello everyone. Thank you so much for joining us for this third topic in the Accessibility Bites Series. Before I get started, I want to highlight that you can download the slides from this session at bit.ly/accessbites and we're going to be putting that link right into the chat. These slides are accessible and include my full speaking notes, so you can use them to follow along as we go today. Refer back to them at any time as well as adapt them for your own purposes. In this folder that we've linked here, you will also see slides from the previous accessibility byte sessions as well. There's quite a few resources now filling up in that folder.

I'm grateful to be joining you all today from Moh'kins'tsis, now known as the city of Calgary. The land I live on is part of Treaty 7, which includes the Blackfoot Confederacy, made up of the Siksika, the Piikani, and the Kainai Nations. Also the Tsuut'ina Nation, and the Stoney Nakoda, which includes the Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Wesley Nations. This area is also part of Métis Nation of Alberta Region 3. Treaty 7 makes up much of southern Alberta. In the text of Treaty 7, it says that the Indigenous nations who signed the treaty "cede release, surrender, and yield all their rights, titles, and privileges to the lands." However, none of the Indigenous nations who are a part of this treaty ever understood it as one of land surrender, but rather one of peace. And this is held up in their oral histories of the event. This discrepancy between the text of the treaty and how it was understood by those nations is due in part to significant language barriers between the Indigenous and Crown representatives, as well as complete opposite worldviews that they had around what relationships people can have to land and how they would live with each other. Going forward, I've lived most of my life in B.C. In B.C. we often talk about the land as being unceded since there are very few treaties in BC, I don't hear the term "unceded" really being used in the context I live in now. But these oral histories passed down through generations of Treaty 7 nations really complicate that implied distinction between unceded and treatied land. I think it is an important reminder that Canada is stolen land. I wanted to open up our session today with some of those thoughts. (Source: *The True Spirit and Original Intent of Treaty 7* https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt80vm3).

My name is Josie Gray and I use she/her pronouns for those who can't see me. I am a white woman in my late 20s with shoulder-length blond hair, glasses, and a septum piercing. I work for BCcampus, and I have been working in digital accessibility in education for seven years. And I have a Masters of Design and Inclusive Design. The things I'll be sharing throughout this series have come from my experience in making educational materials accessible to disabled students. However, it's important to recognize that I'm not a disabled person. And disability is a huge category and there's a lot of diversity, even among people with similar disabilities. I say this because I don't know everything of what it is to make something accessible for all people. What may work for one person may not work for another person. I really want to encourage

everyone to dig into all of the topics we'll cover throughout the series and then seek out further learning, especially from people with lived experience.

Welcome to the third session of the Accessibility Bites Series. The series looks at different accessibility topics related to teaching and learning and post-secondary. For today's topic, we are exploring slide decks. I will be using PowerPoint to demonstrate everything, but all of these principles apply to Google Slides as well, if that's usually the tool you're more familiar with. In the folder that I've linked on this slide, I've included a resource that's a handout. That handout has all the points that we're going to cover in these slides. And it also includes instructions for how you implement something might be a little bit different in Google Docs versus PowerPoint. If you get through today's presentation and you're like, wait, how do I do that in Google Slides? Go to that handout and it'll give you specific instructions there. But this presentation should be pretty applicable regardless of what tool that you use. For this session. I'm going to be sharing my whole screen. So you're going to see the whole PowerPoint interface, not just the slides. And that's so I can go back and forth between the content of the presentation and demonstrations. If you have multiple screens, I encourage you to have a slide deck of your own open to follow along as we go. You're also welcome to just follow along and watch me as I go through the different things. One thing I will say is that in the description of the session, I think it said we would do 5 minutes of content and 20 minutes of practice. It'll actually be more like 20 minutes of content. It was much harder to get everything into the session than I originally anticipated. This will be more like a demonstration and then there'll be time at the end of the session for questions. With that, I'm just going to change the share screen view here and we will get going with the content.

Okay, as I mentioned, for the session today, it's going to be 5 minutes of presentation and then 5 minutes of discussion and questions. Feel free to put questions in the chat as we go. I'll try to keep my eye on it and answer it as they come in, but if I miss any, I will definitely come back to them at the end.

What is accessibility? For this series, when we are talking about accessibility, we are specifically talking about what is needed to ensure people with disabilities can have equitable access to education. To make education accessible, we must design and create resources, experiences, and tools and spaces to allow for and support the diversity of our bodies and minds. Rather than focusing on what we think of as normal or average, we're going to start from a place where we expect and plan for the presence of diversity. We work to build in flexibility and choice so people can access their education in ways that work for them. Although accessibility can benefit everyone, the needs of disabled people are the priority and focus of accessibility work.

Today we're going to be talking about slide design.

The very first rule of slide design is to not use text boxes. Text boxes are cancelled. The reason for this is that text added to text boxes is not read by a screen reader unless you also add

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alternative text to that text box. That's an extra step, which can be frustrating if your whole slide deck is made up of text boxes. If you're not sure what I mean when I say text boxes, text boxes are something that you can insert in PowerPoint. If you go to this Insert Tab and find this Text Box option under that Insert Tab. If I were to click it and drag it into My Slide, that would be me inserting a text box, which is often a really common way that people use PowerPoint. But we're going to show you some alternatives today rather than text boxes. What do you do instead?

Instead, you're going to use what are called Slide Layouts. Slide Layouts give your slides structure that will make it easier for people using screen readers to navigate the slide content. With Slide Layouts, they use what are called content placeholders for different types of content, like headings and text and images, rather than text boxes. By default, PowerPoint will give you a basic selection of slide layouts. They are listed if you go into Home the Slide Section and under New Slide. If you expand that, you'll see the default slide layouts that are available for you. For example, if I wanted to insert a new slide here, I could select this two column layout and it'll insert slide for me.

At the top there's a title and content placeholder and then there's two additional content placeholders that I can either add text to or I can upload images or insert charts, etc. That's kind of where you would start from. Then at any time, you can change the layout that's being used, either by right clicking the slide and going to Layout and selecting a different layout. Or you can go up to the top and there is a layout, slide layout dropdown option where you can select a different layout from there as well. That's your starting point when you're creating new slides.

Okay, So you might be wondering, I have some existing slides. How do I know if my slides are using placeholders or text boxes? I wanted to show you a few different ways that you can identify what your slides are currently using. One way to tell is to select the whole placeholder or text box and then to delete it. To delete it, I'm just going to hit the backspace on my keyboard. With a placeholder, when you do that, that placeholder won't disappear, just the content that's inside that placeholder. Here we see that the content, the placeholder itself, is still there. For a text box, if I select the whole text box and hit backspace, the whole thing is going to disappear. There won't still be that placeholder there. I'm just going to undo that, put them both back.

The other option is to look at what is called the Outline View in PowerPoint. To see the Outline View in PowerPoint, you're going to go up to the View tab. We're going to open this Outline View that's available under Presentation Views. The Outline View basically gives you all of the text content that are on your slides. It's going to show you the titles on your slides and any text that's in content placeholders. It will not show you text that is in text boxes. Right now for the slide I screen, this text is probably very small in your screens, I apologize. But it's listing in the Outline View, the title of the slide and the text content that I have in the content placeholder. If we go to the previous text box where I had the example of a placeholder and a text box, it's only showing me the text that's in that proper content placeholder. So the text that's in the text

box isn't showing up here. That's another way that you can identify what your slides are using. So I'm going to go back to the Normal View.

Okay, we've established that you want to start with the layouts that are available in PowerPoint, but it's possible that the layouts that you're given by default don't quite work for what you're trying to do. Luckily, in PowerPoint, you're able to customize those layouts, create new layouts, and set things up more for how you want your slides to appear in PowerPoint. That's all handled in what is called the Slide Master. In Google Slides. I believe it's called Theme Builder, but it works very similarly. In Slide Layouts, to customize Slide Layouts, we have to go to Slide Master so here again, we're going to go up to that view tab and we're going to find what is called the Slide Master. It'll be a listed group of these master views.

What this is is it's basically like the style sheet for all of the slides in your slide. This is where you can customize all of those layouts.

The very top one, the very first one that we're looking at here, gives us what we want the font to look like for all of the other slides. Here, I can set that. I always want the titles to use this type of font and to be a certain size. I want the default text size in all of my slides to be a certain size. I can set that here.

Then I can go through and customize the different layouts. So I can move where the content placeholders are, I can add new content placeholders, and I can change backgrounds and text colours and things like that. Changes that are made here will be automatically applied to all slides that use those layouts. So it can be much easier if you're trying to have slides with a consistent look and feel.

I mentioned you can edit layouts. If you're wanting to create new layouts, you can start from scratch. But I often find it easier to duplicate a layout that is close to what I want and then edit that layout. What I'm going to do here to duplicate this layout, I'm going to right click the slide and go to Duplicate Layout. And it's going to make an exact copy. I'm just going to rename it, I'm going to say "two column with citation." Maybe you want to be able to add a citation to your slide. I'm just going to rename that here. And I'm going to slightly move these content placeholders to make them a little bit smaller so they don't go all the way to the bottom of the slide. Then I'm going to insert a new content placeholder. Up at the top, you will see an insert placeholder drop down. There's going to be a whole bunch of different options. The very first one is just called Content. It's a placeholder that can be used for anything, pictures, text, graphs, anything can go in that. But if you want a content placeholder that's only ever used for text or only ever used for pictures, you can select one of the other ones. Here, I'm wanting to put a text content placeholder so I can add a reference information to My Slide. I'm going to select that text content placeholder. And I'm just going to drag it to where I want it to appear. Then because this is for references, I'm going to make the text size a lot smaller. I'm just going to quickly change that to 10 points. Okay, now that we've edited, created a new slide, sorry, a new layout. We're going to close Master View, which is going to take us back to our slides.

Now if I go up to New Slide, that slide layout I just created has been inserted into my list of layouts. So now I can select that from my slides that are available and there will be that text content placeholder at the bottom that will now properly be accessible to everyone who's using the slide with a screen reader.

I see a few questions in the chat question. "Do the same things apply in Canva?" That's a great question. I don't know because I'm not familiar in Canvas. Unfortunately, I can't answer that question. If anyone else knows, please feel free to chime in in the chat. Then the next question. "Is the Slide Master where we can also add a footer, either branding or copyright or course name?" Yes, absolutely. If we were to go back to Slide Master, you can insert footers from here and then customize those footers for this. What you're looking at here, I'm using the BCcampus templates. In all of these layouts, we've uploaded BCcampus branded backgrounds, so there's like a consistent look and feel all the way through. That is definitely where you could add those kinds of details and have them be consistent all the way through.

Okay, next I wanted to go through some considerations for customizing those Slide Layouts. The first is the text size that you're using in your presentation. First, generally recommendations for font size are all over. And it's tricky because different fonts are actually different sizes. But generally a recommendation that I use is 24-point font. That's the font size you'll see on these slides. It's pretty big. But it's important because people will be engaging with your slides in different ways and may need larger font to be able to read it clearly. There's disability factors that go into that, but there's also environmental factors. If you're presenting in a large room, people sitting at the back still need to be able to read your content. Or if you're presenting online, maybe someone's connecting on their phone, which means your slides are just tiny little boxes on their phone. Using the large font is definitely the way to go. It also helps keep the amount of text on your slides to a minimum. In terms of what font you're using, generally, keep it simple. No cursive fonts or really decorative fonts. Generally, for digital like on screen reading, people recommend san serif fonts rather than serif fonts. In the examples here that I have on the slides, the san serif fonts don't have those little feet at the ends, while the serif fonts do have those little feet and hats at the ends of those fonts. That's the difference between the two. For colour, you want to make sure you're using a high colour contrast. Colour contrast is measured in a ratio with black text on a white background, that ratio is the maximum ratio. It's 21 to 1. A minimum colour contrast ratio is 4.5 to one. This purple and white text that I have on the screen here is an example of that would fall into that ratio.

I wanted to show a way that you can test your colour contrast, because PowerPoint won't test it for you. I have some text on the screen and I have a contrast checker that you can use. I wanted to show you how you can test your colour contrast. Okay, I'm going to put a link into the chat, along with the colour codes for the colours that are on the screen. But I'll talk you through a little bit more about what it means. With colour, digital colour uses things called hex codes to be able to communicate specifically the exact shade a colour is. You'll need the colour hex code to be able to test the accessibility. To get a hex code for a colour and PowerPoint,

you're going to select the text. Go to that Text Colour option and then go down into More Colours. Then under the Custom Tab, there's going to be a hex text box that's going to give you the hex code for this colour. In this case, it's 2F9700. Hex codes are usually six digits, a combination of numbers and letters. Then this example is really easy because your background is white, the hex code is just 6S, I'm not going to say all those.

Then you'll take those hex codes and you'll open up the Contrast Checker. In the foreground colour, which is our text colour, we're going to put 2F9700, and I'm going to click Tab that's going to select the exact colour that's being used. And then I'm going to leave the background colour as white. It's telling us that the contrast ratio is 3.78 and we're looking for the WCAG double A, and it's telling us it fails at that rating. That means this colour is not dark enough to be accessible. To make this colour darker, to change this colour so it is accessible, I'm just going to select that lightness sliding scale and start moving it to the left to make it darker until that contrast ratio gets high enough that the colour is now passing. And now I can take that value, the hex code, I can copy it, and I can go back into my PowerPoint, select the text, go into the font colour, and replace that hex value in there to make that colour darker and accessible. Someone commented that it is strange that the purple is accessible, but the green is not. The green seems darker to them, and that's totally fair. I think the colour contrast ratios, they're not perfect. I think there are some critiques of that, like 4.5 value. It's possible that maybe the purple is harder to read. Often I would recommend going above that minimum requirement, going much higher than 4.5. Trying to keep that contrast as high as possible to ensure the easiest readability.

Okay. Another thing that you might be using in your slides are animations. Examples of animations are GIFs, slide transitions, or text animations. Generally, when using animations, I would recommend using them with intention. Determine why you're using the animation and what's the value of using that animation. If it's to help people learn and comprehend the information, that's great. If it's just to be flashy and fancy, maybe not the best reason. Then in general, keep animations that you are using simple because excessive animation can be distracting. And sometimes excessive movement on a screen can make people feel nauseous and unwell. Trying to keep movement to a minimum, as much as you can.

Okay, Another thing that's very important with PowerPoint is slide content order. This is important for people who are using screen readers. If you're looking at the slides, you can intuit the order that the content to be read in just by placement. But sometimes that placement doesn't match up with how a computer is going to read through the content. When you're going through your slides, you want to make sure that you're verifying the slide content order and that the content will be read in the order you want it to. An easy way to test your slide content order is just to click somewhere on your slide where there isn't any content. And then you're going to use the tab key on your keyboard and you're just going to skip through the content on your slide here. First it's highlighted the title, then it's highlighted the content placeholder that has a bunch of text explaining. And then here I have "Kittens great are." So you can see that order is wrong. It's going to be read in a different order and it's going to make the

content much harder to understand for someone who is using a screen reader to access this content. To reorder the content on your slides, if you're using Google Doc or Google Slides, the way you do that is by changing the order of content on your slides. With slides, content is read from back to front. You can move content backward and forward, and that will change the order it is read in. That can be done just by selecting the object you want to move, right clicking, and then go to either Bring Forward or Bring Backward. In PowerPoint it's a lot simpler. You can go into the Accessibility Checker, which is under Review, Check Accessibility. Then we're going to go to the Reading Order pane, and that's going to list all of the objects on the slide. So I can click through those objects and it'll highlight them. Then I can drag and drop the content where I want it to be or I can click the object I want to reorder and use the arrows to move it. And that will change the order. If I go back to test it, title, content, and then "Kittens are great." That's a way to fix that. I see we are getting on in our time. Let's keep moving.

Now let's move into slide content. This is content that you would include on your slide. The first thing is to consider the slide titles that you're using. A recommendation is to give each slide a unique title. That will make the presentation much easier to navigate through and to come back to specific content, especially for people using screen readers. Because if you have a whole bunch of slides that all have the same slide title, it'll be difficult to pinpoint which slide someone might need. If you do, if you have slides where the content is consistent over a few slides, you could consider adding "Part 1, Part 2," or something like that to the slide title.

Next is images. Images on your slides should have alt text if that image is conveying information. To add alt text in PowerPoint, you're going to select your image, right click, and then go to View Alt Text. You'll get a text box where you can put in that description of that image. Then also a practice of when you're presenting and you have images on your slide is to describe those images allowed during the presentation as well.

I see someone asking how to get the order changed if you're using an older version of PowerPoint. In the older version of PowerPoint, you're going to go to Home. There should be an arrange option. I'm seeing it under Drawing here, it's to arrange objects. And then there's a Selection pane, which works very similarly to the Reading pane. The only difference is that it goes in reverse order. The title would go at the bottom rather than the top.

Another thing to consider in PowerPoint is to not use colour alone to convey information. I just want to use this example here to illustrate why that is. I've got two different graphs that have the same content, but they use different colours. One graph has labels and the other graph does not.

If we were to look at both of these graphs without colour, it all of a sudden becomes really difficult to tell in the first graph which of the bars correspond to what data. But when we look at the other graph where there's higher contrast colours, but there's also labels under each bar, you can actually tell what information is being communicated without having to see the colour.

If you're using links in your slides, you'll have to consider how you want people to use those links. If you want people to be able to write the links down or to be able to type them in while you're speaking, make sure you're using short links. If the website isn't giving you short links, consider using a link shortener tool to make those links easier to type in. And remember, if you're sharing your slides and people can go through your slides and click through the links, then you should use descriptive link text that describes where that link will take them. Two different considerations depending on how you want people to use your links.

Okay. Then a final step, once you get your slides as accessible as you can, is you can run an accessibility check. As I mentioned in PowerPoint that is under Review, Check Accessibility. That'll go through all of your slides. Now, the accessibility checker in PowerPoint is limited. It won't catch everything. It's not something to rely on, But it can be a good way to catch images you forgot to add alt text to and slides that might be out of order. It's a last step.

Then the last thing I'll leave you with is some tips for accessible presentation practices. When you're presenting, ensure that you read out slide text and you're describing the visuals that you have on your slides so that people don't have to be able to see your content to know what's going on. It also makes note taking a lot easier. Also consider sharing a copy of your slides in advance. That also makes note taking easier and so people can follow along and then enable auto captioning if that's something that's not already available in either the place you're presenting or the tool that you're using to present. Okay. I've seen that I've gone over time. I will definitely stick around for people that have questions. But thank you very much, everyone who attended today and for your engagement. If you have questions, feel free to stick around and I will answer what I can. But otherwise, have a great rest of your day. Thank you.

PARTICIPANT:
Thanks so much, Josie, I've learned so much. One question I have and it's probably stupid. I could probably Google this quickly. But how do you check the colour of your background on the slide? I can see for font, what's a quick way to do that for the background colour in PowerPoint?

JOSIE:
What I would generally do is I would go into Font and I would go to this eyedropper tool. With the eyedropper tool, you can hover over parts of your slide and select that colour. So if I wanted to know the colour value of this orange, I can select that in my colour dropper. Now it's changed the colour of my text. But what's happened here is it's been added now to my recent colours and it's been selected. Now what I can do is go into that More Colours and get that hex code through there. Okay. So that's an easy way to do it in PowerPoint. There's also another contrast checker that I've used has a tool where you can upload an image to it and it'll pull colours from that image and then give you the hex values of those that one is contrastchecker.com That's another tool if you're trying to pull colours from images. I just lost the chat, but I'll put it into the chat.

PARTICIPANT: Awesome, thank you.

JOSIE: You're welcome.

PARTICIPANT:
This is a fantastic presentation. I'm wondering if you're emailing out the deck to participants.

JOSIE:
es. All of the slides for this session are in the folder. Excuse me, just go to the slide that has that information. If you go to bit.ly/accessbites, that will open up a folder where you can download the slides for this session and this link will be emailed out to everyone as well. PARTICIPANT: Lovely. Thank you.

PARTICIPANT:
I have a question regarding websites uploading. Are you... Have you thought about doing something related to, um, checking websites, doing an analysis? The reason I ask is because I have a new library team, we're recreating things. Some things they're doing in H5P, which is new to them, but also just the redesign of the whole website. They are using videos, they are using PowerPoints and some images. But I had to go back and go over a lot of accessibility things. One thing that troubles me is, librarians use a roundabout or I don't know what the words is called, but you can view a number of images. It just constantly goes around. Like if you put ebook cover or whatever. Yeah, a carousel. I was wondering how you determine accessibility using that. Any ideas?

JOSIE:
I don't know exactly about the accessibility of carousels, but if you Googled carousel accessibility, I'm sure there are lots of resources out there. Specifically, I generally don't do sessions on websites because there's so many things that could be relevant for websites. It's a lot more technical than creating content like document creation in other tools. I would look for other people who might have more knowledge and training available on that topic. But like I do a lot of work in Pressbooks. And Pressbooks is kind of like a website, and a web accessibility checker that I use a lot for Pressbooks is also by WebAIM WAVE. I find that's a really useful tool in terms of being able to check alt text. It'll flag like a lot of the markup that might not be correct in the website. That can be a good way to highlight some common issues. But in terms of how to design and create accessible websites, I'm not the best person for.

PARTICIPANT:
Okay, no worries. Yeah, it's great. I love coming in just to listen to you. I know the stuff, but it's always great to hear from you. All right. Keep up the great work. Thank you very much.

JOSIE: Thank you very much. I see Charlie has his hand up.

CHARLIE:
I have a quick thing to share about carousels. I have done screen reader testing on a lot. Just incidentally, I have never encountered one in the wild that functions as you would expect incorrectly when using a screen reader. I have found some where people have demonstrated like, here's how to build one that works well with a screen reader, but I've never seen one like actually in active use on a website. Usually what'll happen is because the carousel just keeps looping forever, it hijacks tab order or something, and then the screen reader is just caught in that forever until they forcefully navigate to some other portion of the page.

JOSIE:
Thank you. That's helpful. So it sounds like avoid carousels is the takeaway from that. Alyssa.

ALYSSA:
Thank you. I just cannot remember where you said the eyedropper was. JOSIE: Oh, yeah. Okay. Let me pull that up again. It's under the Text Colour, the dropdown, that's kind of under the A, there's an eyedropper option.

PARTICIPANT: There it is, yes. Oh, my goodness. Thank you.

JOSIE: You're welcome. Sorry if I said your name wrong.

PARTICIPANT:
That's correct. Thank you. Thank you so much for this great presentation, Josie. My question is about the smart art in PowerPoint. I see the manufacturer instructors are using it, assuming that the text that they put using smart art are accessible. But when I run Accessibility Checker, it says that it also needs alternative text. Can you clarify what's going on with the smart art and then what is the best practice? Thank you.

JOSIE:
That's a great question, and I don't think it's one I could answer right away. I would have to look into it a little bit more. But if you'd send me an email, I can follow up on that for you. I'll just put my email into the chat.

PARTICIPANT: Thank you so much.

JOSIE:
Any other questions? Okay, it looks like not. Thank you so much everyone for coming today. I apologize for running over time, but I really appreciate all the questions and engagement. I hope you have a good rest of your day.