

Terms Relevant to Universal Design for Learning

Accessible

When a person with a disability is able to use, interact, enjoy the same services effectively as a person without a disability.

******When asking publishers/authors about the accessibility of their content, specify that you're not asking if it's available online 24/7.

Accommodation

A physical or academic adjustment made to “level the playing field” for an individual with a disability based on a proven need.

Alt-Text

Alternative text. Descriptive text given to an image (format image to add the alt-text). A screen reader will read this text to someone who cannot see the image/graphic.

Assistive / Adaptive Technology

Software or devices that assist a person with a disability to access a computer. These may include speech to text software, alternate keyboard, etc.

DSS

Acronym for Disability Services Office or Disability Support Services.

Dragon

A lizard like monster that will eat you alive for making inaccessible content. Just kidding... a popular speech recognition tool; it is often used to dictate for students unable to type.

Headings/Headers

Headings identify the hierarchical structure of a document. They allow a person using a screen reader or with limited mobility to navigate a document/page. Titles or short text used to define sections of a document should be formatted as headings. (Most people use bold or a larger font size to identify section titles – don't do this. *Use headings!*)

JAWS

A man-eating shark that will eat people that do not make content accessible. No... a screen reader/voice output that reads web content or digital documents to the user.

Section 508

A section of the US Rehabilitation Act requiring that all federal agencies make electronic and information technology accessible.

Screen reader

Software that reads web content or digital documents to the user. Users are able to navigate through a page/file with the help of headers and alt text for images.

Universal Design

An approach to design that emphasizes designing for the widest range of the population to avoid the need for retrofitting (design a building *with* an elevator and ramps, don't add those once someone in a wheelchair shows up).

UDL

Universal Design for *Learning*. Applying Universal Design principles to instruction. Emphasis is placed on multiple means of representation, engagement, and expression.

VPAT

VPAT stands for Voluntary Product Accessibility Template. This is something filled out by a vendor that walks through if and how they comply with Section 508. Make note - this is *voluntary* and not always to be taken at its word. (More about that when we cover procurement.)

Zoom Text

A screen magnification software.

[Printable bookmark to share!](#)

Watch: Assistive Technology in Action!

Working Together: People with Disabilities and Computer Technology (13 mins)

This video provides a nice overview of different types of assistive technology.

[Working Together: People with Disabilities and Computer Technology](#)

Screen Reader Demo (13 mins)

How do people who can't see a computer screen navigate a website? Colleen explains the basics of how she uses a screen reader and how to design for visually impaired users.

[Screen Reader Demo](#)

Web Accessibility 101: ZoomText Demo (3 mins)

SSB Client Services Director Cammie Truesdell demonstrates how ZoomText magnification software works, as well as common accessibility challenges faced by users with low vision when using screen magnification software.

[Web Accessibility 101: ZoomText Demo](#)

Web Accessibility 101: Dragon NaturallySpeaking Demo (5 mins)

Thomas Logan, Senior Accessibility Consultant for SSB BART Group, demonstrates the use of Dragon NaturallySpeaking speech recognition software to perform basic tasks including completing a form online.

[Web Accessibility 101: Dragon NaturallySpeaking Demo](#)

Explore: More Vocabulary Lists!

- [Glossary of Disability-Related Terms](#)
- [25 Incredible Assistive Technologies](#) (If accessibility and disability is a totally new topic to you, please review this

article to learn about how technology has greatly impacted how people with disabilities interact with and navigate the world.)

- [Assistive Technology Videos](#)



This document was originally developed by HotChalk for an online course about UDL.