Transcript: Font Attributes Summer Short

[Riane LaPaire] Welcome to our last Summer Shorts session on font attributes. My name is Riane LaPaire and I'm the Braille and Accessibility Testing coordinator at NNELS and I'm very involved with the Accessible Libraries or PLARC project. And co-presenting with me today is Patrick Bouchard and he is an Accessibility Analyst with NNELS.

So our presenters today come from across this land, living and working in what we now know as Canada.

We respect and affirm the inherent treaty rights of all Indigenous Peoples and will continue to honour the commitments to self-determination and sovereignty that we have made to Indigenous Nations and Peoples. We respectfully ask for all of you to take a moment to acknowledge the lands on which you reside.

So font attributes, what do we mean by those? So font attributes can be added to the font or text of your document to change or style it. And they can include things like font size (such as 14 points), font colour (for example, black or automatic or red), and options in the styles pane, such as applying a "Strong" style to bold text. So why are these important?

So when we want to make documents accessible, we're going to consider carefully how we can apply different font attributes. For example, a small tight line letter spacing and poor colour contrast between the text and background can make a document nearly impossible to read.

So how can we ensure that our font attributes are accessible? We recommend using the "Strong" and "Emphasis" style option in the styles pane to tag the text for screen readers, instead of direct formatting to bold or italicize your text.

When possible use a larger font size and try not to use colour alone to convey meaning in your text. For example, suggested changes are in purple or Ariel's book recommendations are in yellow, and all of our book recommendations are in green may not be easily seen by those with low vision, limited vision or those who experience colour blindness. The colour changes are also not announced by default by screen readers or braille displays. So a way to do these in a more accessible fashion would be "Suggested changes are in purple and enclosed in to asterisks." And for the book recommendations, we could reformat those recommendations into two lists and denote them with symbols as well as the colours. Sorry or denote them with symbols as colours depending on how you have your document laid out.

Always consider how your text contrasts with the background of your document. Black text on white is accessible but light gray text on a white background has low contrast and is difficult to read.

We recommend using a sans-serif font like Arial or Verdana as they are easier to read. And we recommend limiting or avoiding the use of all caps.

So how do we add font attributes in Word? From the home toolbar, we can click on the styles pane, select "Strong" or "Emphasis" to change a small chunk of text. So you can select a style like "Normal," click on modify style and then a pop-up appears when you change the font size, colour, etc. And then you can adjust the font size colour of all the text in the document. You can also do this for specific headings to make them look a certain way that you really like.

In pages, in the formatting sidebar, you can select the drop-down menu character styles, choose "Emphasis" to italicize or "Underline" to underline the font.

To change the font type, size, colour, spacing, etc. use the corresponding options in the formatting sidebar in Google Docs. In the main toolbar, select the font attribute option, like font type, size, bold, spacing, colour, etc. and then format the font.

In LibreOffice select tools options, basic fonts western and then change the font type and size.

So now we're going to try it together. I'm going to stop sharing my screen, if I can get the menu controls to come back. There we go. And quick question in the chat, if you can let me know which word processor you're using on a regular basis, so whether that be Pages, Word, LibreOffice, something else, Google Docs. Mostly Word but also Pages, awesome. All right and Word. So we'll do this in Word today. I'm going to put a file in the chat and this is the document that we've been working on throughout the entire Summer Shorts. And we're going to work through this together. So there's some things in here that we can change up.

So I'm going to share my screen again and here we go. So let's open the styles pane, those zoom controls. I can't open anything, they're in the way. Here we go, all right.

So I am going to emphasize some text here. Let's see here, let's see maybe "Renewed once over the phone" in the renewal section maybe makes the most sense. "Renewed once" we're going to emphasize that one and see if there's anything else.

"Patrons will not be allowed to check out any materials when fines exceed 25 dollars," let's do "will not." We're going to make that "Strong" so it's bolded so that it stands out a little bit more. And then we can also change the overall font of everything. So right now it's like 11-point Calibri. We're going to change everything and so I'm going to change, I'm going to go to this drop-down table here and modify my normal style.

And I'm going to change it to Arial. And let's go. This is gonna be a handout at the library, so and available digitally, so maybe we'll make it 20-point font. And we're going to choose automatic for colour. That way anyone who's using a screen magnifier or maybe uses dark mode or something, it doesn't play with the colours too much.

And we also need to change our headings too, so there's some headings that would be good to change. And let's do Arial as well and since we did the other one 20, we will do this one 24. And maybe we'll make this one black as well since we're making it bigger we don't necessarily need to make it a different colour, which I mean you could certainly do. There should also be a heading 2 that we can also change.

We'll make that the same, maybe we'll do that one also 24 and automatic. So they're still marked up in a way that screen readers can read them, and it's nice and clear. There's some extra spaces in here we can take out that don't need to be in there.

So you have lots of options. Oh, I think there's a title that we probably need to change too.

Let's try to modify that style and let's go with Arial again, 28 seems like a good one, and we can make it bold, and here it'll automatically let you know that it's a title, so it'll all be fine there. So here we have lots of options, we can certainly, add bold or italic or italics or underlines to all of these other headings as well if we want. We could also change the colours, so if we wanted maybe all of the heading ones to be purple or blue, maybe really dark ones with good contrast that's always an option as well. So I'm going to stop the share here and I'm going to stop the recording. Wait, nope a little bit more left, my apologies.

All right so we've made the document a little bit more accessible by using different front attributes so thank you so much for attending the last Accessible Library Summer Shorts webinar on font attributes. Please watch our mailing list and social media for more learning opportunities!