

Maine CITE welcomes you to today's webinar!

Creating Accessible Documents

Lani Carlson, Maine CITE

The webinar will begin soon.

July 16, 2025



Serving all ages and all abilities!

Maine CITE and partners provide:

- Information and assistance
- Assistive technology training
- Device demonstrations
- Device short-term loans
- Device reuse

Partners include:

- Spurwink ALLTECH
- Pine Tree Society
- University of Maine Farmington



Plain Language

Know your Audience

- Spell out acronyms
- Avoid overly technical information
- Use the same terms throughout



Plain Language Example

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends a half hour or more of moderate physical activity on most days, preferably every day. The activity can include brisk walking, calisthenics, home care, gardening, moderate sports exercise, and dancing.



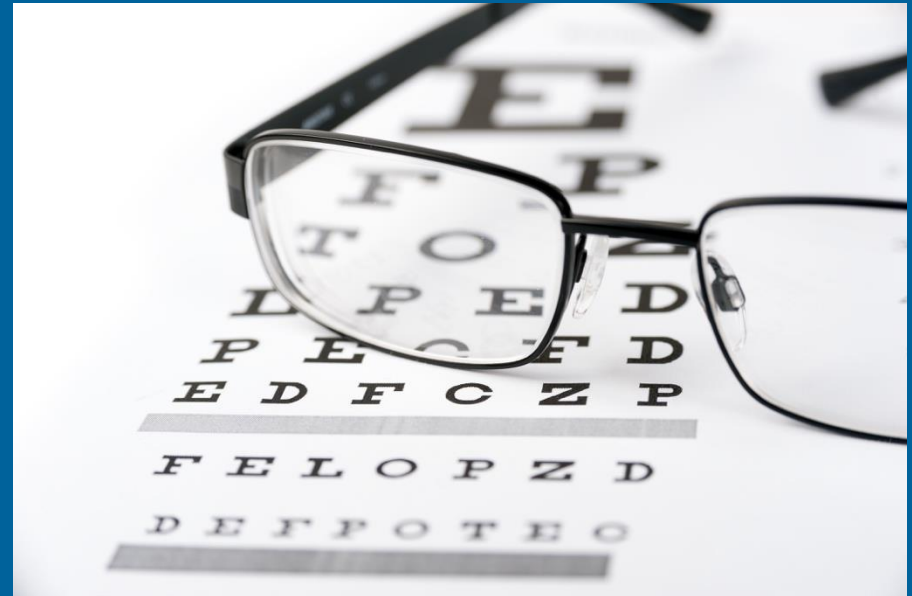
Do at least 30 minutes of exercise, like brisk walking, most days of the week.

Make Your Content Readable

- Documents for the general public should be written on an 8th-grade reading level.
- Reading level check apps are available.
- “Shorter sentences, smaller words”.

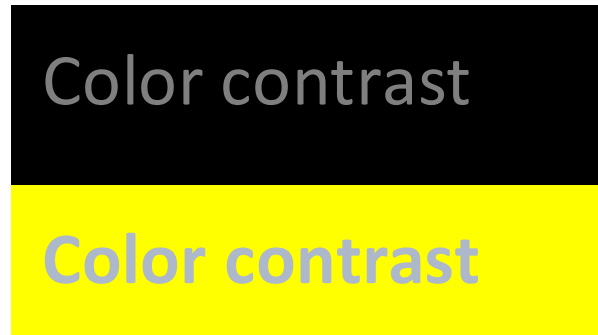
Font Style & Size

- Can you read this?
- Can you read this?
- *Can you read this?*



Color Contrast

Color contrast is the difference between two colors that makes it easy to see one thing from another.



Color contrast



Color contrast



Color Conveying Meaning

Apply Now!

(required fields are in blue)

Name:

Email:

Country:

Apply Now!

***** = Required field

Name *

Email *

Country:

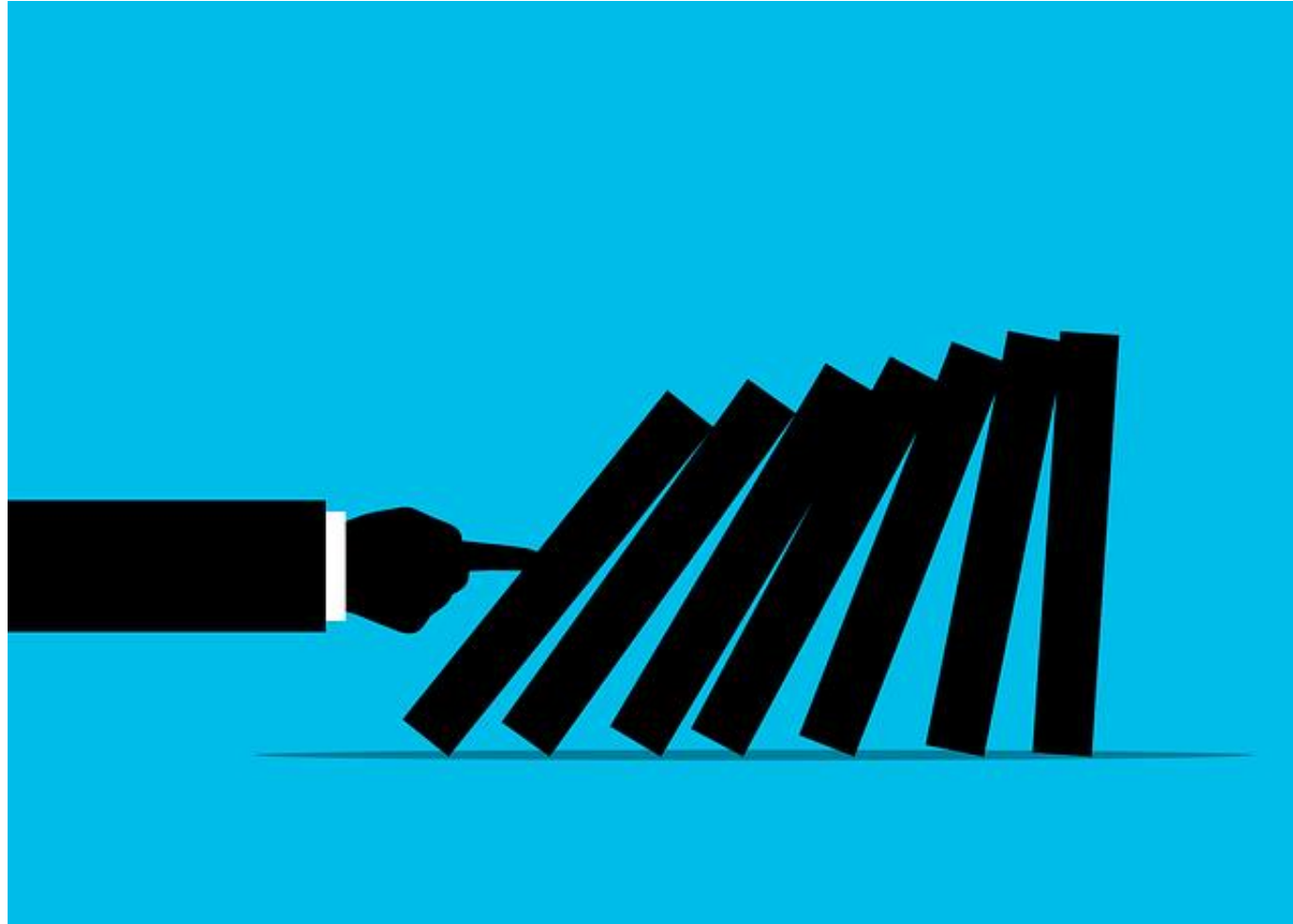
Keep it Simple



1:12 men are color blind.



Content Structure



Reading Order

- Titles
- Headings
- Sub-headings
- Non-text elements

The College Application Process

Choose Desired Colleges

Visit and evaluate college campuses

Visit and evaluate college websites

Look for interesting classes

Note important statistics

Student/faculty ratio

Retention rate

Prepare Application

Write Personal Statement

Choose interesting topic

Describe an influential person in your life

Favorite high school teacher

Grandparent

Include important personal details

Volunteer work

Participate in varsity sports

Review personal statement

Compile resume

How a Screen Reader Works

Reading a Document

tinyurl.com/4s2tesmn

Heading Structure

Headings (H)

- H1: Title or main content
- H2: Major section
- H3: Sub-section of H2
- H4: Sub-section of H3

**** Do not skip heading levels**

The College Application Process

Choose Desired Colleges

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Prepare Application

Write Personal Statement

Choose interesting topic

Describe an influential person in your life

Favorite high school teacher

Grandparent

Include important personal details

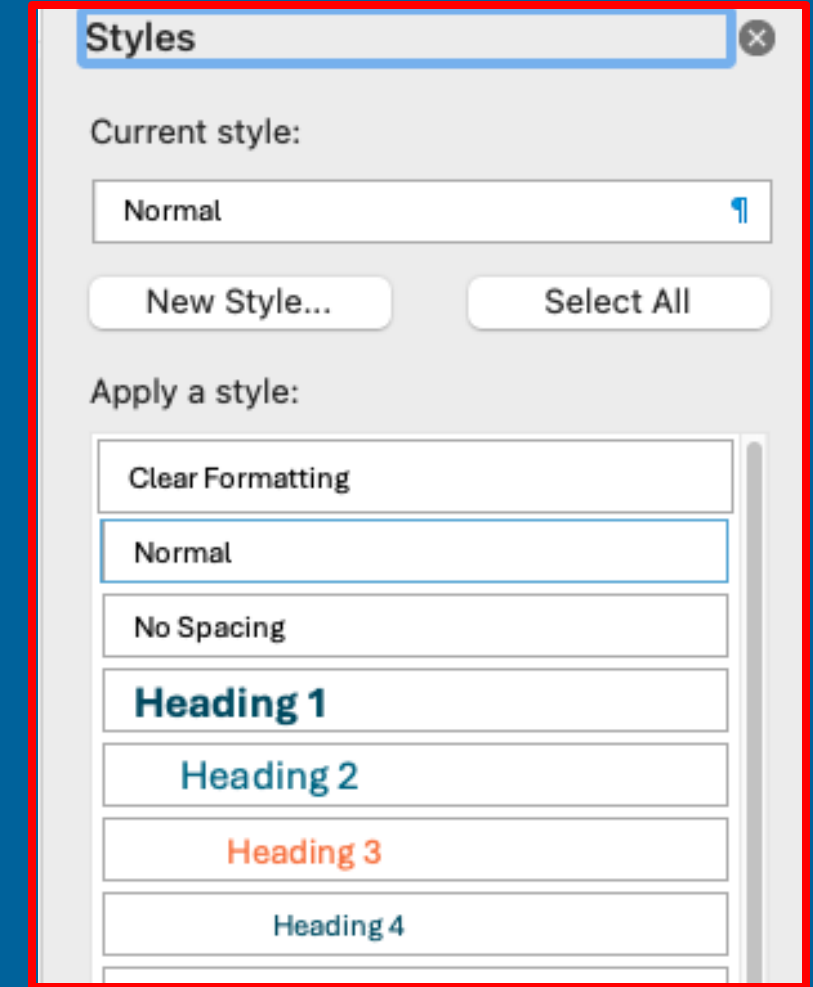
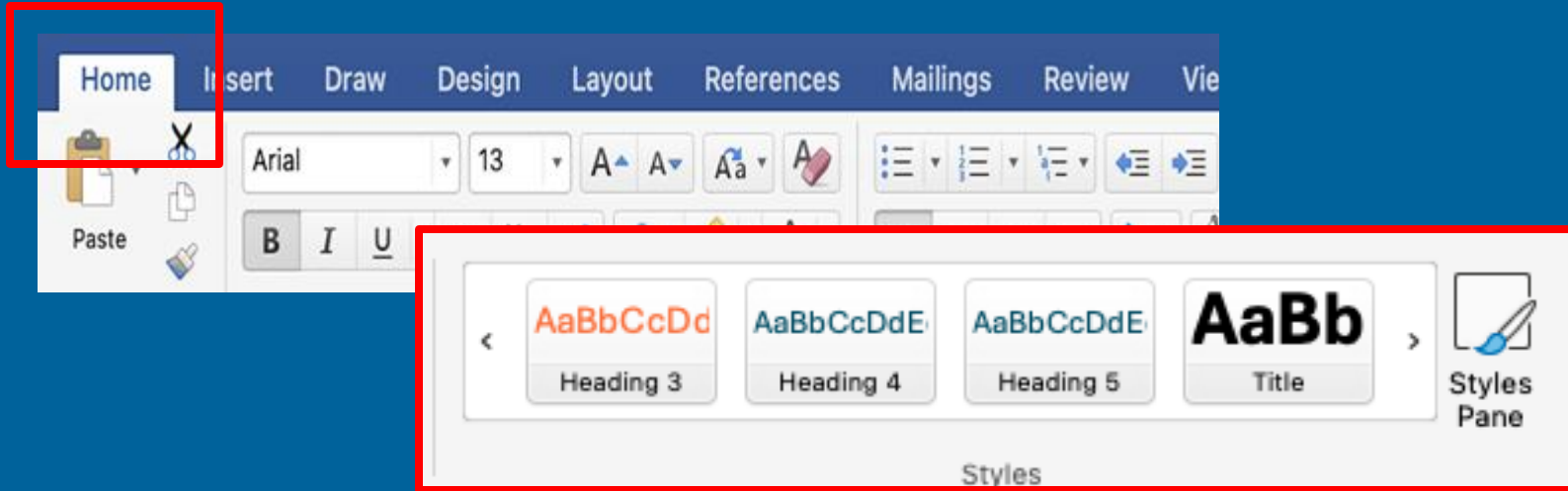
Volunteer work

Participate in varsity sports

Review personal statement

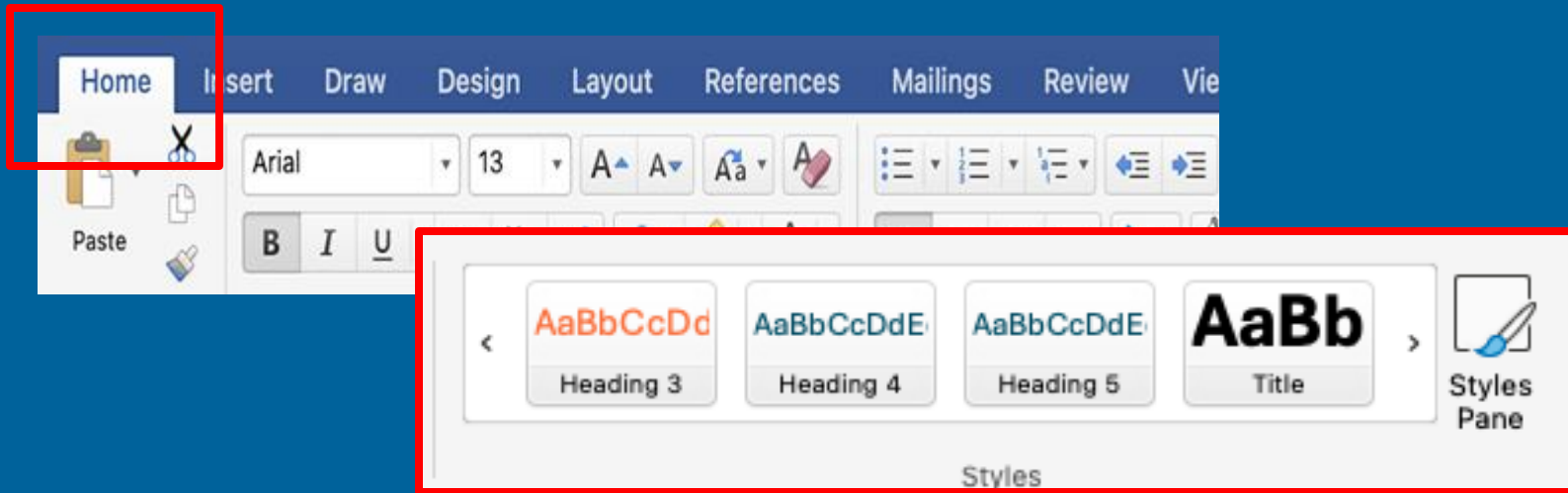
Compile resume

Headings in Word

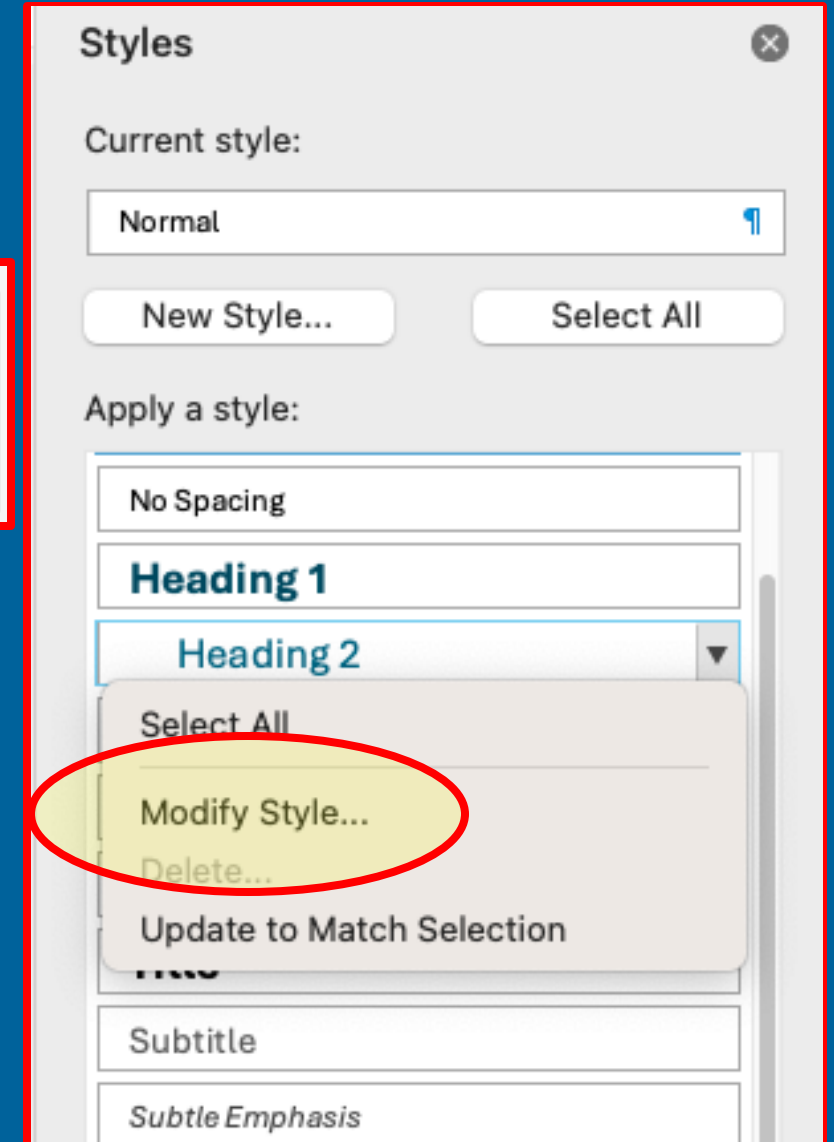


- Main Menu, Select Home tab
- Look for the Styles section
- Select Styles Pane
- Highlight text & assign a style

Modify Headings in Word

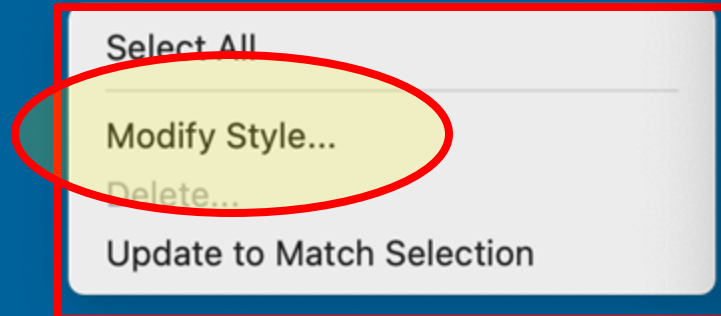


- Highlight text
- Dropdown arrow next to current style
- Modify style



Modify Styles

- Font
- Alignment
- Page formatting
- Preview
- Save & update



Modify Style

Properties

Name:

Style type:

Style based on:

Style for following paragraph:

Formatting

Aptos Display (Hea... 16 **B** *I* U

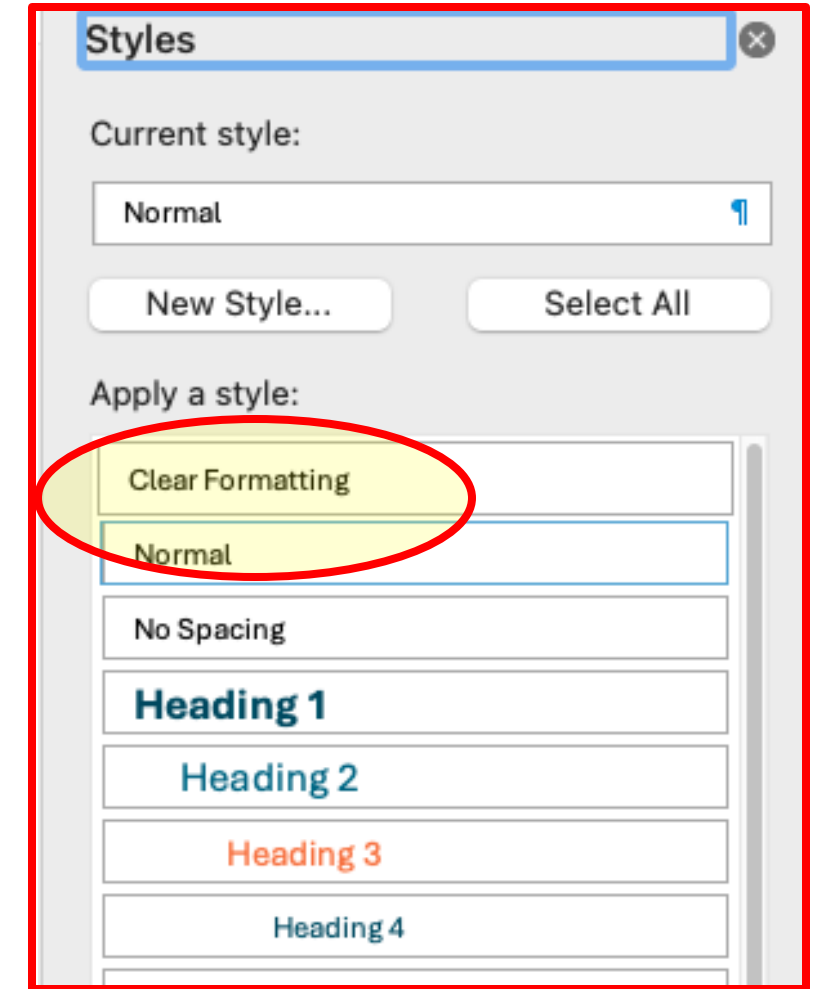
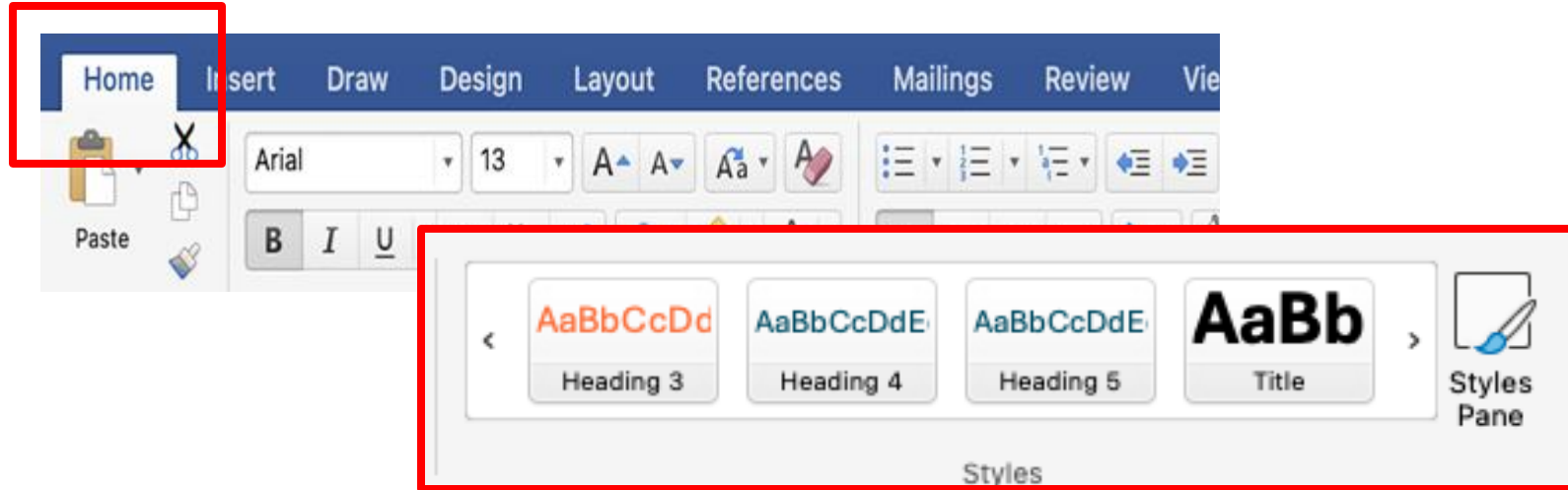
Previous Paragraph Previous Paragraph Previous Paragraph Previous Paragraph Previous Paragraph Previous Paragraph Previous Paragraph Previous Paragraph Previous Paragraph Previous Paragraph

Sample Text Sample Text Sample Text Sample Text Sample Text
Sample Text Sample Text Sample Text Sample Text Sample Text
Sample Text Sample Text Sample Text Sample Text Sample Text
Sample Text Sample Text Sample Text Sample Text Sample Text
Sample Text

Font: (Default) +Headings (Aptos Display), 16 pt, Font color: Accent 1, Indent: Left: 0.5", Space Before: 8 pt

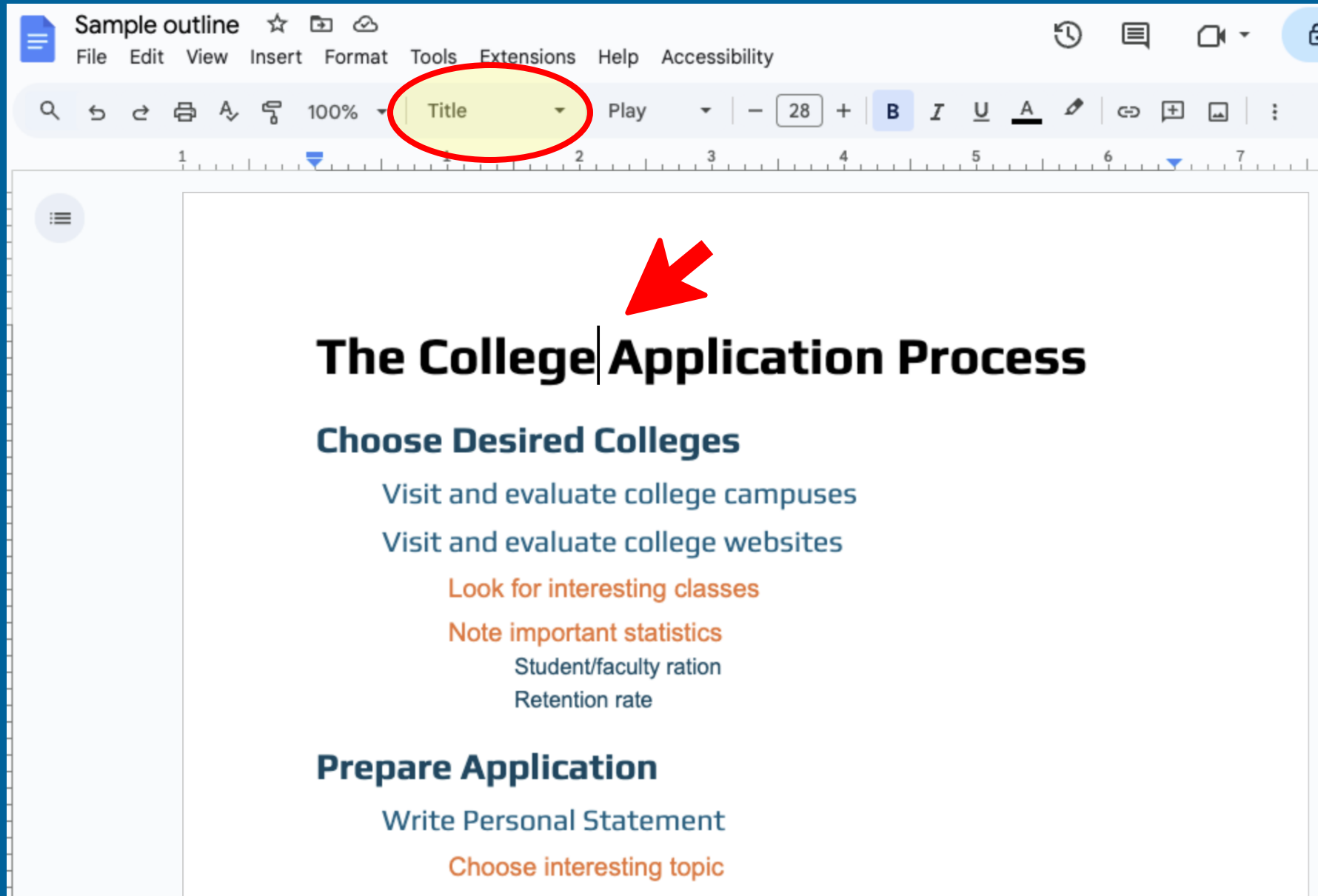
☐ Add to template
☒ Add to Quick Style list

Fresh Start in Word



- Select all text (Command A)
- Styles pane: Clear formatting

Headings in Google Docs



The screenshot displays the Google Docs interface for a document titled "Sample outline". The top menu bar includes "File", "Edit", "View", "Insert", "Format", "Tools", "Extensions", "Help", and "Accessibility". The toolbar below the menu features various icons for search, undo, redo, print, and zoom, followed by a dropdown menu labeled "Title" which is circled in red. To the right of the "Title" dropdown is a "Play" button and a font size selector set to "28". The main content area shows a document with a large heading "The College Application Process" in bold black text, with a red arrow pointing to it. Below this heading is a subheading "Choose Desired Colleges" in bold dark blue text. Underneath the subheading are four bullet points: "Visit and evaluate college campuses", "Visit and evaluate college websites", "Look for interesting classes", and "Note important statistics". The last two bullet points are indented. Below the subheading is another subheading "Prepare Application" in bold dark blue text. Underneath this subheading are two bullet points: "Write Personal Statement" and "Choose interesting topic". The last bullet point is indented.

Sample outline ☆ 📁 ☁

File Edit View Insert Format Tools Extensions Help Accessibility

100% Title Play 28 B I U A

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

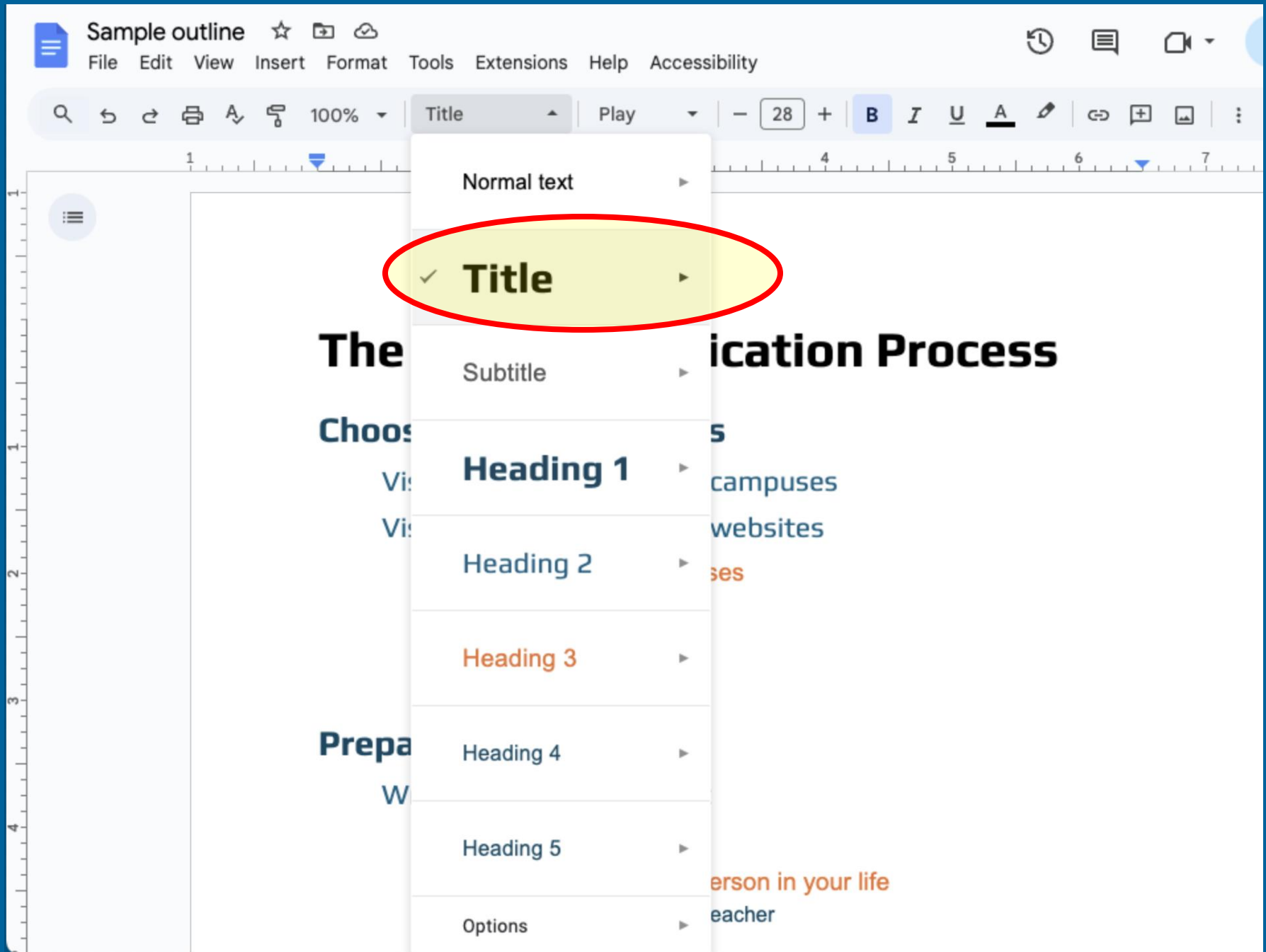
The College Application Process

Choose Desired Colleges

- Visit and evaluate college campuses
- Visit and evaluate college websites
- Look for interesting classes
- Note important statistics
 - Student/faculty ration
 - Retention rate

Prepare Application

- Write Personal Statement
- Choose interesting topic



Sample outline

File Edit View Insert Format Tools Extensions Help Accessibility

28

B

I

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A

1

4

5

6

7

1

1

2

3

4

Normal text

✓ Title

Subtitle

Heading 1

Heading 2

Heading 3

Heading 4

Heading 5

Options

Apply 'Title'

Update 'Title' to match

The

Choose

Prepa

W

person in your life

teacher

education process

campuses

websites

ses

Sample outline

File Edit View Insert Format Tools Extensions Help Accessibility

🔍 ↶ ↷ 🖨️ ↵ 🗑️ 100% ▾ | Title ▾ | Play ▾ | - 28 + | **B** *I* U A 🖋️ | 🔗 + 🖼️ | ⋮

1 1 2 3 4 5 6

←

Document tabs +

Tab 1 ⋮

The College Application ...

Choose Desired Colleges

Visit and evaluate colle...

Visit and evaluate colle...

Look for interesting c...

Note important statis...

Student/faculty rati...

Retention rate

Prepare Application

Write Personal Stateme...

Choose interesting to...

Describe an influenti...

The College Application Process

Choose Desired Colleges

Visit and evaluate college campuses

Visit and evaluate college websites

Look for interesting classes

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Retention rate

Prepare Application

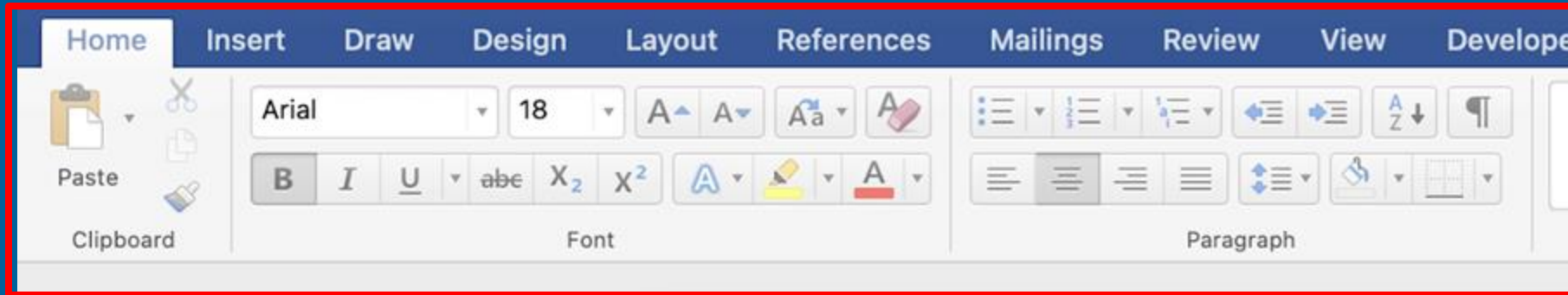
Write Personal Statement

Choose interesting topic

Describe an influential person in your life

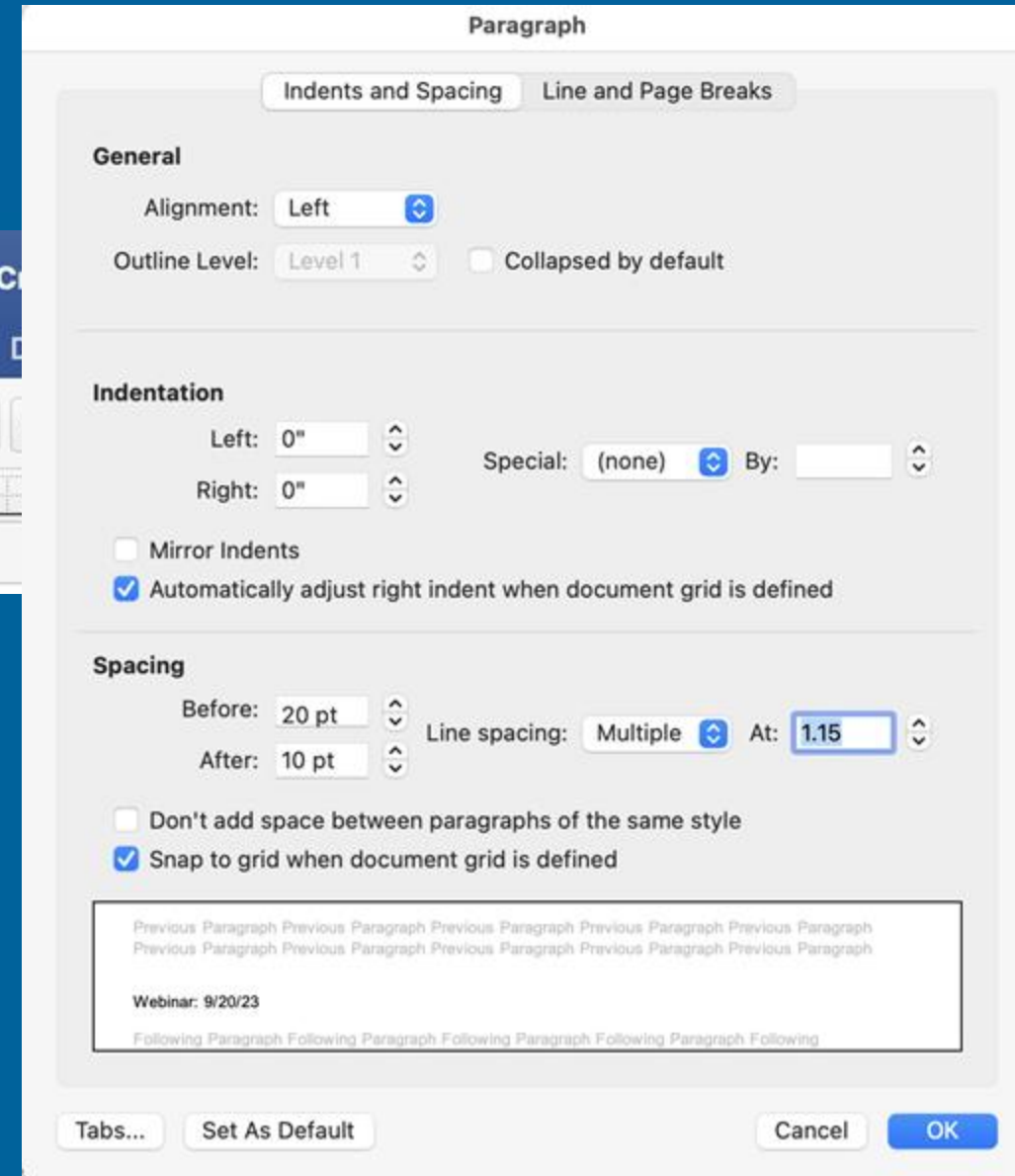
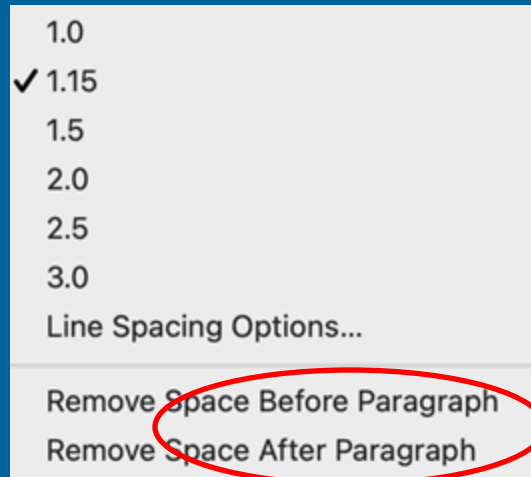
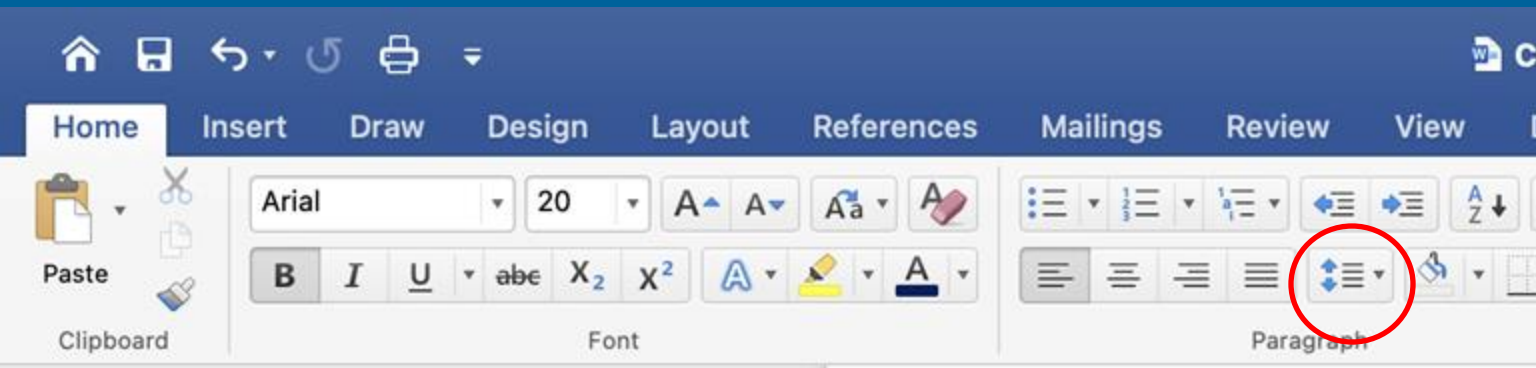
Favorite high school teacher

Use Your Tools

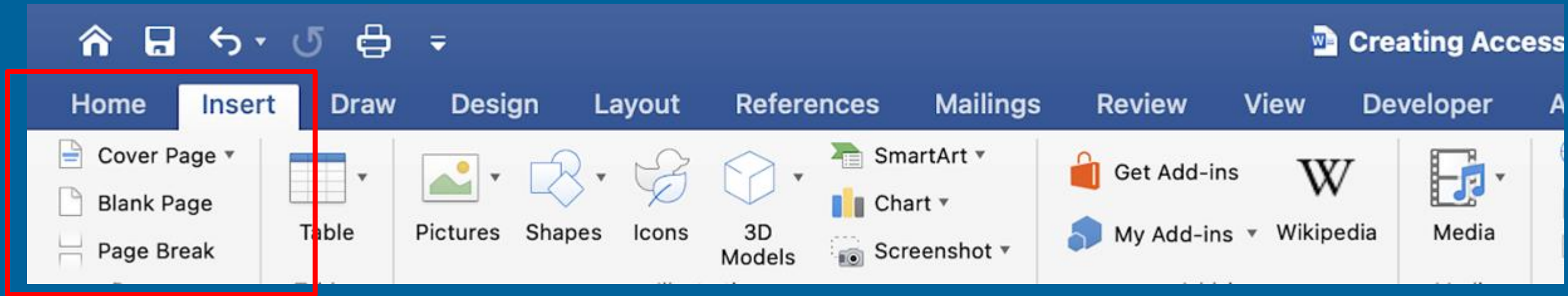


- Blank spacing is an issue for screen readers.
- Increase or decrease white spaces between sentences and/or paragraphs using the built-in tools.

White Space



Page Breaks



Using page breaks instead of filling a document with empty space allows you to isolate text/information while still controlling the layout and setup of the pages in each section.

Hyperlinks - Do

- Keep text to a minimum.
- Be descriptive without relying on the surrounding text.
- Use different text style for hyperlink.
- More information can be found on Maine CITE's website.
- More information can be found on Maine CITE's website, www.maine cite.org.

Hyperlinks – Do not

Avoid ambiguous hyperlink text.

- More information can be found [here](#).

Long URL address that may be easily confused or forgotten.

- Watch this webinar: <https://mainecite.org/trainings/creating-accessible-content-level-1-november-20-2024/>

Shorten hyperlinks:

- Tiny URL (free), Bit.ly (free limited use), or Ow.ly (free trial).



Watch the [Level 1 CAC training](https://tinyurl.com/yck6my83), (<https://tinyurl.com/yck6my83>)

Alternative Text (Alt text)

- Provides a description of any non-text elements.
- Describes the **content** or **function** of the image.
- Images, icons, charts, maps, and images of text.

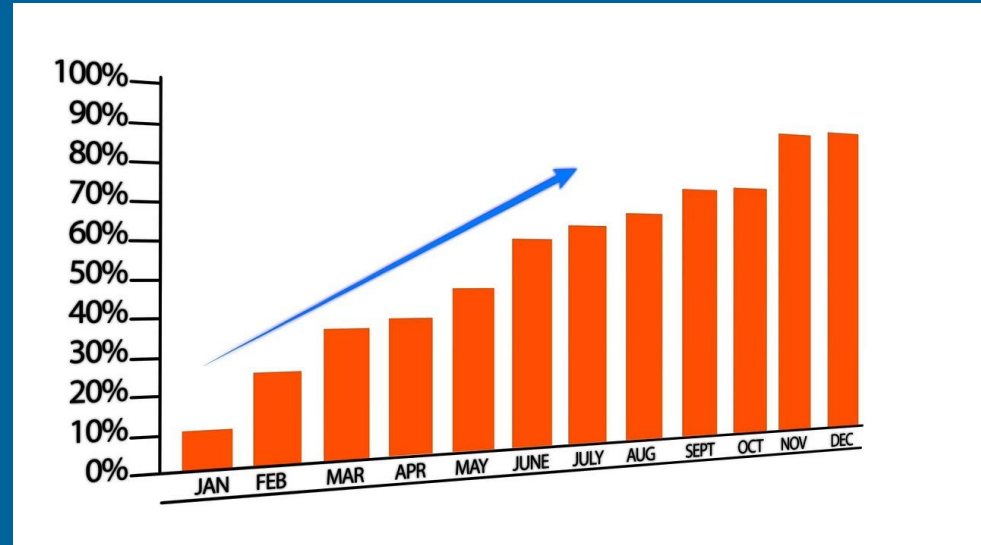
Screen Reader Reading Alt Text

Screen reader test
Images with and without
alt attribute

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NvqasTVoW98>

Alt Text Best Practices

- Keep it short
- Accurate and equivalent
- But NOT redundant



Alt text: A bar chart showing increased percentages over a 12-month time period.

How to Add Alt-Text

Alt Text

How would you describe this object and its context to someone who is blind or low vision?

- The subject(s) in detail
- The setting
- The actions or interactions
- Other relevant information

(1-2 detailed sentences recommended)

A cat, missing one ear, has its mouth open and eyes wide.

☐ Mark as decorative

Generate alt text for me



Cut⌘ X

Copy⌘ C

Paste⌘ V

Save as Picture...

Change Picture>

Group>

Bring to Front>

Send to Back>

Hyperlink...⌘ K

Insert Caption...

Wrap Text>

View Alt Text...

Crop

Size and Position...

Format Picture...⇧⌘ 1

Alt Text



How would you describe this object and its context to someone who is blind or low vision?

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Alt text



Cut ⌘ X
Copy ⌘ C
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Save as Picture...

Change Picture >

Group >

Bring to Front >

Send to Back >

Hyperlink... ⌘ K

Insert Caption...

Wrap Text >

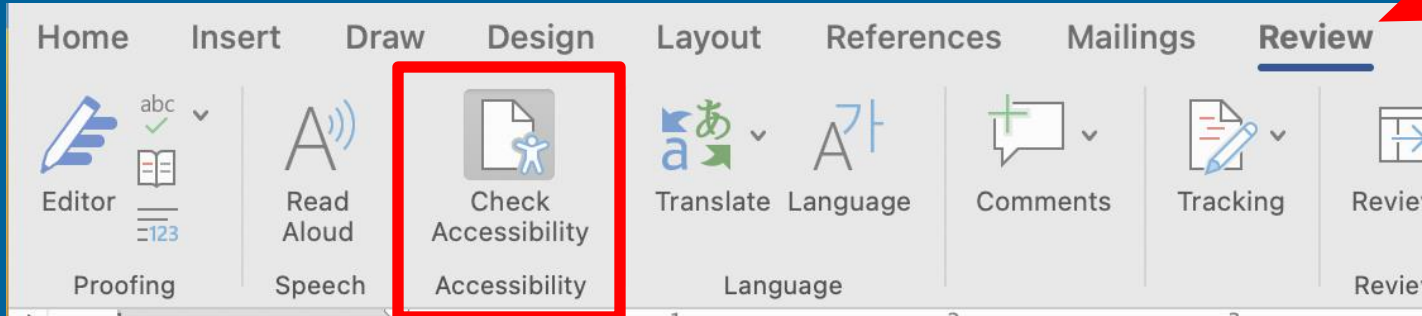
View Alt Text...

Crop

Size and Position...

Format Picture... ⌘ 1

Accessibility Checker- Word



Accessibility Assistant

Keep going!

Fix the remaining issues in the document to make it accessible to everyone.

Color and Contrast

Hard-to-read text contrast 1 >

Media and Illustrations

Missing alt text 1 >

Tables

Missing table header ✓ >

Use of merged or split cells ✓ >

Document Structure

No headings in document ✓ >

Hey GOOGLE!



Accessibility features are built into Google applications too!

- Alt-Text
- Headings
- Lists
- Line spacing

Accessibility Checker Warning

Some items may require manual checking:

- Color contrast
- Information provided in color
- Bullet and numbered lists
- Font readability
- Abbreviations and terms
- Grammar and spelling
- Accuracy of alt text



It's Accessible, now what?

How is it being shared?



Reach out! We are here to help!



www.mainecite.org

info@mainecite.org

207-621-3195

