

PDF Accessibility Guide

Microsoft Word vs PDF

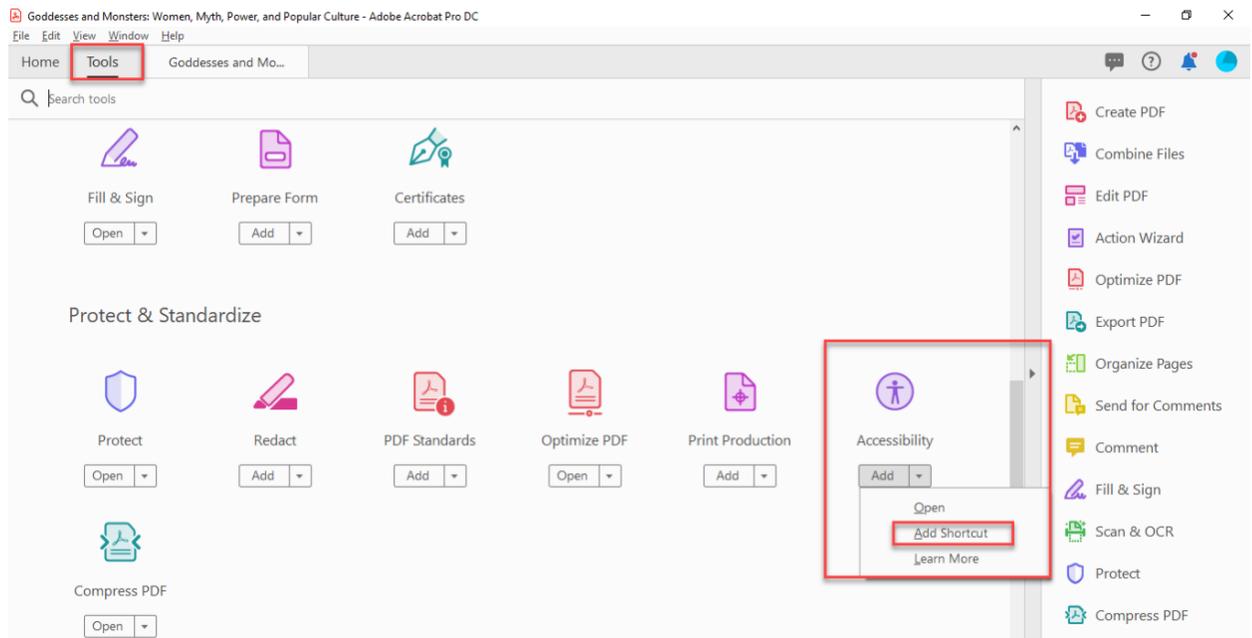
Microsoft Word is normally more accessible than Adobe PDF. For one, Word documents are searchable so that a screen reader can read the words on the page. Word documents are also easier to edit for accessibility. If possible, use the Word version of a document or convert your PDF document so that you can edit it to be accessible. If this is not possible (for example you don't have the Word version or the PDF will not convert correctly to a Word version) then these instructions will help you make your PDF accessible for screen readers.

Scanning to PDF

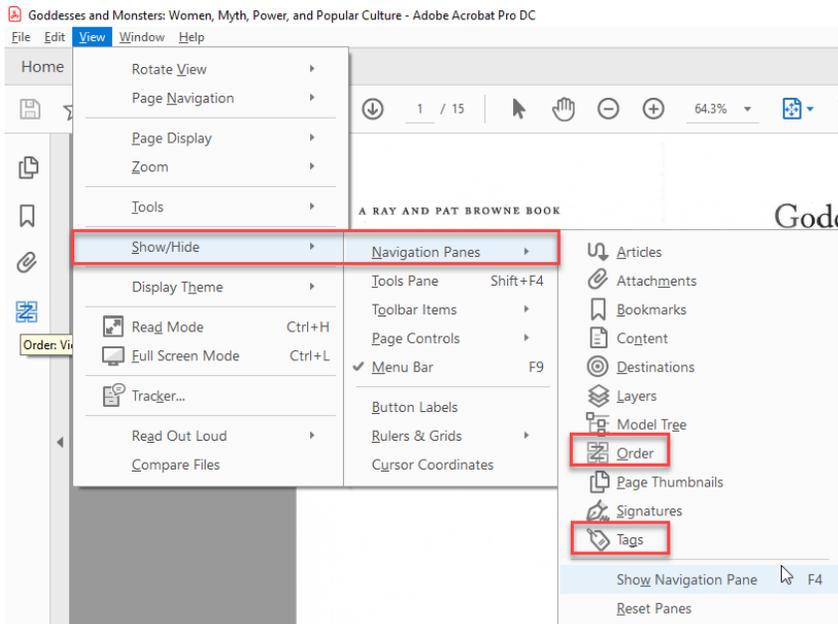
If you are scanning text then after you have scanned your document and are preparing to save it as a PDF check to see if there is the option to save as searchable text. It won't make the PDF accessible but it will make it easier to make it so.

PDF Accessibility Tools

1. You will need Adobe Acrobat DC. If you don't have it (or need a newer version), you can request it from your [technology support staff](#).
2. To make sure you have the right accessibility tools, go to the View Menu in Adobe Acrobat. You will need to add Tools and Navigation Options.
 - a. To add the Tools, go to the Tools tab and find both the Action Wizard and Accessibility tools. Click the dropdown arrow by each and select Add Short Cut to add them to your tool's panel.



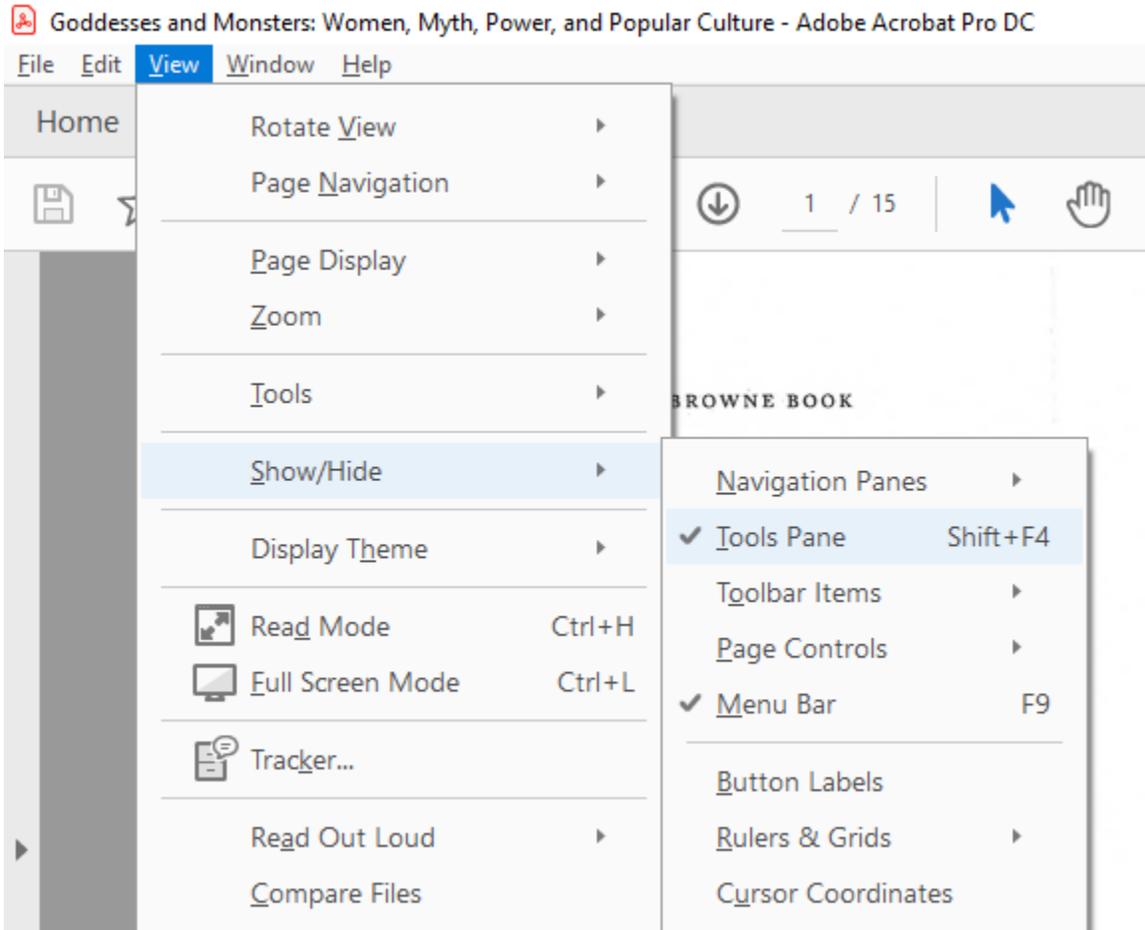
- b. To add the Reading Order and Tags buttons, go to the View menu at the top of the screen and click the Show/Hide option, select Navigation, and select the Reading Order and Tags buttons.



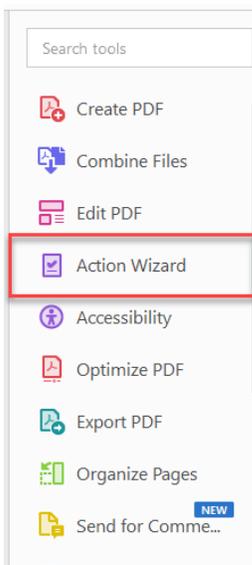
Now you should be ready to start making PDFs accessible!

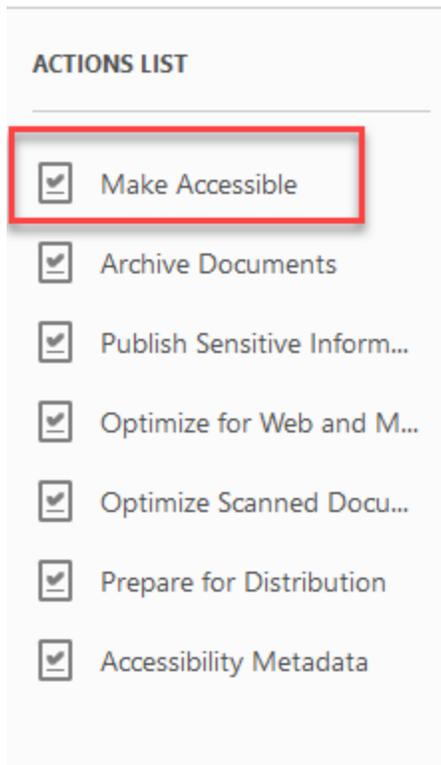
Basic Accessibility Steps

1. The first step is to open your document in Adobe Acrobat DC. Open Adobe Acrobat DC then go to the **File** menu at the top of the screen and select **Open**. Navigate to where you have the PDF saved and select it.
2. To open the **Tools** panel, go to the **View** menu, **Show/Hide** and then select the **Tools Pane**.

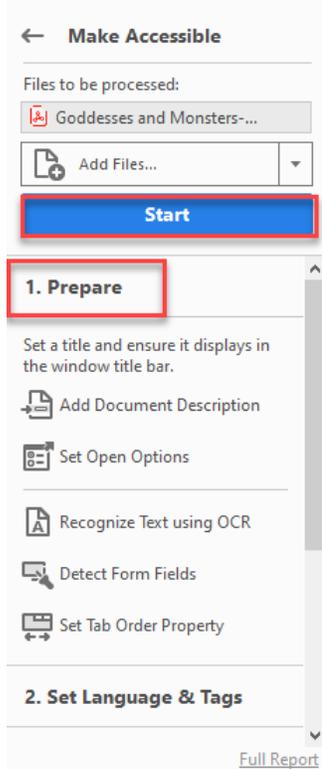


3. Click the **Action Wizard** and select **Make Accessible**

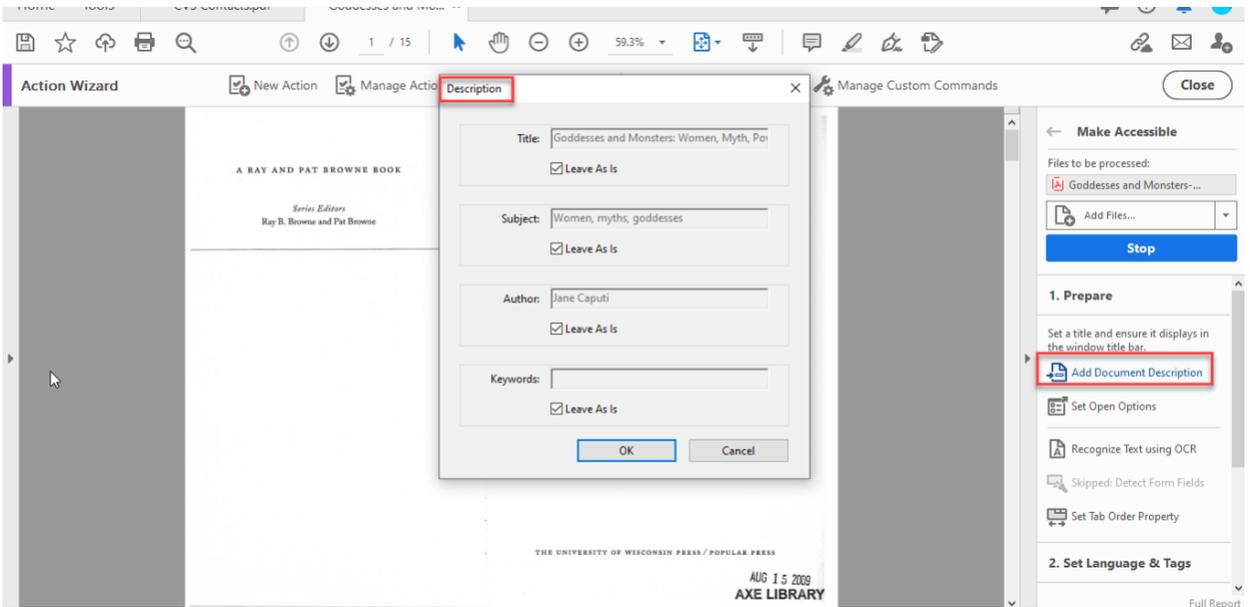




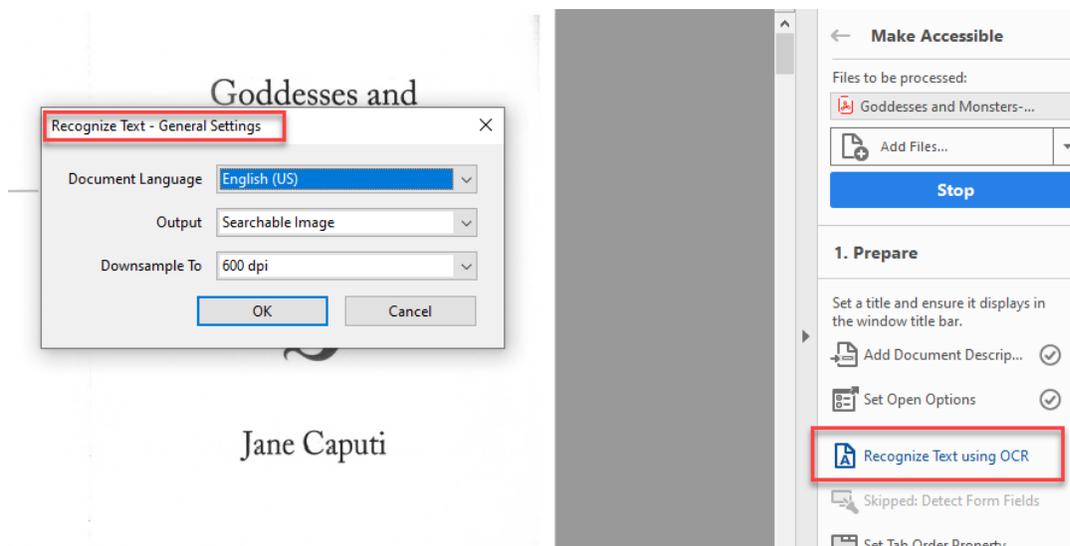
4. Under step 1, right click (PC) or Ctrl click (MAC) to skip any steps you don't want to perform (for example, **Detect Form Fields**) and then click the **Start** button to start the Accessibility Wizard.



5. The first step will take you to **Add Document Description**. Here you will uncheck any of the fields you want to edit and then add the document information.



6. The next step is to set the language and make the text searchable.



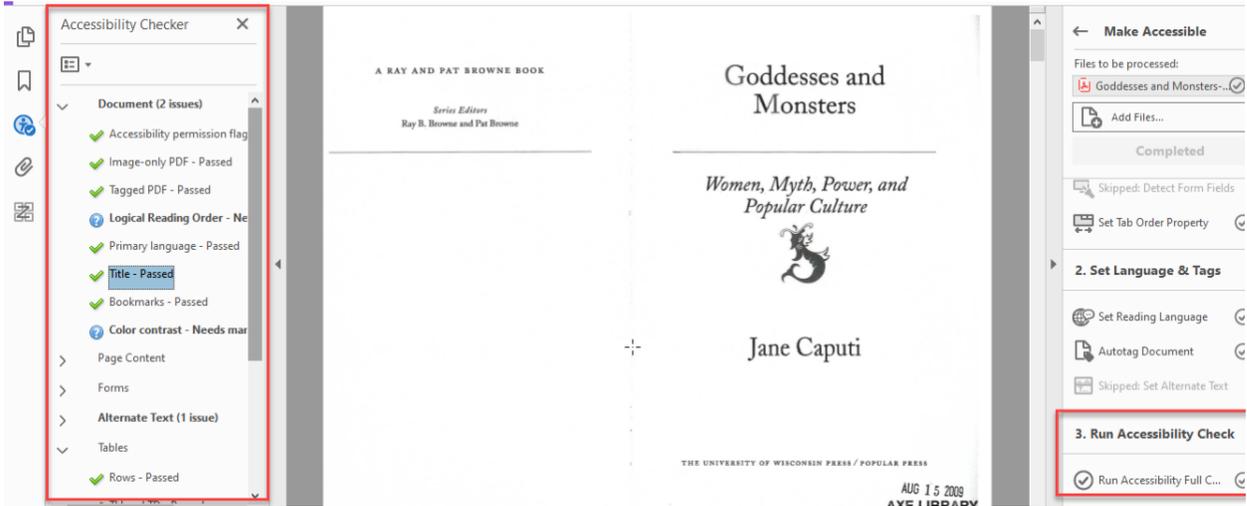
7. The next steps will depend on which steps you did not choose to skip before starting the wizard. By default the wizard will auto tag the document (not perfectly) and run an accessibility check.
8. Running the Accessibility Wizard will at least make the document searchable for a screen reader and set the language.

Advanced Steps

To add alt text, correct tags (headings), and set the reading order for a screen reader follow these steps.

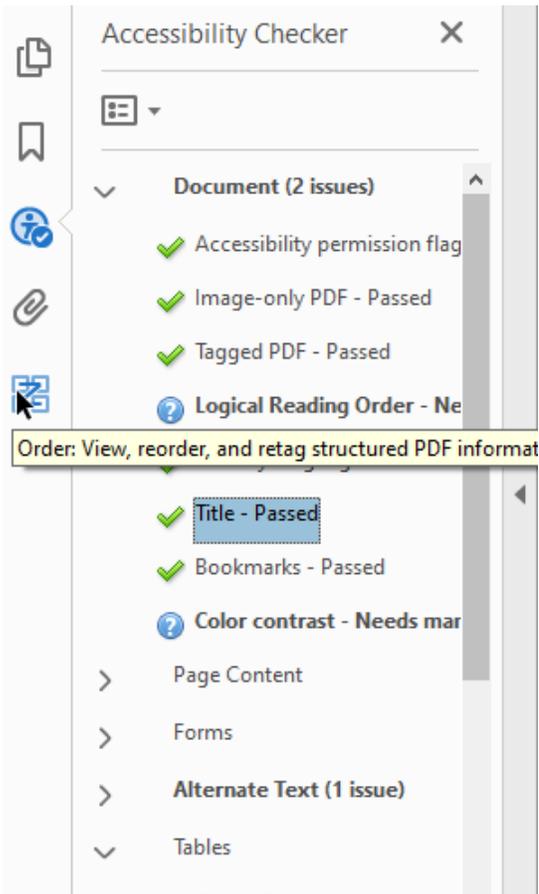
1. The last step of the Accessibility Wizard will perform an accessibility check and then it will display a report. You can skip the Action/Accessibility Wizard and go right to this step to fix everything in the document. You can right click (PC) or ctrl (MAC) click on each item that is flagged on the report and select "Fix" if it gives you that option. For all other items (tagging,

reading order, alt text, tables, etc) see the section, “Tagging and Reordering the Document Content.”

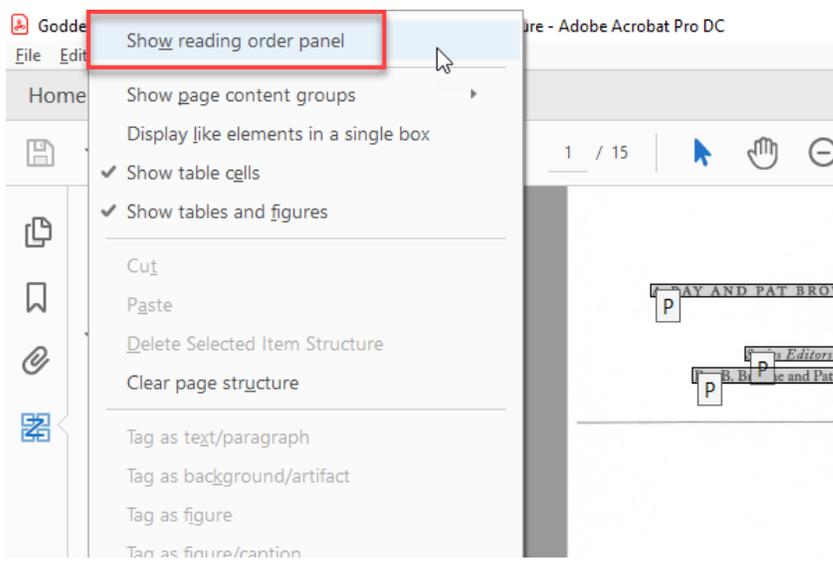
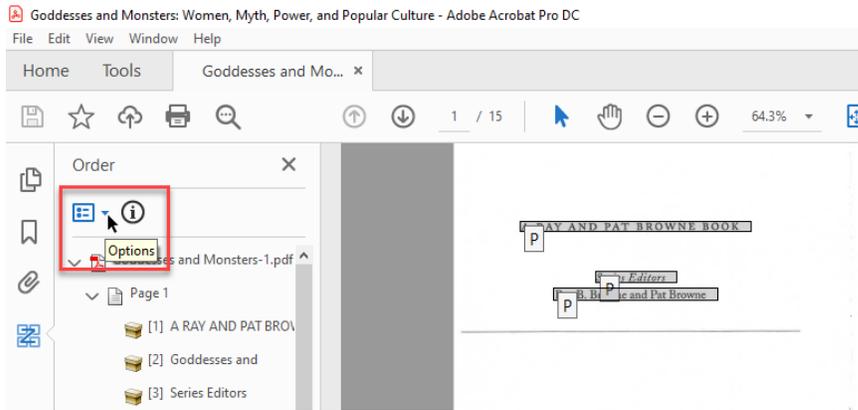


Tagging and Reordering the Document Content

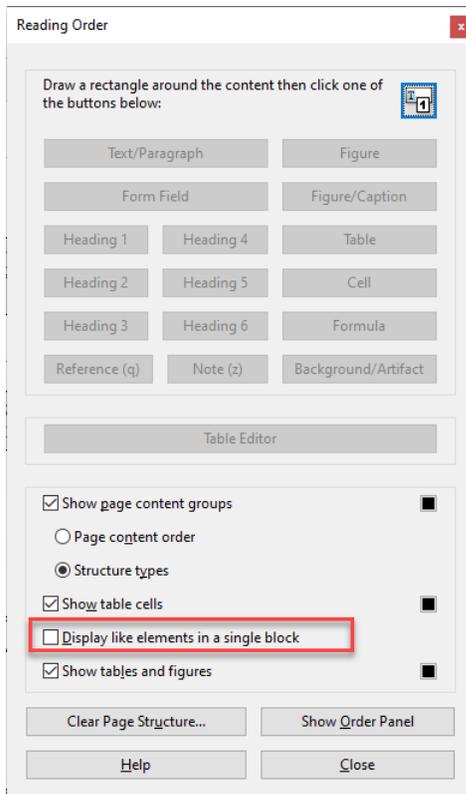
2. Click on the **Order** icon (it looks like a Z) which will allow you to view the tags, reading order, and structure of the PDF.



- At the top of the navigation pane click on the **Options** icon and select the **Reading Order** panel. The **Reading Order** panel will open to the right of the PDF. The **Reading Order** panel allows you to add tags and see and arrange the reading order of the PDF.



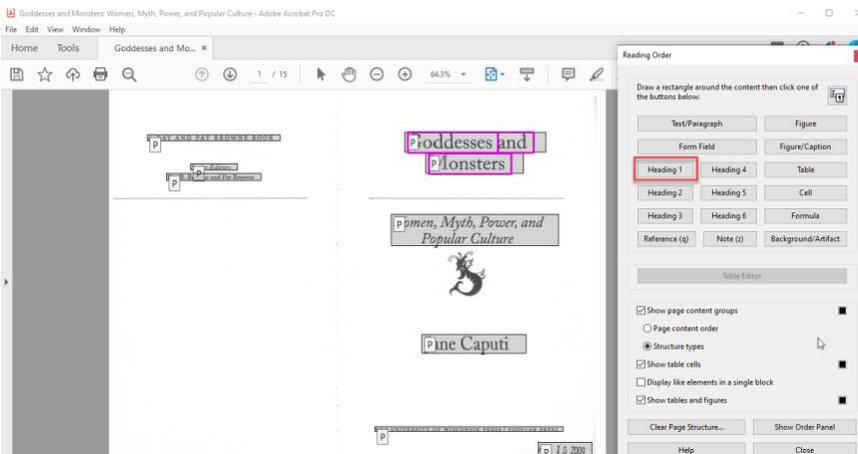
- To be able to select/modify individual items on the PDF you will need to uncheck the **Display Like Items** box on the reading panel.



Creating Structure with Tags

First you will want to create and edit tags to create structure. Tags tell the screen reader how to read the text. For example it will differentiate between a main topics, subtopics, or a paragraph versus a bulleted list. If the document is not tagged, it reads all the text as if it is one big paragraph.

5. Select the tag you want to change with your mouse, and in the **Reading Order** panel, select the proper tag (you can combine like elements or group items by using your cursor to draw a box inclosing them).

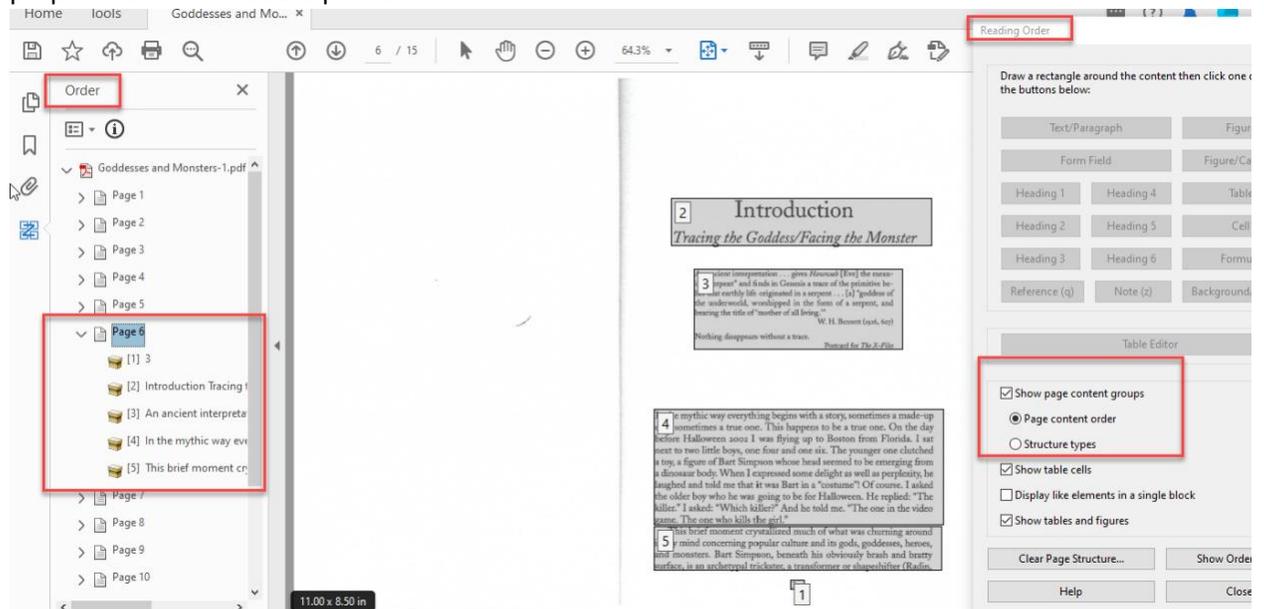


- a. For images that are only decoration, you can use the **Background/Artifact** tag to have the screen reader skip them. However, be careful using this option because it is very hard to undo.

- b. For images, you can use **Figures/Figures/Captions** to describe the image. In the description explain the context or meaning or the image. This option can be used for tables if it isn't important for students to read the data in the table but rather a summary.
- c. Tables are easier to make accessible in Microsoft Word. The document can either be kept in its original Word format or converted (see the Word guide for table accessibility instructions). To make tables accessible using the Table Editor/ or Adobe's Tags option see Adobe's [PDF Accessibility Repair: Examine and Repair Tables](#) webpage.

After appropriately tagging the document then you will reorder the tags so that a screen reader will read the document the way it is intended. However, the Academic Achievement & Access Center recommends making the page number the first thing read on the page. To reorder the page elements:

6. Select the **Page content order** option on the Reading Order panel. Drag and drop the tags in the proper order in the **Order** panel.



7. Make sure to save your work periodically.

By following these instructions, you will fix the majority of the accessibility issues in your document. If you need help with these steps or would like help with more complex work like table and list tags, please contact the ADA RESOURCE CENTER FOR EQUITY AND ACCESSIBILITY, accessibility@ku.edu, 785-864-4946.