



MAKING CANVAS CONTENT ACCESSIBLE

Canvas gives you a few built-in tools that make day-to-day accessibility easier — not a separate project, just a normal part of how you already announce, discuss, and grade. This piece covers three of them: the Accessibility Checker built into every Rich Content Editor, what to do about images in email and inbox messages, and how to use color in grading without leaving colorblind students behind.

The Canvas Accessibility Checker

Whenever you use the Rich Content Editor (where you type your Announcements, Discussion Posts, or Assignments), look for the accessibility icon at the bottom of the window. This tool instantly identifies missing alt-text, poor color contrast, or heading issues and lets you fix them with one click.



It's not just watching for errors after the fact — as you type, a small number badge appears right on the icon showing how many issues it's currently found, so you can check in as you go rather than waiting until you're about to publish.

Accessible Email & Inbox Messages

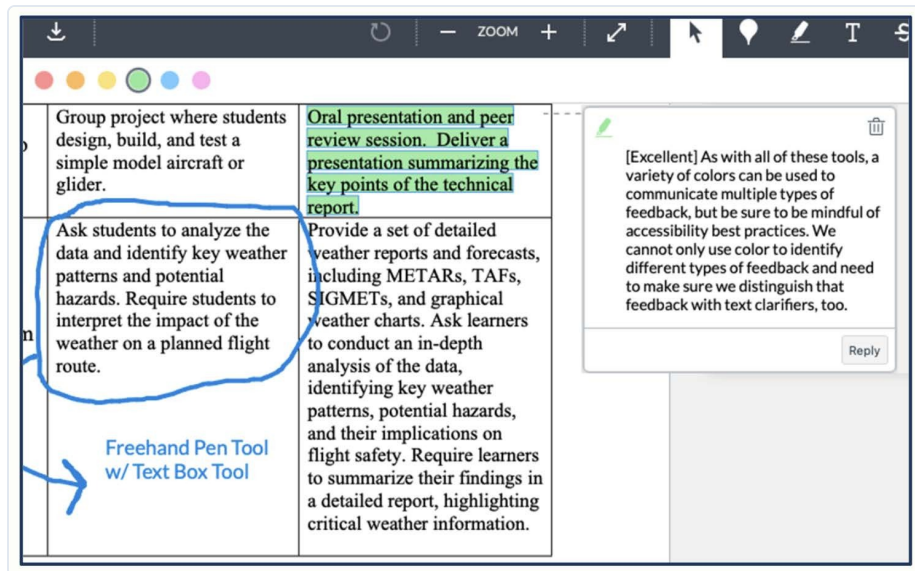
If you include images in an announcement or a Canvas inbox message, you must provide a written description of that image within the text of the message itself, as these tools often lack a traditional alt-text field. This includes images in your signature that convey information rather than being purely decorative.

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Color in Grading

Avoid using color alone to convey meaning (e.g., "Red text is wrong, green text is right," or using a markup pen or highlighter tool to solely convey meaning or intention). Students with colorblindness cannot distinguish these.

The Fix: You can still use color highlighting tools, but at the start of the highlight, indicate in parentheses what it signifies — for example, (well done) or (grammar). Also use labels or symbols, such as "X – Incorrect" or "✓ – Correct."



The screenshot shows a Canvas LMS interface with a table containing student work. The table has two columns. The first column contains text about a group project and weather analysis. The second column contains text about an oral presentation and weather reports. A blue circle highlights the text in the first column, and a blue arrow points to it with the text "Freehand Pen Tool w/ Text Box Tool". A feedback comment box on the right contains the text: "[Excellent] As with all of these tools, a variety of colors can be used to communicate multiple types of feedback, but be sure to be mindful of accessibility best practices. We cannot only use color to identify different types of feedback and need to make sure we distinguish that feedback with text clarifiers, too." The comment box has a "Reply" button.

Group project where students design, build, and test a simple model aircraft or glider.	Oral presentation and peer review session. Deliver a presentation summarizing the key points of the technical report.
Ask students to analyze the data and identify key weather patterns and potential hazards. Require students to interpret the impact of the weather on a planned flight route.	Provide a set of detailed weather reports and forecasts, including METARs, TAFs, SIGMETs, and graphical weather charts. Ask learners to conduct an in-depth analysis of the data, identifying key weather patterns, potential hazards, and their implications on flight safety. Require learners to summarize their findings in a detailed report, highlighting critical weather information.

Freehand Pen Tool w/ Text Box Tool

[Excellent] As with all of these tools, a variety of colors can be used to communicate multiple types of feedback, but be sure to be mindful of accessibility best practices. We cannot only use color to identify different types of feedback and need to make sure we distinguish that feedback with text clarifiers, too.

Reply