



TOOLBOX OF RESOURCES

SEQUENCE 14: Adapting the story for accessibility and SLD learners

Target: Educators, Youth Workers, Trainers

Estimated duration: 2–3 hours (can be split into shorter working sessions or included systematically during the creation and reviewing processes).

Context: This sequence supports creators in reviewing and adapting an already drafted story to ensure it is accessible, understandable, and inclusive for users with Specific Learning Difficulties (SLD) and for a wider audience, following principles of cognitive accessibility and universal design. It is informed by a universal approach as described in the “**A General Approach to Cognitive Accessibility**” guide developed within the AccessibleEU Centre framework¹.

This approach aims to make content easier to understand, communicate with, and interact with for everyone.

Cognitive Accessibility (basic definition)

Cognitive accessibility refers to the way information is structured, written, presented, and interacted with so that it can be **easily understood and used** by as many people as possible.

Specific Learning Difficulties (SLD) – in this sequence

In this sequence, SLD learners are understood as young people who may experience difficulties with: reading and decoding text, processing large amounts of information, attention and concentration, working memory, organisation, and navigation.

This includes, for example, dyslexia, dyscalculia, dyspraxia, or attention-related difficulties.

The sequence does not require formal diagnosis and does not focus on labels, but on practical barriers to understanding.

¹ AccessibleEU Centre, *A General Approach to Cognitive Accessibility*, European Union, 26 September 2025, https://accessible-eu-centre.ec.europa.eu/general-approach-cognitive-accessibility_en



1. OBJECTIVES

By the end of this sequence, participants will be able to:

- Verify whether their story is cognitively accessible
- Identify barriers related to language, structure, navigation, and multimedia
- Apply basic principles of cognitive accessibility to story content
- Adapt text, choices, and visuals to improve clarity and readability
- Ensure the story is inclusive for users with SLD without oversimplifying content

TANGIBLE OUTPUT: by the end of the sequence, will be produced a revised and more accessible version of the story, supported by an accessibility review checklist.

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE SEQUENCE

This sequence guides participants through a structured accessibility review of an interactive story.

Participants use a practical checklist to examine:

- Language and readability
- Narrative structure and choice clarity
- Characters and consistency
- Visual and multimedia elements
- Navigation and interaction patterns

The focus is on making small, concrete improvements that increase understanding, reduce cognitive load, and support diverse users while raising awareness and sensibilisation towards how each and everyone of us can make some small but important adjustments.



3. PROPOSED ACTIVITIES

Activity 1 - Accessibility Self-Check of the Written Part

Duration: 45 minutes (including review and rewriting)

Instructions: Use the worksheet in [Annex 1](#) to systematically review your written content. Mark each item as "Yes" or "Needs Revision" and apply the corresponding corrective action.

Output:

An annotated version of the story, highlighting unclear or complex elements and rewriting passages to make them easier to read and understand.

Activity 2 - Multimedia and Visual Review

Duration: 30-45 minutes

- Are visuals support add to understanding the story, or are they only decoration?
- Are there flashing images, autoplay sounds, animations, and overlapping of those elements?
- Are images consistent in style and meaning?
- Are multimedia not distracting from reading, both in design (not hiding text) and in understanding? (If a dialogue is played, then readers cannot fully pay attention to another text and the voices at the same time.)

Output:

Adjusted multimedia elements aligned with accessibility principles

4. DIGITAL TOOLBOX - Tools for the Sequence

- [LanguageTool](#): multilingual writing assistant that checks spelling, grammar, and style in texts.
- [Natural Reader](#): platform that converts any written text, including documents, PDFs, e-books, web pages, and even text from images, into audio with natural-sounding voices.



5. HOW TO APPLY THESE ACTIVITIES IN FORMAL AND INFORMAL CONTEXTS

Formal (School)

- Used as part of a content creation or digital project review phase
- Integrated into collaborative story development workshops
- Supports inclusive design requirements without changing curriculum goals

Non-formal (youth work)

- Applied during co-creation labs or creative storytelling sessions
- Encourages peer review and group reflection
- Can be adapted to short sessions or iterative improvements

6. ADAPTATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH SLD

Before starting the accessibility review, participants are invited to identify and express what makes reading, navigating, or understanding a story difficult for them.

Possible adaptations:

- Create a personal difficulty map (written, visual, or audio)
- Use prompts such as:
 - “I lose track when...”
 - “Too much information at once makes it hard when...”
 - “I understand better when...”
- Allow participants to choose how they express this: keywords or short sentences, icons or drawings.

Purpose:

This helps the group understand *what to focus on* when reviewing the story and turns lived experience into a design resource.



6.1 Adapting Activity 1 - Accessibility Self-Check

Adaptations:

- Use a simplified checklist with:
 - One question per line
 - Clear yes / no / unsure options
 - Focus on what they identified before
- Read checklist items aloud or provide audio support
- Work in pairs or small groups
- Provide before / after examples of simplified text
- Accept oral reformulations that another participant can write down

6.2 Adapting Activity 2 - Multimedia Review

Adaptations:

- Review media elements one type at a time (images first, then sound)
- Use guiding questions with visual cues:
 - “Does this help me understand?”
 - “Does this distract me?”
- Allow participants to mute sounds or hide animations during review

6.3 Working Rhythm and Environment

Across all activities:

- Use short working blocks with clear start and end points
- Allow breaks and flexible timing
- Work in calm environments with minimal distractions
- Repeat instructions and summarize key points often
- Validate different processing speeds and strategies

7. RELATED TUTORIALS

- [Tutorial 6 : Adapting the stories for different learning styles & age groups \(16–26 years\)](#)
- [Tutorial 7: Facilitating Youth Group Discussions & Problem-Solving Challenges](#)

SEQUENCE 14: Adapting the story for accessibility and SLD learners

Activity 1 - Accessibility Self-Check of the Written Part

Review Criteria	Checklist	Corrective Action Required
Sentence Structure Are sentences short and direct?	Yes / Needs to be reviewed	>Replace complex or abstract vocabulary with plain language. >Avoid metaphors or figurative expressions unless essential. If used, accompany with clear examples, dialogue, or pictures.
Idea Density Is only one idea expressed at a time?	Yes / Needs to be reviewed	>Break long sentences into shorter, focused units.
Consistency Are terms, symbols, and buttons used consistently?	Yes / Needs to be reviewed	>Verify consistency of navigation labels (e.g., "next chapter") and interface elements (sound/image buttons). >Clearly distinguish between narrative text and explanatory notes (e.g., scientific facts or context).
Visual Distinction Are choices clearly distinguished from narrative text?	Yes / Needs to be reviewed	>Use colors to highlight choices. >Create a clear visual separation between the story narrative and user decisions.
Instruction Clarity Are instructions explicit and easy to find?	Yes / Needs to be reviewed	>Add basic instructions at the very beginning of the story. >Explain: how to navigate, where to click, and the meaning of any symbols used.

