

Using Ally in Canvas

A Guide for Students

Created by the Academic Commons at Thomas Jefferson University


Ally is a tool embedded into your Canvas courses that provides you the opportunity to download course files in a format that is best suited for how you like to learn. Alternate formats include readable text, pictures with captions, and audio files. The types of available alternate formats vary depending on the original file type.

Alternative Formats Available in Canvas:

Alternative Format	Description	Use If...
Audio	Read the text out loud. May include descriptions for images. This is saved as an MP3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You prefer listening to information.• You have a lot of material to read, and your eyes get tired.• You can't carry print materials for any length of time.
BeeLine Reader	Has options for changing the color of text and background.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You have a lot of material to read, and your eyes get tired.• You read a lot on screen and wish you could read more easily and quickly.• You experience dyslexia, ADHD, or low vision.• You have difficulty with visual tracking or focus.
Electronic Braille	Creates a file that can be read on a refreshable Braille display, Braille reading devices, or Braille software.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You have a visual impairment.
ePub	Creates a format that is supported by mobile devices and e-readers. Works with Apple, Android, Windows, and Linux apps.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You want to highlight content, take notes, and bookmark pages.• You want to use text-to-speech.
HTML	Uses tags, block quotes, paragraphs, and headings to provide structure and is viewed in a browser that adapts to your device. Designed for onscreen viewing and interaction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You want to highlight content, take notes, and bookmark important pages.• Your content has complex layouts.• You want to use text-to-speech.
Immersive Reader	In a nutshell, Immersive Reader is an online alternatives format that enhances the reading experience,	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You want to learn spelling and grammar by splitting words into syllables.

	increasing the readability of the content.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You want to highlight verbs, nouns, adjectives, and sub-clauses. You want to convert text to speech and translate content in real time.
ORCed PDF	Creates a searchable text when the original content uploaded is a scannable PDF image. Helpful format if content is a scanned article or chapter.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You want to be able to copy, paste, and search text. You want to use text-to-speech and adjust the speed of the speech. You prefer to read or use a screen reader.
Tagged PDF	Uses tags, block quotes, paragraphs and headings to provide content structure and for improved use with assistive technology.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You want to highlight content, take notes, and bookmark important pages. You want to use text-to-speech.
Translated Version	Provides a machine-translated version of the original document in 50 different possible languages. Supports PDF Word, PowerPoint, and HTML documents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You have a primary language other than English. You prefer to read in a language other than English.

How to Access Alternative Formats:

- Within your Canvas modules or assignments, find the file you want to view.
- Click on the arrow to the right of the link to your file and choose “Alternative formats.” 
- Read the description for each option and choose the format you need.

Ally Help

- Video: [Accessing Alternative Formats](#) (1:00)
- Video: [How to Choose Your Alternative Format](#) (2:52)
- Video: [BeeLine Reader Demonstration](#) (0:32)
- Website: [Ally for LMS Help for Students](#)
- Instructor Assistance: Academic Commons and [Schedule a Consultation](#) on our website.
- Campus Specific Support: Available Monday – Friday 8 AM – 6 PM
 - ❖ Contact the Academic Commons’ Educational Technology Support team at EdTech.Support@lists.jefferson.edu or call (215) 503-2830.