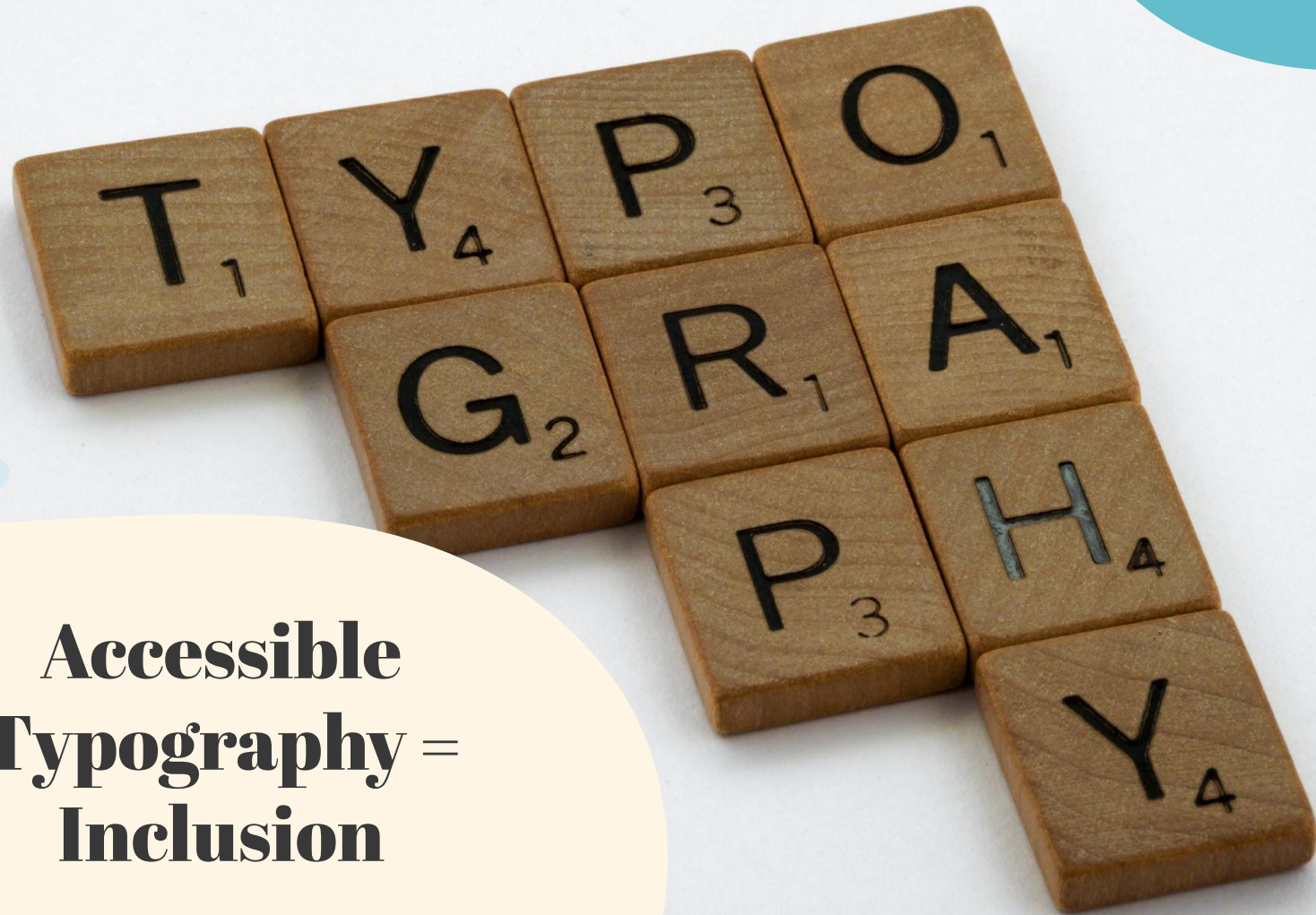# Accessible Typography Essentials

Hello!

Carie Fisher, MS, CPWA

Sr. Accessibility
Consultant & Trainer

HCI Ph.D. Student at
Iowa State University

Accessible
Typography =
Inclusion

01

Color & Contrast

Color & Contrast WCAG Guidelines

	Small text	Large text	Icons & Graphics
A	n/a	n/a	n/a
AA	4.5:1	3:1	3:1
AAA	7:1	4.5:1	3:1

Demo #1

Color & Contrast Takeaways

01

Small text (14 pt or smaller) must have a contrast ratio of 4.5:1

02

Large text (14 pt bold or 18pt) must have a contrast ratio of 3:1

03

Icons and essential images must have a contrast ratio of 3:1

04

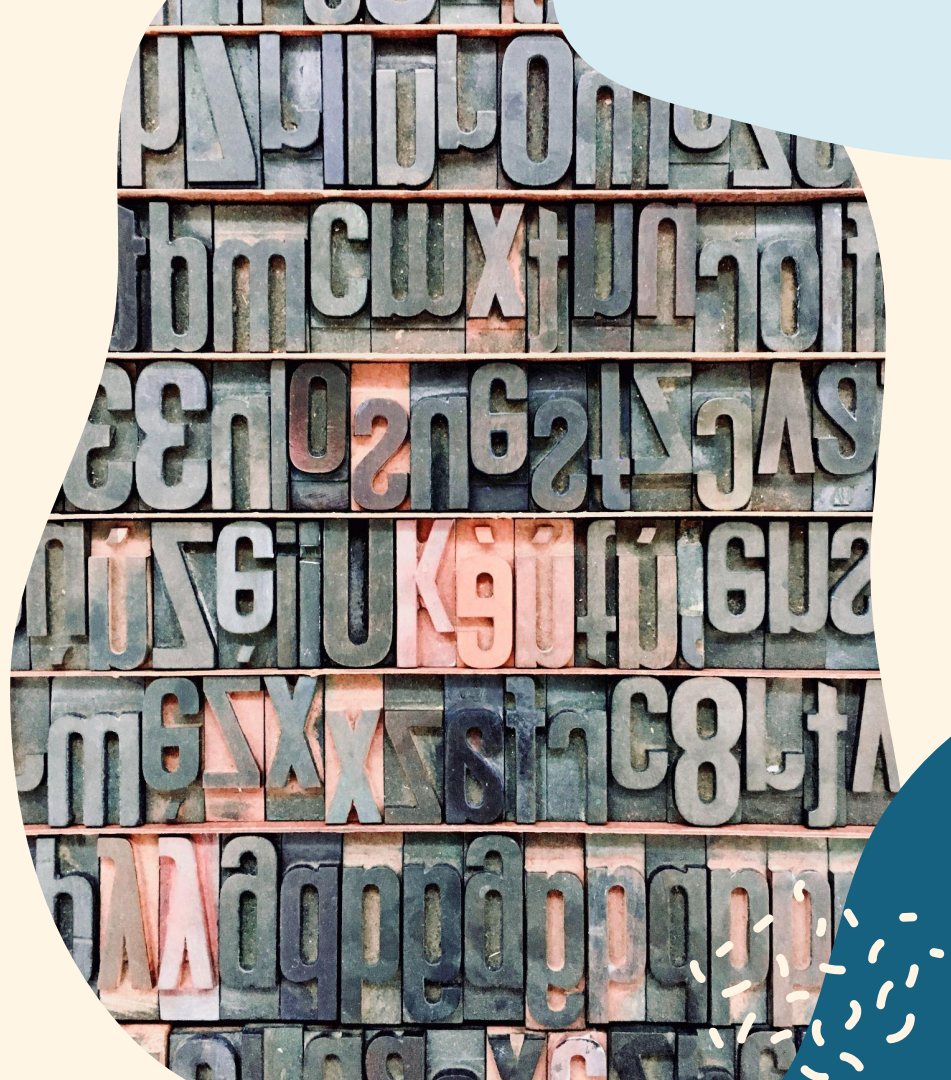Use solid color backgrounds to help with readability

05

Do not rely on color alone to convey information

06

Avoid certain color combinations like red + green and shades of gray

02

Typeface & Styling

Typeface & Styling WCAG Guidelines

	Text resizing	Text spacing	Readability
A	n/a	n/a	n/a
AA	Required	Required	n/a
AAA	Required	Required	Required

Demo #2

Typeface & Styling Takeaways

01

Use common fonts like Arial or Open Sans whenever possible

02

Pick a typeface that has unique characteristics

03

Allow a user to resize the text up to 200% but not lose content

04

Font size for copy should be a minimum of 14 pts (bonus points if larger)

05

Limit the number of typeface variations to increase readability

06

Avoid using only color, ALL CAPS, or italic styling to emphasize a word

03

Structure & Layout

Structure & Layout
WCAG Guidelines

	Visual presentation	Text spacing	Section headings
A	n/a	n/a	n/a
AA	n/a	Required	n/a
AAA	Required	Required	Required

Demo #3

Structure & Layout Takeaways

01

Use elements like headings to break up the page into sections

02

Add visual elements like lists, numbers, and quotations

03

Try not to exceed 80 characters per paragraph line

04

Line height needs to be 1.5X the typeface, and paragraph spacing is 2X

05

Letter spacing should be 0.12X the typeface, and word spacing is 0.16X

06

Avoid justified paragraph alignment which create "rivers of space"

"How many opportunities do we have to dramatically improve people's lives just by doing our job a little better?"

Steve Krug

Thanks!

@cariefisher

/in/cariefisher

cariefisher.com