

Converting Microsoft Word Files into ADA-Compliant PDFs with Adobe Acrobat Professional 7

STEP 1:

The first step in creating ADA-compliant PDFs is to make sure that all of your images have **alternative text tags**. To create an alternative text tag on an image, follow the instructions below:

1. Double-click the image.
2. When the **Format Picture** dialog box appears, select the **Web** tab.
3. Type in the alternative text for the screen reader in the **Alternative text:** box
4. Click the **OK** button.

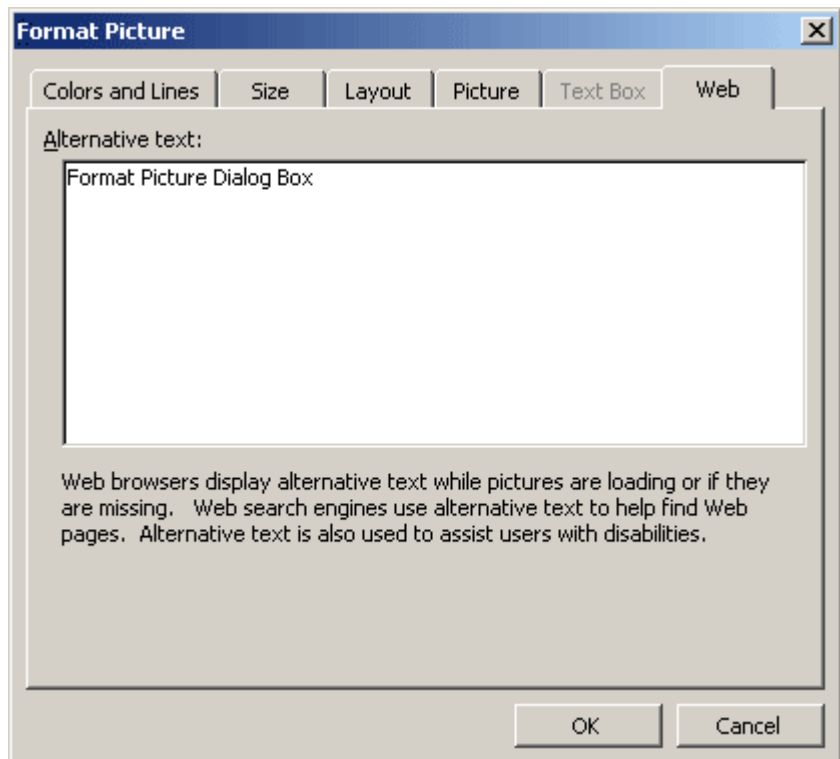


Figure 1: Format Picture Dialog Box

Note: If you wish to have images left- or right-aligned with text wrapping near the image, you must put the image into an invisible table. A screen reader will not recognize alternative text tags on images that have been left- or right-aligned.

STEP 2:

The next step in creating ADA-compliant PDFs is to make sure that your PDF conversion settings are properly set. From the **Adobe PDF** menu, at the top of Microsoft Word or PowerPoint, select **Change Conversion Settings...** and make sure that you have the following configuration for each tab in the dialog box:

SETTINGS TAB SETUP:

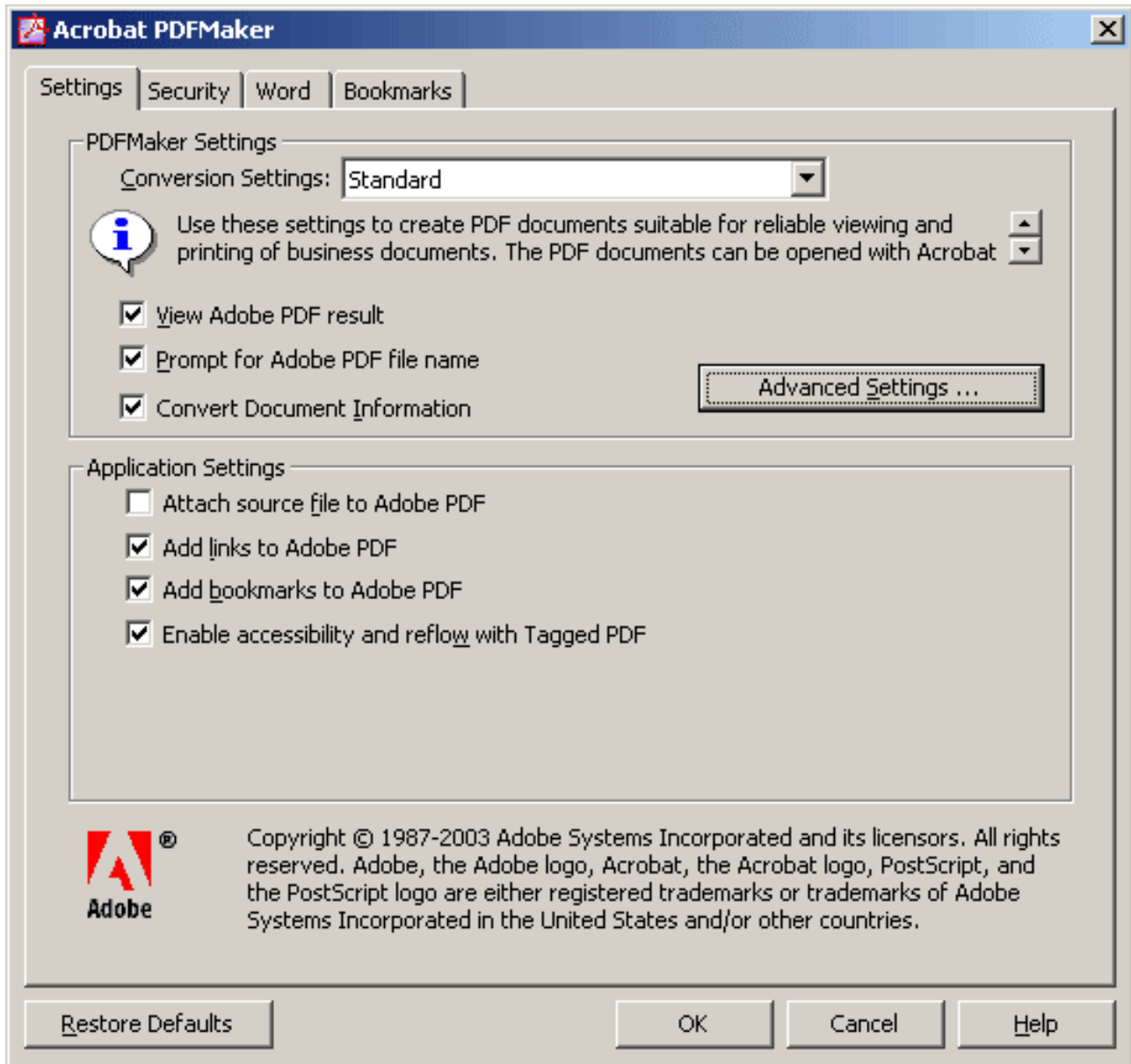


Figure 2: Acrobat PDF Maker Dialog Box – Settings Tab

SECURITY TAB SETUP:

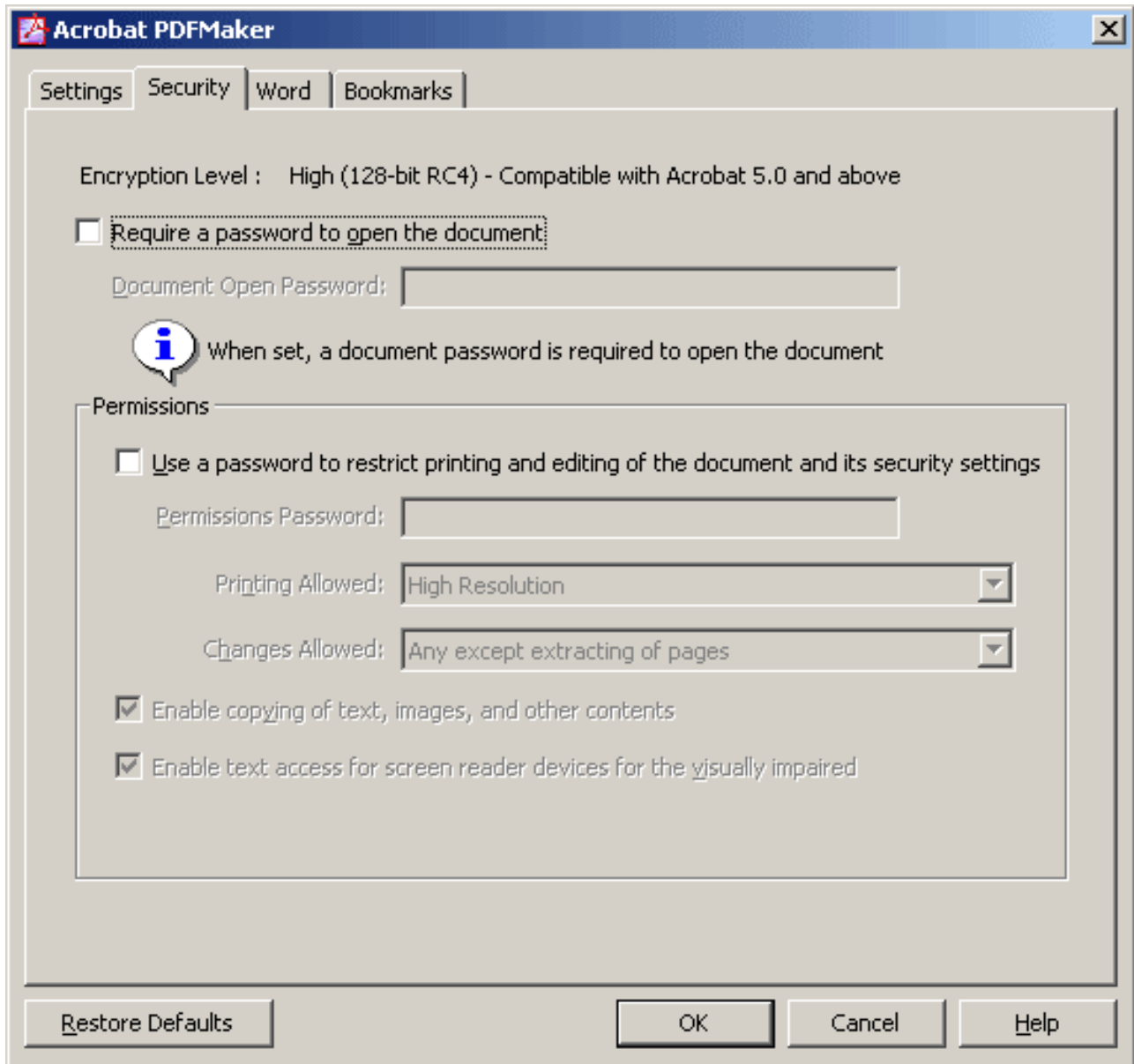


Figure 3: Acrobat PDF Maker Dialog Box – Security Tab

1. In this tab area, make certain that there is a checkmark next to **Enable text access for screen reader devices for the visually impaired**. If this option is not already enabled, click on the checkmark under **Permissions** that says **Use a password to restrict printing and editing of the document and its security settings**. This will allow you to turn on the **Enable text access for screen reader** option. If you don't want to set a password to restrict printing, just uncheck this box under **Permissions** after you have made your screen reader enabled option change.

WORD TAB SETUP:

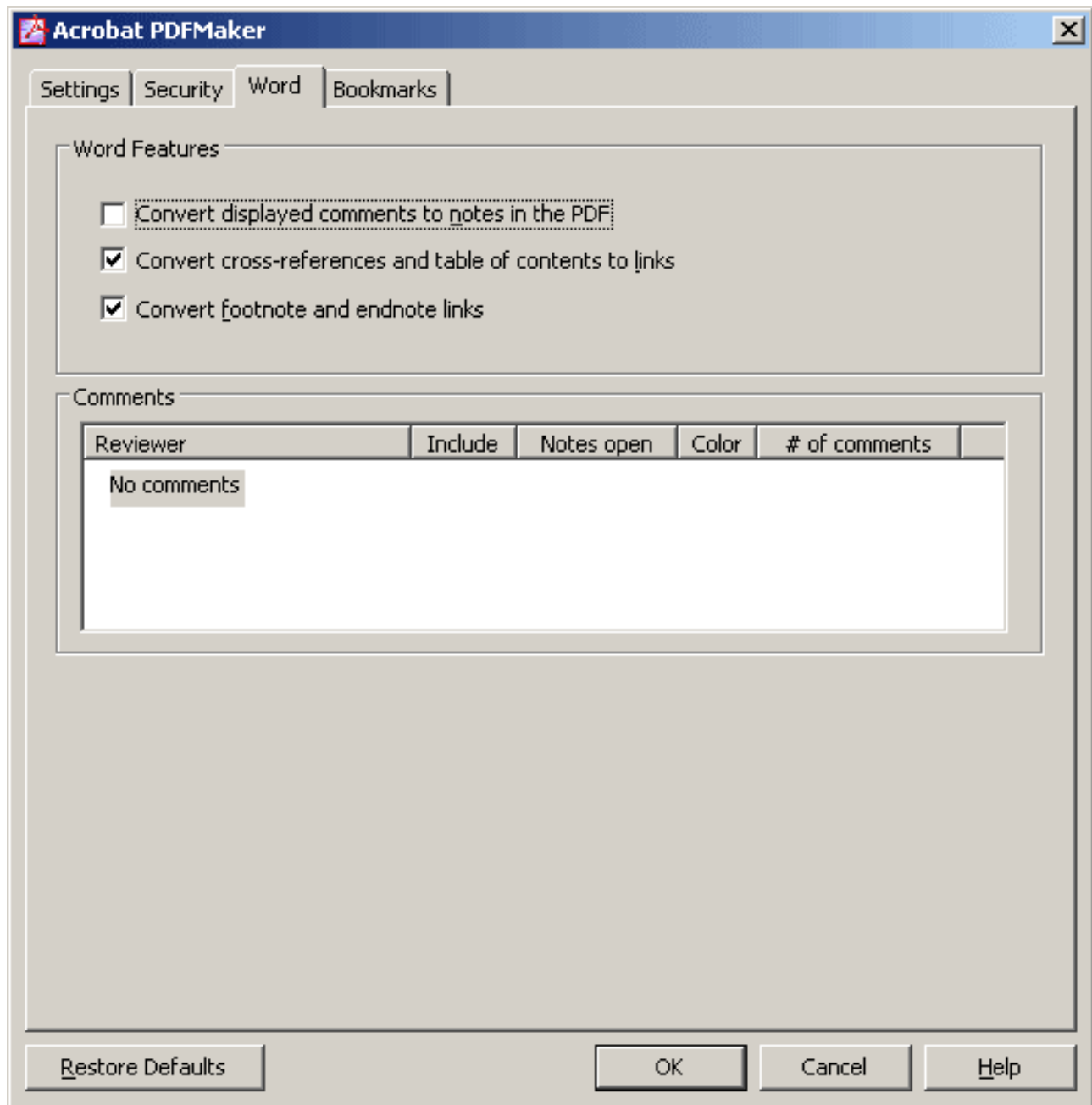


Figure 4: Acrobat PDF Maker Dialog Box – Word Tab

BOOKMARKS TAB SETUP:

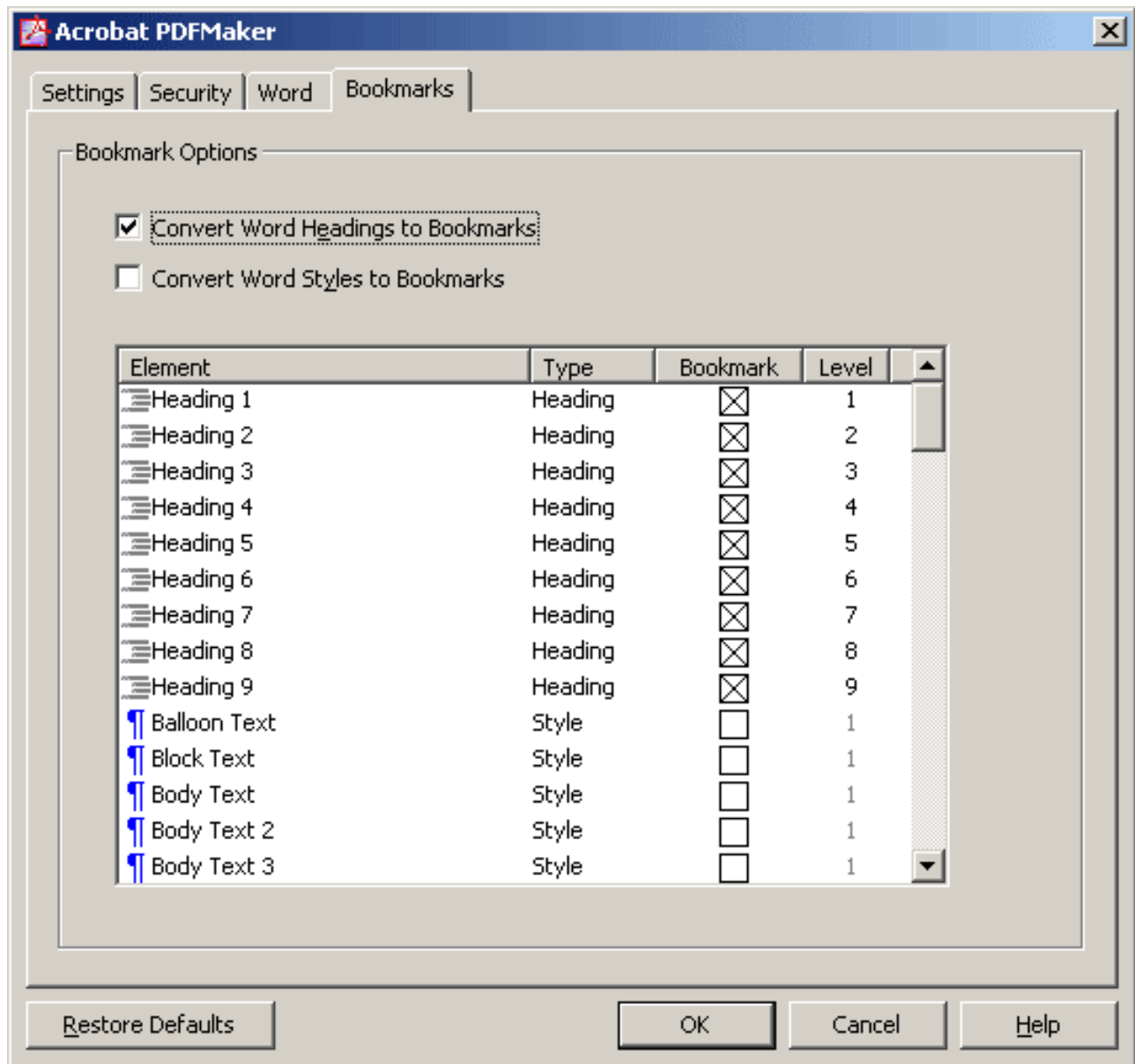


Figure 5: Acrobat PDF Maker Dialog Box – Bookmarks Tab

2. After you have checked all the conversion settings in the **Acrobat PDFMaker** dialog box, click the **OK** button to close the dialog box and save your settings.

STEP 3:

1. After you have reviewed the conversion settings, select **Adobe PDF > Convert to Adobe PDF**.

2. When the **Save Adobe PDF File As** dialog box appears, type a filename with all lowercase letters and the **.pdf** extension. If you wish to have a space in your filename, use an underscore instead. The use of the underscore in lieu of a space is essential if you wish to place the files on the web or in Blackboard.

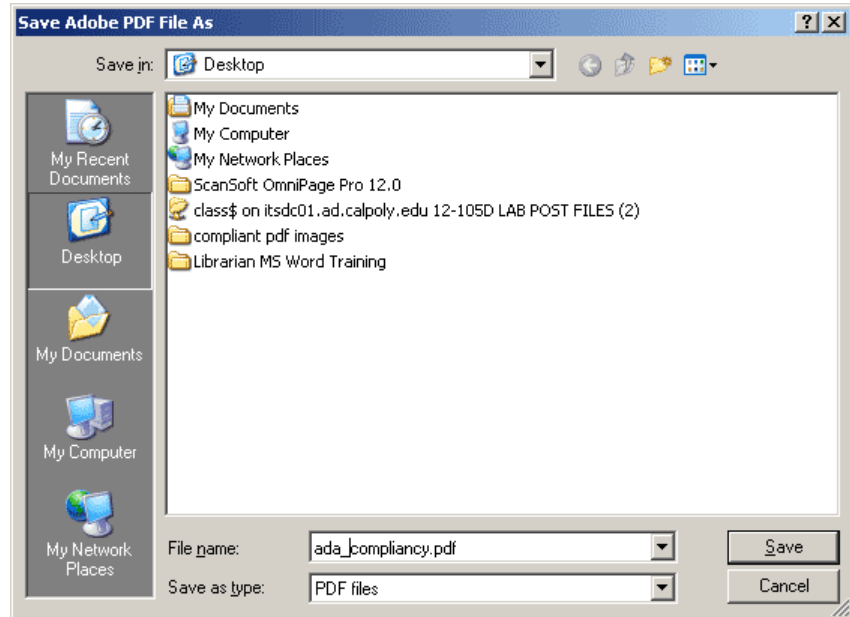


Figure 6: Save Adobe PDF File As Dialog Box

STEP 4:

Now when you open the PDF in Adobe Acrobat Professional, there a few more tasks you need to complete.

1. With the generated PDF file open in Adobe Acrobat Professional 7.0, select **File > Document Properties**.
2. Click on the **Description** tab and make certain that the **Title:** and **Author:** areas are filled out with the proper information (See Figure 7 below). Generally, you can avoid having to fill this information out in Adobe Acrobat if you make sure that in Microsoft Word within **Tools > Options > User Information**, you have the appropriate data already listed there. The title has been taken from the first heading of your Microsoft Word document. If you wish to have a different title, erase the title that is here and provide a different one.

3. Click on the **Advanced** tab in the **Document Properties** dialog box and in the section labeled **Language:**, select **English US**. If you don't select the appropriate language for the document, the screen reader will have difficulty reading the document correctly.
4. Click **OK** to save your settings and close the **Document Properties** dialog box.

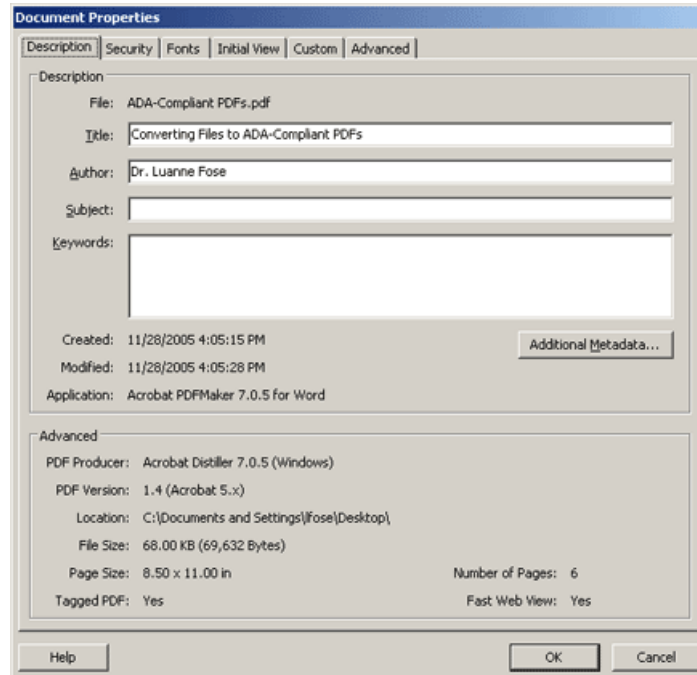


Figure 7: Document Properties Dialog Box – Description Tab

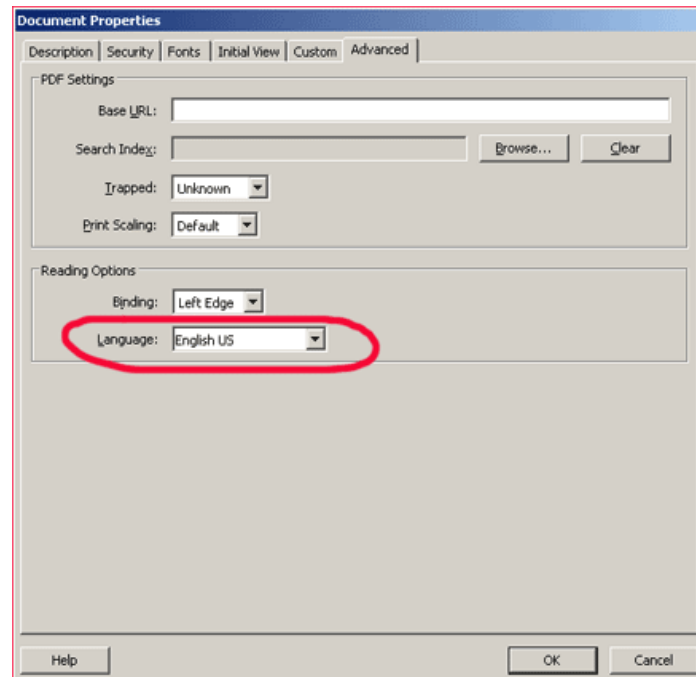


Figure 8: Document Properties Dialog Box – Advanced Tab

STEP 5:

Now you will need to test your document to make sure it really is accessible:

1. With speakers connected to your computer and turned on for audio, open the PDF file in Adobe Acrobat Professional. Select **View > Read Out Loud > Read to End of Document** and listen to the document being read as a screen reader would. If alternative text tags have been added properly on the images, the computer voice should also read the content of those tags.
2. Now create an accessibility report by selecting **Advanced > Accessibility > Full Check...**
3. When the **Accessibility Full Check** dialog box appears, click on the checkbox where it says **Create Accessibility Report**. Retain the other default settings in this dialog box as shown in Figure 9 below.
4. Click on the **Start Checking** button and the **Accessibility Full Check** will look for possible accessibility problems within the document.

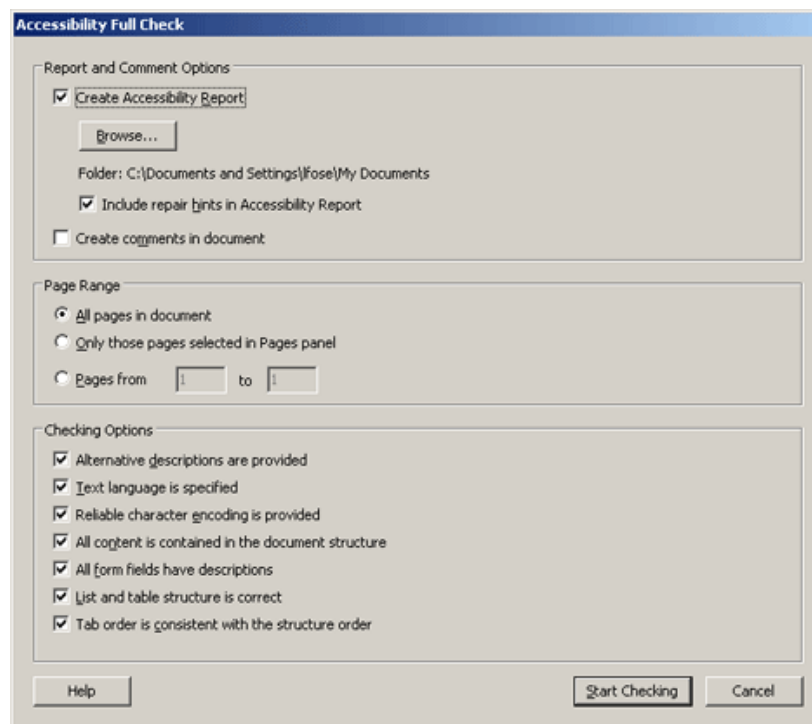


Figure 9: Accessibility Full Check Dialog Box

5. After the **Accessibility Full Check** has completed its analysis, Adobe Acrobat will provide you with a full accessibility summary and tips on how to fix any problems that might have been found. This summary report will appear in the window to the right of the PDF document where Adobe Help generally resides. If

accessibility problems have been detected and flagged, fix them according to the instructions provided in Adobe Acrobat and then run the **Accessibility Full Check** once again.

6. Continue running the **Accessibility Full Check** until there are no longer any accessibility problems detected. In certain circumstances, you may wish to make the fixes in the original Microsoft Word document and then convert it to PDF once more; then, run the **Accessibility Full Check** again after the edits have been made within Microsoft Word. This will secure that your Microsoft Word document is compliant in case you ever return to it in the future to make edits or changes.
7. Save the PDF once more by selecting **File > Save**.

Congratulations! You now have an ADA-compliant PDF!