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## Bold, italics, underline, and strikethrough

These types of formatting can cause accessibility barriers to people with print disabilities. We have to be careful when we retain this type of formatting.

When we do keep Bold or Italics we use the Styles in the NNELS template, and not direct formatting (via the toolbar).

- *Emphasis style* (italics) - this translates to the `<em>` tag in XML
- **Strong style** (bold) - translates to the `<strong>` tag in XML

If we need to use strikethrough or underline, this will be one of the rare occasions when we use direct formatting.

### Italics

Italicized text can create accessibility barriers for a lot of users who find it difficult to read. Blocks or paragraphs of italicized text are particularly problematic, and italics should be removed from these sorts of sections. In general, italics (or the `<em>` tag) should be removed unless they are used to convey important meaning, like if the text needs to be vocally stressed, or a change of voice, or tone like a thought, or dream sequence, or a similar divergence from the main narrative. Stage directions (in plays) are another case where we'd use the Emphasis Style. Whenever there is what they call a "semantic significance" behind the emphasis then it would usually be appropriate to retain it.



When in doubt, just ask! There are always different ways italics and emphasis are used in publications, and sometimes it is okay, and sometimes not.

Remove Italics from:

- paragraphs or blocks of text
- Full sentences and long phrases (unless a thought or dream sequence.)
- titles (books, movies, etc.)

Leave Italics in place when:

- they are used to convey important meaning:
  - In the sentence "I never said she stole my money." Depending on which one of the seven words you emphasize, the sentence can have seven different meanings!
  - Poetry (ask Production Coordinator)
  - Thoughts
  - Dream Sequences

#### Example 1:

"I *never* said she stole my money."

"I never said she stole my money."

"I never *said* she stole my money."

and so on.

### Example 2:

*Emphasis and italics seem to be kinda confusing.* Thought the Production Assistant. *I am not sure if I should use them in the particular case. I am gonna email the Production Coordinator.*

### Example 3:

Stage direction example.

*Exit, pursued by bear.*



There are some cases where the publisher has used Italics/Emphasis for a quotation, a note, or a letter. In these cases clear the style and apply Quote. [See the section on Block Quotations for more information.](#)

Locating all the text and phrases that require emphasis can be tedious and time consuming. We came up with this possible solution for speeding up the process: have two word versions: one for reformatting, and the untouched original to search for italics/emphasis.)

The current workflow as follows:



- Download the word doc from cyberduck and save as working file (Title\_of\_Book\_YourLastName). This is the one you will be reformatting
- Download the word doc again, you can rename it if you wish or leave its original name. This is the untouched version. The point is to have one copy to reformat, and one to keep intact
- Keep both open at same time
- Use advanced search in original to locate italics/emphasis:
  - Search for italics by opening Advanced Find and Replace, Go to Format, choose Font and Select Italics. Here is a video demo on [Searching for Italics](#)
  - Search for Emphasis by opening Advanced Find and Replace, Go to Format, choose Style, and select Emphasis. Here is a video demo on [Searching for Emphasis](#)
- Use search to find word/phrase in working copy to apply emphasis style

This should help speed up the process of locating the emphasis in the original.

## Bold

Remove bold from the text unless it conveys important meaning, such as poetry.

Bold text (or the `<strong>` tag) should be used to indicate importance, such as when making imperative statements or using signal words like 'warning' and 'alert'.

It can also be used for character names in plays. [See the section on Plays for more information.](#)

## Underline

Underlined text should be removed from the text unless deemed necessary. Underlines often present an accessibility barrier for users and people often confuse the text for links. If underlined text needs to be retained (e.g., in a poem where it conveys important meaning), use direct formatting.



Weirdness note: Sometimes, the conversion process will result in free-floating "underlines", where the individual horizontal lines from under words will be converted into text boxes. These should be removed. If you come across this, and cannot identify and delete them easily, try the Hidden Text Boxes process given [here](#).

## Strikethrough

If strikethrough text needs to be retained (e.g., in a poem where it conveys important meaning), use direct formatting.



Strikethrough is inaccessible to most people with print disabilities, so we only leave it in poetry.

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WCAG 2.0 - H49: [Using semantic markup to mark emphasized or special text](#)

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