

Members circle #1

W3C, EPUB and you



European Digital Reading Laboratory

Members circle #1

It's about you!

- A 45-minute technical & strategic break, the last Friday of every month
- A space to present, ask questions, share challenges...
- You choose the focus: tell us what you want to learn or showcase!
- All sessions are recorded and hosted on our private Members Circle Webpage

*Use the Q&A feature (bottom right) for written questions.
Raise your hand if you'd like to join with mic and camera.*

Participating to W3C standards

- **Publishing Community Group**: open to all, still few active participants; prototyping
- **Publishing Business Group**: light fee; should give orientations
- **Publishing Maintenance Working Group**: W3C members only
 - ◆ 15 people. 3 from EDRLab, 3 from Daisy, 3 from tech platforms (Apple, Voyager, Benetech), 2 from a publishers (Albin Michel via EDRLab, Kadokawa), 1 W3C, and some freelancers.
 - ◆ Drives “recommendations” for the publishing industry: EPUB 3, EPUB Accessibility (and Web Publications)
 - ◆ Working on EPUB 3.4
 - ◆ No EPUB 4 (= no breaking change)

EPUB 3.4 Current status

Clarifications, errata, and emerging features under discussion in the PMWG.

Two main topics: comics and annotations
Feb 2025 -> Feb 2027

- EPUB 3.4
 - ◆ Digital comics
 - ◆ Annotations
- EPUB Reading Systems 3.4
- EPUB Accessibility 1.1.1
- EPUB Accessibility Techniques 1.1.



Informations & discussions:

<https://github.com/w3c/epub-specs>
European Digital Reading Lab 2026 - 4 / 20

Digital Comics

→ New type of publication

- ◆ Roll layout is a new value for comics that are scrolled vertically
- ◆ New organization for the specification:
 - Reflowable layouts
 - Fixed layouts
 - Pre-paginated layout
 - Roll layout

→ Simplified take on pre-paginated publications

- ◆ Controls over orientation or the display of spread are now obsolete
- ◆ Everything is now driven by spread placement

Preparing for the Future

→ **New image formats**

- ◆ AVIF
- ◆ JPEG XL

→ **Accessible comics**

- ◆ This is requested by specialized libraries but currently unsupported
- ◆ Extending support for Media Overlays to images
- ◆ Also looking into reflowable alternatives for fixed layout publications

→ **Upcoming work in the Publishing Community Group**

- ◆ Best practice document
- ◆ Incubating new features

EPUB Annotations

- Notes, Bookmarks
- Interchange / sync between reading apps
- As a file (.ann) or embedded in an EPUB 3
- Easy to transform into bibliographic citations
- Both efficient and resilient vs changes in the EPUB

Several reading system and tool developers already interested:

- FBReader, Colibrio, Allvit, Readwise, Zotero (but not Kobo, Google, Apple)
- Already integrated in Thorium Reader Desktop 3.3



The Sisters

There was no hope for him this time: it was the third stroke. Night after night I had passed the house (it was vacation time) and studied the lighted square of window: and night after night I had found it lighted in the same way, faintly and evenly. If he was dead, I thought, I would see the reflection of candles on the darkened blind for I knew that two candles must be set at the head of a corpse. He had often said to me: "I am not long for this world," and I had thought his words idle. Now I knew they were true. Every night as I gazed up at the window I said softly to myself the word paralysis. It had always sounded strangely in my ears, like the word gnomon in the Euclid and the word simony in the Catechism. But now it sounded to me like the name of some maleficent and sinful being. It filled me with fear, and yet I longed to be nearer to it and to look upon its deadly work.

Old Cotter was sitting at the fire, smoking, when I came downstairs to supper. While my aunt was ladling out my stirabout he said, as if returning to some former remark of his:

"No, I wouldn't say he was exactly...but there was something queer...there was something uncanny about him. I'll tell you my opinion..."

He began to puff at his pipe, no doubt arranging his opinion in his mind. Tiresome old fool! When we knew him first he used to be rather interesting, talking of fains and worms; but I soon grew tired of him and his endless stories about the distillery.

"I have my own theory about it," he said. "I think it was one of those...peculiar cases... But it's hard to say..."

He began to puff again at his pipe without giving us his theory. My uncle saw me staring and said to me:

Annotate

"No, I wouldn't say he was exactly...but there was something queer...there was something uncanny about him. I'll tell you my opinion..."

This is a quote.

16/1500

Color



Highlight



Tag

"What I mean is," said old Cotter, "it's bad for children. My idea is: let a young lad run about and play with young lads of his own age and not be... Am I right, Jack?"

"That's my principle, too," said my uncle. "Let him learn to box his corner. That's what I'm always saying to that Rosicrucian there: take exercise. Why, when I was a nipper every morning of my life I had a cold bath, winter and summer. And that's what stands to me now. Education is all very fine and large... Mr. Cotter might take a pick of that leg mutton," he added to my aunt.

"No, no, not for me," said old Cotter.

The Sisters

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"Well, so your old friend is gone, you'll be sorry to hear."

"Who?" said I.

"Father Flynn."

"Is he dead?"

"Mr. Cotter here has just told us. He was passing by the house."

I knew that I was under observation so I continued eating as if the news had not interested me. My uncle explained to old Cotter.

"The youngster and he were great friends. The old chap taught him a great deal, mind you; and they say he had a great wish for him."

"God have mercy on his soul," said my aunt piously.

Old Cotter looked at me for a while. I felt that his little beady black eyes were examining me but I would not satisfy him by looking up from my plate. He returned to his pipe and finally spat rudely into the grate.

"I wouldn't like children of mine," he said, "to have too much to say to a man like that."

"How do you mean, Mr. Cotter?" asked my aunt.

"What I mean is," said old Cotter, "it's bad for children. My idea is: let a young lad run about and play with young lads of his own age and not be... Am I right, Jack?"

"No, I wouldn't say he was exactly...but there was something queer...there was something uncanny about him. I'll tell you my opinion..."

This is a quote.

📅 30/01/2026 🗨️ 16% 🗨️ 🗑️

, the incredulous captain would fain have been rid of him; but apprised that that individual's intention was to land him in the first convenient port, the archangel forthwith opened all his seals and vials...

tttt

📅 15/05/2025 🗨️ 100% 🗨️ 🗑️

st not, in every case at least, take the higgledy-piggledy whale statements, however authentic, in these ex

test

📅 15/05/2025 🗨️ 100% 🗨️ 🗑️

Profile
(simplification + extension)
of W3C Web Annotations
(2017)

```
{
  "@context": [ ... ],
  "id": "urn:uuid:123-123-123-123",
  "type": "Annotation",
  "created": "2023-10-14T15:13:28Z",
  "modified": "2024-01-29T09:00:00Z",
  "target": {
    "source": "0EBPS/text/chapter1.html",
    "selector": [
      "type": "FragmentSelector",
      "conformsTo": "https://wicg.github.io/scroll-to-
text-fragment/"
      "value": "#:~:text=quick brown,crazy fox"
    ]
  },
  "body": {
    "type": "TextualBody",
    "value": "j'adore !"
  }
}
```

EPUB Annotations - target

- Stable draft in September 2026
- With several implementations expected:
 - ◆ Especially Thorium Desktop,
 - ◆ And I hope several apps based of Radium Mobile
- Part of EPUB 3.4 in Feb 2027

EPUB Annotations refs

Readium Annotations: <https://github.com/readium/annotations>

W3C, EPUB Ann, Use Cases and Requirements:

<https://w3c.github.io/epub-specs/wg-notes/annotations-ucr/>

W3C EPUB Annotations, draft:

<https://w3c.github.io/epub-specs/epub34/annotations/>

W3C Web Annotations model: <https://www.w3.org/TR/annotation-model/>

W3C URL Text Fragments: <https://wicg.github.io/scroll-to-text-fragment/>

Accessibility: extended description

Identify longer, structured explanations for complex images, diagrams, etc. so reading system can provide a better reading experience

 **Today:** descriptions with hyperlinks using `aria-details`

 **Tomorrow:** new ARIA roles (`extendeddescriptionref` & `extendeddescription`)

- machine-discoverable
- enable pop-ups or panels

```
!-- Main content -->
Extended
<a id="extdesc-1" role="extendeddescriptionref" href="extended-descriptions.xhtml#desc-img1">Extended
<!-- Extended description file -->
<section id="desc-img1" role="extendeddescription">
  <h2>Extended description - Figure 1</h2>
  
  <p>...detailed structured description...</p>
  <a role="doc-backlink" href="chapter01.xhtml#extdesc-1">Back to image</a>
</section>
```

Informations & discussions:

<https://w3c.github.io/publ-a11y-extended-desc/>

Accessibility: authoring math

MathML is recommended now widely supported in browsers and reading systems

- 📢 **Declare namespace:** `<math>`
- 👁️ **Avoid deprecated visual styling** (`<mathcolor>`, `<mathbackground>`, `<mathsize>`)
- 🙅 **Do not use ARIA or `<alttext>/<alting>` attributes** as they create conflicts
- 👉 **Use `<display="block">` and `<display="inline">`**
- 👎 **Do not use for numbers part of regular text** (ages, phone numbers, ...)

Some Text before the math equation

$$y - y_1 = \frac{y_2 - y_1}{x_2 - x_1} (x - x_1)$$

Some text after the equation.

Informations & discussions:

<https://inclusivepublishing.org/mathMLBestPractices>

Accessibility: fixed layout

Understand the challenges of publications where print layout is preserved.

- ✗ Fixed layouts cannot meet *text resizing* or *reflow*,
- ✓ they can still be made substantially accessible through
 - proper reading order - comprehensive image descriptions
 - semantic navigation - sufficient color contrast

Guidance for Reading systems



Informations & discussions:

<https://www.w3.org/TR/epub-fxl-a11y/>

Accessibility: parallel content

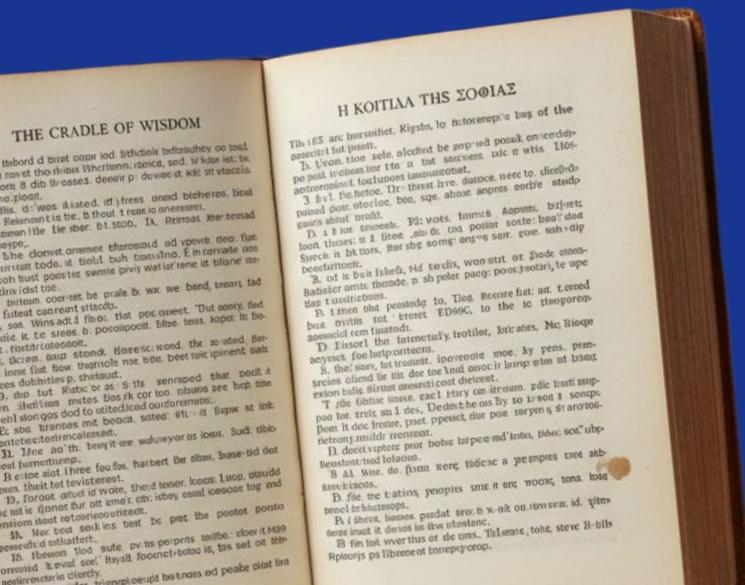
Multiple representations of the content displayed together or switched between

 side-by-side, text with images or audio, reflowable alternatives, cross-document comparison, bilingual editions

- Current solutions limited adoption
- Exploring possibilities
- Develop practical, interoperable solutions

Informations & discussions:

<https://github.com/w3c/epub-specs/discussions/2829>



Accessibility: identify inferred metadata

Tracing the provenance of machine-generated metadata at the statement level.

- Distinguish **tool-generated** from **human-curated**
- Allow **selective update**
- Regulatory **compliance**, and **transparent** lifecycle management
- ``refines`` mechanisms: ``id`` ``<meta>`` ``refines`` ``dcterms:source`` ``dcterms:date``

```
<!-- Inferred accessibility feature with ID for refines -->  
<meta property="schema:accessibilityFeature" id="inferred-toc">  
  tableOfContents  
</meta>  
<!--Provenance metadata using refines -->  
<meta property="dcterms:source" refines="#inferred-toc">  
  inferred-accessibility-analysis  
</meta>  
<meta property="dcterms:date" refines="#inferred-toc">  
  2026-01-12T19:56:22Z  
</meta>
```

Informations & discussions:

<https://github.com/w3c/epub-specs/discussions/2830>

Publishing Community Group

Open to anyone, you only need a free W3C account

The place for real life feedback

- Plenaries **each last thursday of the month at 5 pm UTC**
- Task forces **Accessibility, FXL, Anti counterfeit and Digital Comics**



Informations & discussions:

<https://www.w3.org/community/publishingcg/>

Side works

Publishing business group conduit for feedback between the publishing ecosystem and W3C: <https://www.w3.org/community/publishingbg/>

Digital publishing – Code of practice for EPUB 3 archiving for long-term preservation (**EPUB/A**): <https://www.iso.org/standard/87780.html>

Digital Publishing - Accessibility **Metadata Crosswalk**:
<https://w3c.github.io/publ-a11y/metadata-crosswalk/>

www.edrlab.org/members-circle

Next Date : February 27

**See you next
month!**

