Searching for Resources in the EMMA Repositories

Version 2.0—April 1, 2025

Introduction

As of November 2024, the EMMA federation comprises:

- the Internet Archive;
- ACE, the Accessible Content ePortal from the Ontario Council of University Libraries (OCUL);
- OpenAlex, a resource providing a wealth of links to Open Access journal articles;
- access to books from the University of Michigan Press, provided by Bibliovault; and
- the EMMA repository hosted at the University of Virginia Libraries that contains all of the resources remediated and deposited by EMMA members.

The EMMA technical infrastructure provides a federated index across all of these. This enables disability services offices (DSOs) to search across the millions of resources contained in them with a unified search to discover and obtain:

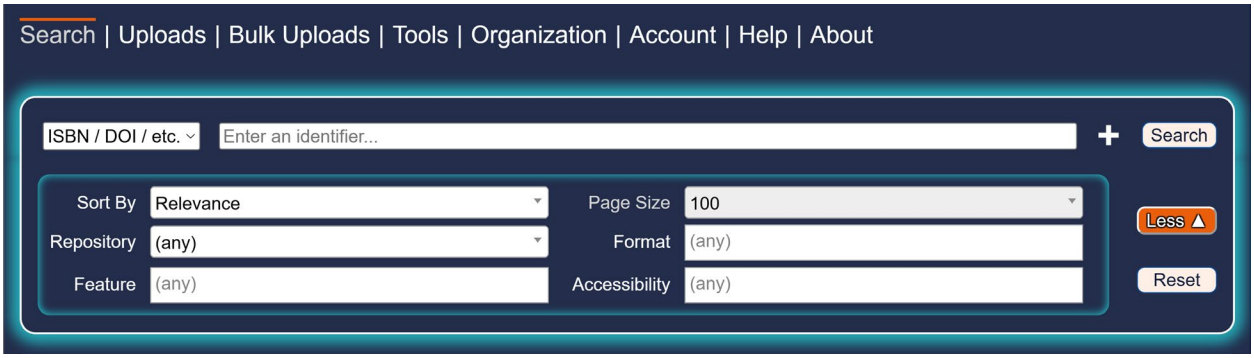
- resources available for remediation and
- resources that have been remediated by other DSOs.

Key to this was the development of a metadata model that provides a systematic way of identifying and describing remediated content and the ways in which it has been remediated, enabling a DSO to discover not just the content required by a student or other print-disabled end user, but to find the specific format or version of that content that best addresses the needs of that particular end user and is most useful to the DSO.

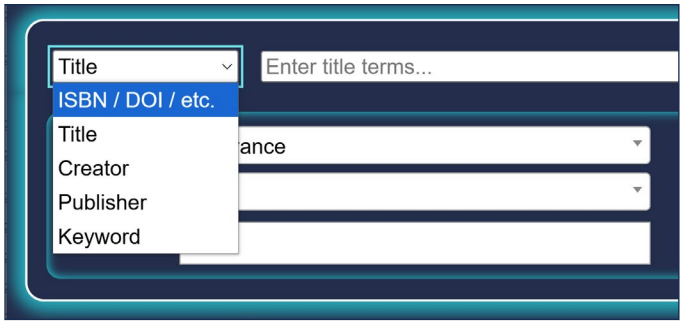
This metadata is described in detail in the accompanying document "A Guide to the EMMA Metadata." The process for depositing remediated resources and their metadata is described in the accompanying document "Depositing Remediated Resources in EMMA."

The Search Procedure

Clicking on “Search” on the EMMA landing page will bring you to this:



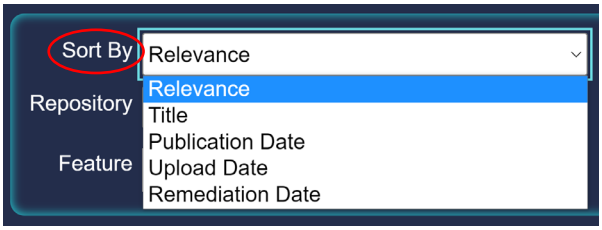
If you want to provide another type of information as the search term, click on the field in the upper left to open a drop-down list of other types of search terms. When you select a different type of search term, the placeholder text in the input field adapts appropriately.

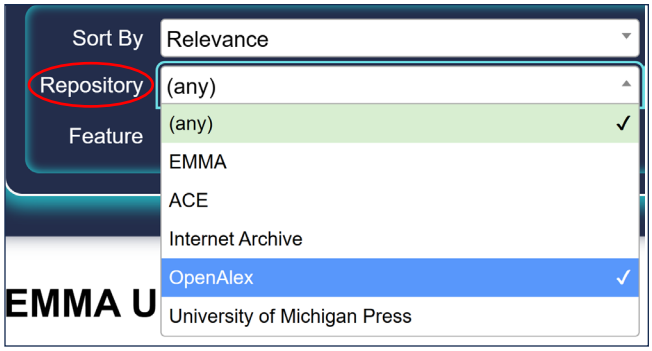


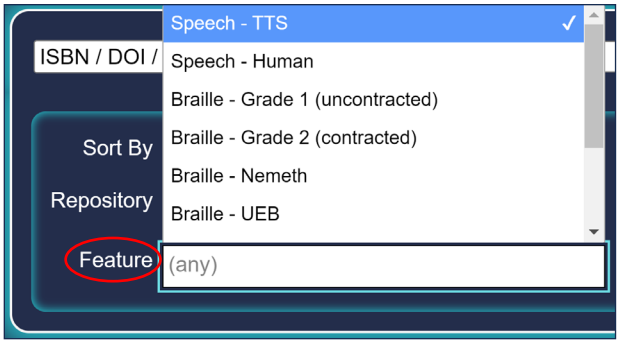
Below the search box, six fields control how you want your search to perform and display. Clicking each field activates a drop-down or pop-up menu of the available choices.

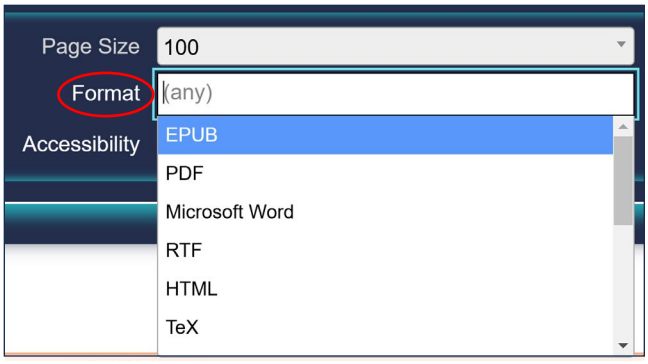
Note that “Sort By” doesn’t affect the results of the search; it only affects how the results are displayed. The same is true of “Page Size,” which only applies when “Results by File” is selected; “Results by Title” is the default. (This is discussed in more detail below.)

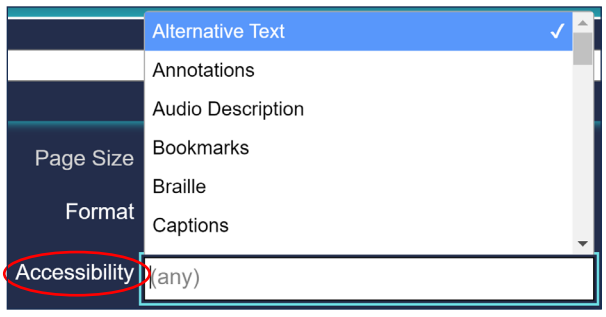
Here are screenshots of the drop-down menus for these fields. Note that drop-down menus with more than six items are scrollable.


Sort By
Relevance
Repository
Feature
Relevance
Title
Publication Date
Upload Date
Remediation Date


Sort By
Relevance
Repository
(any)
Feature
(any)
EMMA
ACE
Internet Archive
OpenAlex
University of Michigan Press
EMMA U

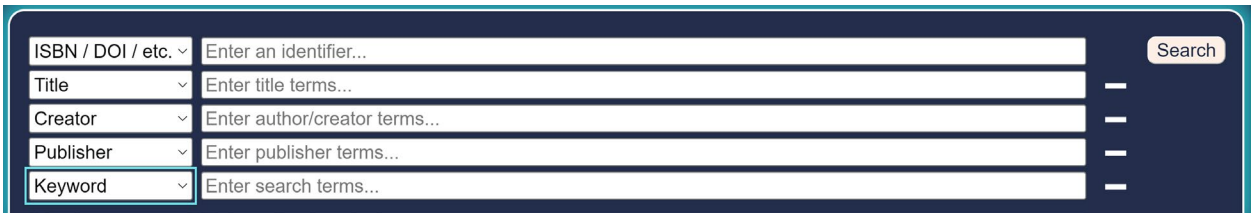

ISBN / DOI /
Sort By
Repository
Feature
Speech - TTS
Speech - Human
Braille - Grade 1 (uncontracted)
Braille - Grade 2 (contracted)
Braille - Nemeth
Braille - UEB
(any)


Page Size
100
Format
(any)
Accessibility
EPUB
PDF
Microsoft Word
RTF
HTML
TeX


Alternative Text
Annotations
Audio Description
Bookmarks
Braille
Captions
Page Size
Format
Accessibility
(any)

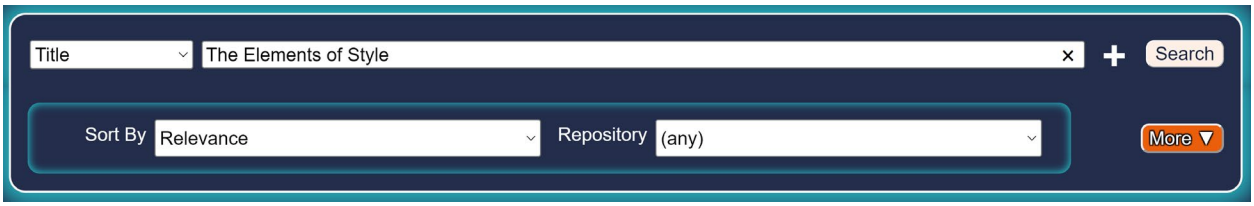
The orange “Less” (or “More”) button Less ▲ to the right of these six fields can be toggled to hide (or reveal) the Feature, Page Size, Format, and Accessibility fields. Sort By and Repository fields are always displayed.

Clicking on the plus icon + to the right of the search term field opens up one or more additional search term fields so that you can refine your search by providing additional search terms, whether of different types or alternatives of the same type. Note that by doing this, you’re asking to search for results that satisfy *all* of the criteria you’ve specified, not results that satisfy *any* of them.



Performing Your Search

Here is an example of a search by title for Strunk and White, *The Elements of Style,* sorted by relevance, in any of the repositories.



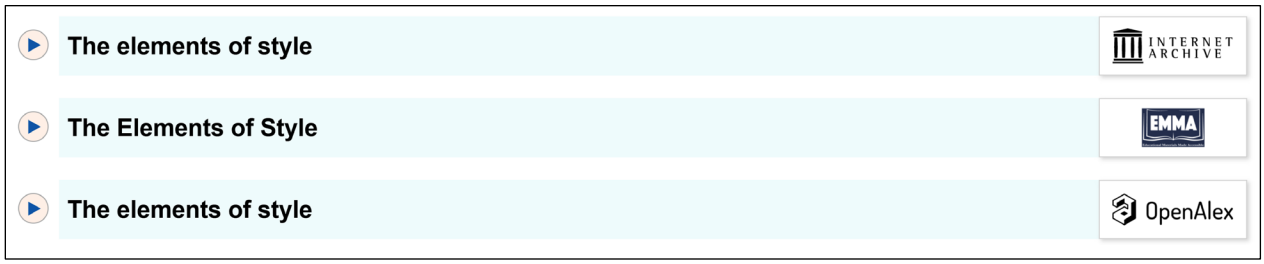
Click on the “Search” button in the upper right corner of the Search dialog to launch the search.

There are two ways of viewing the results: by file, which provides detailed metadata about each file returned by the search, or by title, which groups together alternate formats of each title that have the same bibliographic metadata (same identifier, date of publication, and so on).

The system defaults to Results By Title, which is what most users will prefer because it first shows one result for each title, with the ability to click through to multiple file types that may be available

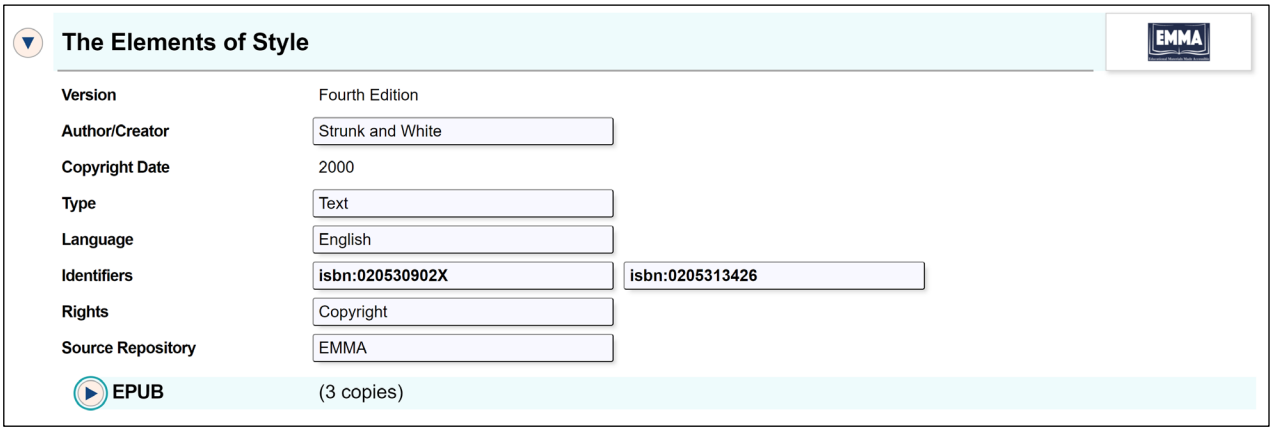
of that title. To select Results By File, use the drop-down menu that appears in the upper right of the search results.

Here is a sample of results returned on the search above by title.

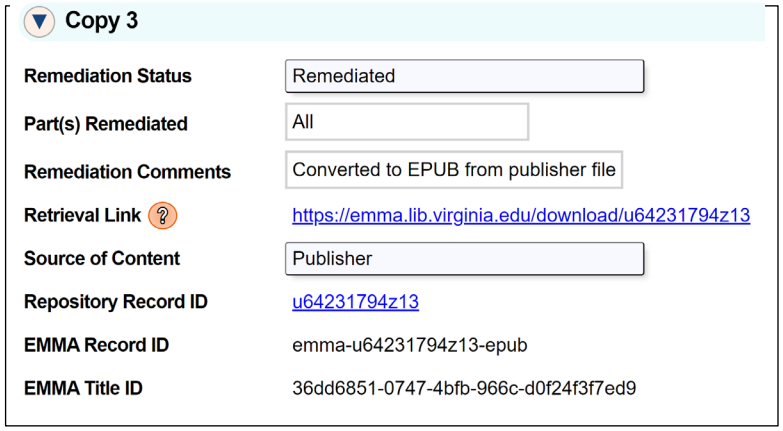


That search actually returned 42 results, with the closest title matches at the top and other ones that aren't an exact match farther down. Note that if the author names "Strunk and White" had also been provided in the search, only three of the 35 results would have been returned, because the other 32 either lack the names or express them differently. This is an example of how providing more criteria narrows the search.

Clicking on the circled triangle ▶ to the left of the middle result expands the display of bibliographic metadata common to three available copies:

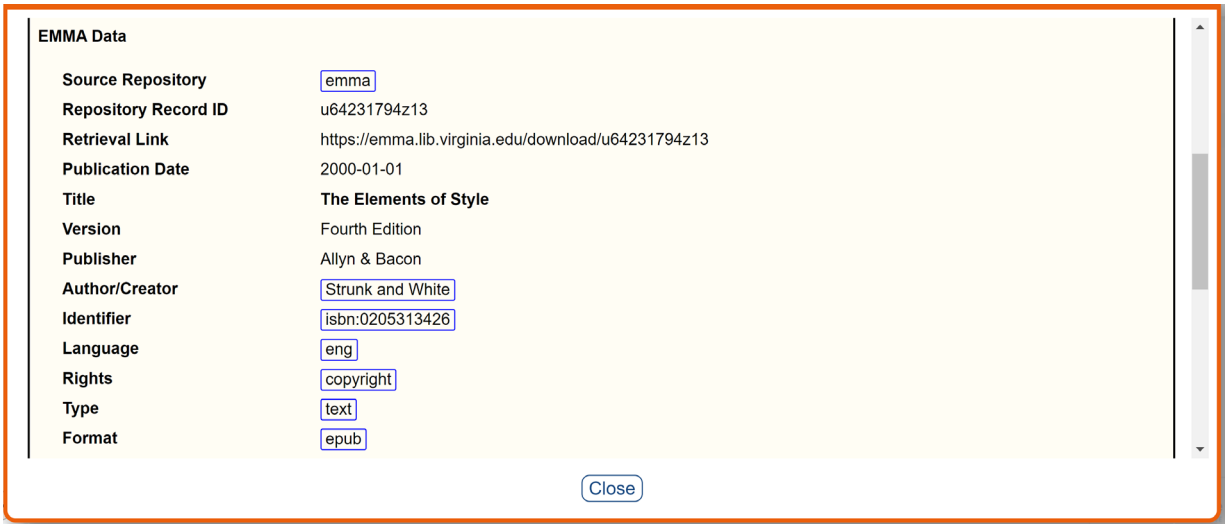


Metadata specific to each of the three available copies comes next.



This includes remediation metadata, enabling you to choose the item best suiting the needs of the end user you're obtaining it for.

Clicking on the Repository Record ID brings up the complete set of metadata associated with that item. Here's the top portion; note the scroll bar on the right enabling you to see the rest of it.



Clicking on the Retrieval Link (shown in the previous screenshot) of the copy you've selected—

—will enable you to download the file from the repository to your computer.

Because EMMA federates search results from several repositories, the Retrieval Link and the link to the Repository Record ID for

each title may behave differently depending on the repository it comes from. Below is a table showing what to expect from the Retrieval Link and Repository Record ID for each repository.

Source Repository	**Retrieval Link**	**Repository Record ID**
EMMA	A direct link to the file in the EMMA Repository	A popup showing item details
ACE	Initiates an API request to generate the actual download link	A link to the Internet Archive page for the item (ACE files are stored by the Internet Archive)
Internet Archive (PDF)	Initiates an API request to generate the actual download link: usually offers quick availability	A link to the Internet Archive page for the item
Internet Archive (EPUB and DAISY)	Initiates an API request to generate the actual download link: requires a lengthy pre-processing time before the true download link appears (leave your browser window open and check back later)	A link to the Internet Archive page for the item
OpenAlex	A link to the original source of the file	A link to the OpenAlex page for the item
University of Michigan Press	A link to an EMMA-held copy of the item provided by the University of Michigan Press	A popup showing item details similarly to EMMA Repository submissions