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Managed Digital Accessibility Ops

Accessibility Evaluation Report:

Children’s Literature Comprehensive Database

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Conducted by: Accessiblü, LLC

For: Library Accessibility Network (LAA)

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Table of Contents

SUMMARY OF ACCESSIBILITY FINDINGS 3

KEY FINDINGS 3
Top 3 Issues Identified 3
DISABILITIES IMPACTED 4
PAGE-SPECIFIC FINDINGS AND IMPACT ANALYSIS 5
CLCD Landing Page 5
CLCD Landing Page Screenshot 6
Search Results Page 7
Search Results Page Screenshot 8
Book Detail Page 9
Book Detail Page Screenshot 10
Advanced Search Functions (Main Landing Page) 11
Advanced Search Functions Screenshot 12
Award Search Page 13
Award Search Page Screenshot 14
CODE SNIPPETS 15
Low Contrast Button (1.4.3) 15
Missing Form Labels (1.3.1) 15
Inaccessible Slider (4.1.2) 15
Ambiguous Link Text (2.4.4) 16
Missing Focus Indicator (2.4.7) 16
FINAL THOUGHTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 17
Recommended Fixes 17
DISCLAIMER 18

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Summary of Accessibility Findings

Accessiblü conducted a **high-level accessibility evaluation** of the Children's Literature Comprehensive Database (CLCD) from the University of Washington to assess its usability for individuals with disabilities. The review was conducted using the JAWS and NVDA screen readers, keyboard-only navigation, and manual inspection for conformance to select WCAG 2.2 AA success criteria.

Key Findings

The CLCD platform demonstrates a mixed accessibility profile with several positive features alongside areas requiring improvement. The platform includes helpful features such as a "Skip to main content" link and generally consistent navigation patterns. However, our testing revealed issues with form control labeling, color contrast in certain interface elements, and keyboard navigation challenges that could impact users relying on assistive technologies.

The good news is that the core functionality of searching and browsing the database remains largely accessible, with most critical features being operable via keyboard. The platform's clear heading structure and logical content organization support screen reader navigation. Addressing the identified issues would significantly enhance the experience for users with disabilities, ensuring equitable access to this valuable educational resource.

Top 3 Issues Identified

1. **Insufficient Form Input Labels and Instructions**
    - Several form controls lack proper labels or have ambiguous labeling, particularly in the advanced search filters.
    - Impact: Screen reader users and users with cognitive disabilities struggle to understand the purpose of form fields.
    - WCAG Success Criteria: 1.3.1 Info and Relationships (A), 3.3.2 Labels or Instructions (A)

2. **Low Color Contrast in Interactive Elements**
    - The yellow "My CLCD" button and several link colors do not meet minimum contrast ratios against their backgrounds.
    - Impact: Users with low vision or color vision deficiencies have difficulty reading text and identifying interactive elements.

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- WCAG Success Criteria: 1.4.3 Contrast (Minimum) (AA)

3. **Missing Keyboard Focus Indicators**
   - Some interactive elements, particularly custom dropdown menus and sliders, lack visible focus indicators during keyboard navigation.
   - Impact: Keyboard-only users cannot determine their current position when navigating through the interface.
   - WCAG Success Criteria: 2.4.7 Focus Visible (AA)

Disabilities Impacted

Blind and Low-Vision Users

- **Issues:** Missing or inadequate form labels, inconsistent heading hierarchy in search results, images without meaningful alternative text, and low contrast text.
- **Impact:** Screen reader users encounter difficulties understanding form purposes and navigating search results efficiently. The platform's core search functionality remains usable but requires extra effort to complete tasks.

Users with Motor Disabilities

- **Issues:** Small click targets for some interactive elements, missing keyboard shortcuts for common actions, and difficulty accessing certain dropdown menus via keyboard alone.
- **Impact:** Keyboard-only users can access most functionality but experience reduced efficiency. Some advanced filtering options require mouse interaction for optimal use.

Neurodiverse Users

- **Issues:** Complex search interface without clear instructions, inconsistent interaction patterns between different search modes, and lack of error prevention messages.
- **Impact:** Users with cognitive disabilities may find the multiple search options overwhelming without adequate guidance. The absence of confirmation messages for actions could lead to uncertainty about task completion.

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Page-Specific Findings and Impact Analysis

The following section lists the accessibility findings by page and WCAG violations and describes their impact on users.

CLCD Landing Page

Issue	WCAG Success Criteria	Description	Example
Low Contrast	**1.4.3 Contrast (Minimum) (AA)**	Yellow "My CLCD" button has insufficient contrast ratio	The yellow background (#FDB813) against white text fails to meet the 4.5:1 ratio
Missing Labels	**1.3.1 Info and Relationships (A)**	Search field dropdown lacks accessible name	"Keyword" dropdown button has no programmatic label
Focus Order	**2.4.3 Focus Order (A)**	Tab order skips between header and search inconsistently	Focus moves from skip link directly to search, bypassing navigation

Impact Summary: While the landing page includes positive accessibility features like a skip navigation link, the contrast and labeling issues may create barriers for some users with visual impairments. The main search box does contain placeholder text to provide a visual guide for users. However, the search functionality, being the primary feature, needs clearer labeling to ensure all users can effectively begin their research.

CLCD Landing Page Screenshot

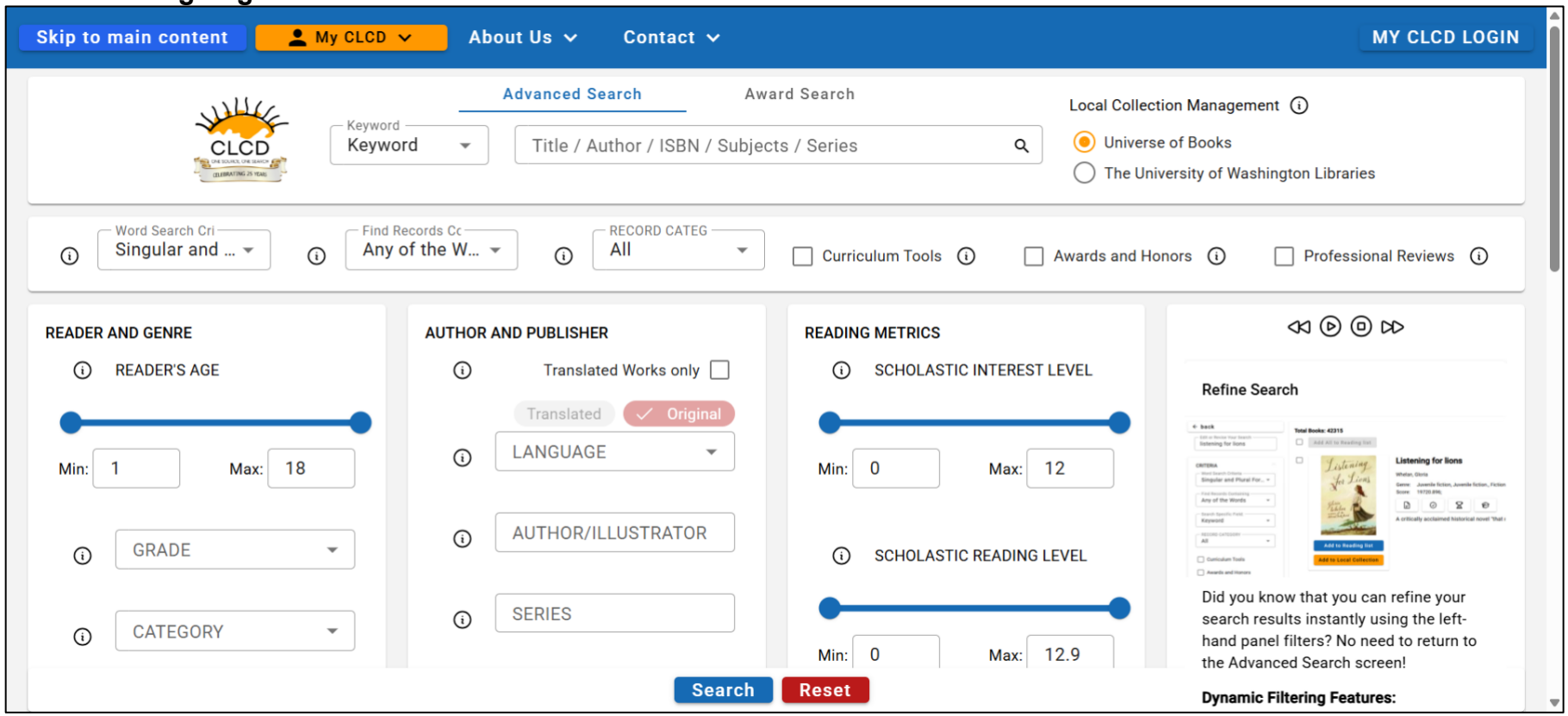

Figure 1. CLCD's Home page has advanced search functions demonstrating the extensive filtering options evaluated for accessibility compliance.

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Search Results Page

Issue	WCAG Success Criteria	Description	Example
Ambiguous Links	**2.4.4 Link Purpose (In Context) (A)**	Multiple "more" links without context	"more" link appears after book descriptions without identifying which book
Missing Headings	**1.3.1 Info and Relationships (A)**	Filter sections lack proper heading structure	"CRITERIA" section uses visual styling instead of semantic headings
Form Controls	**3.3.2 Labels or Instructions (A)**	Checkboxes for adding to reading list lack clear labels	Checkbox only announces "Add All to Reading list" without context

Impact Summary: The search results page's core functionality works with assistive technologies, but the lack of clear link text and proper heading structure may make it challenging for some screen reader users to efficiently navigate and understand the available options.

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Search Results Page Screenshot

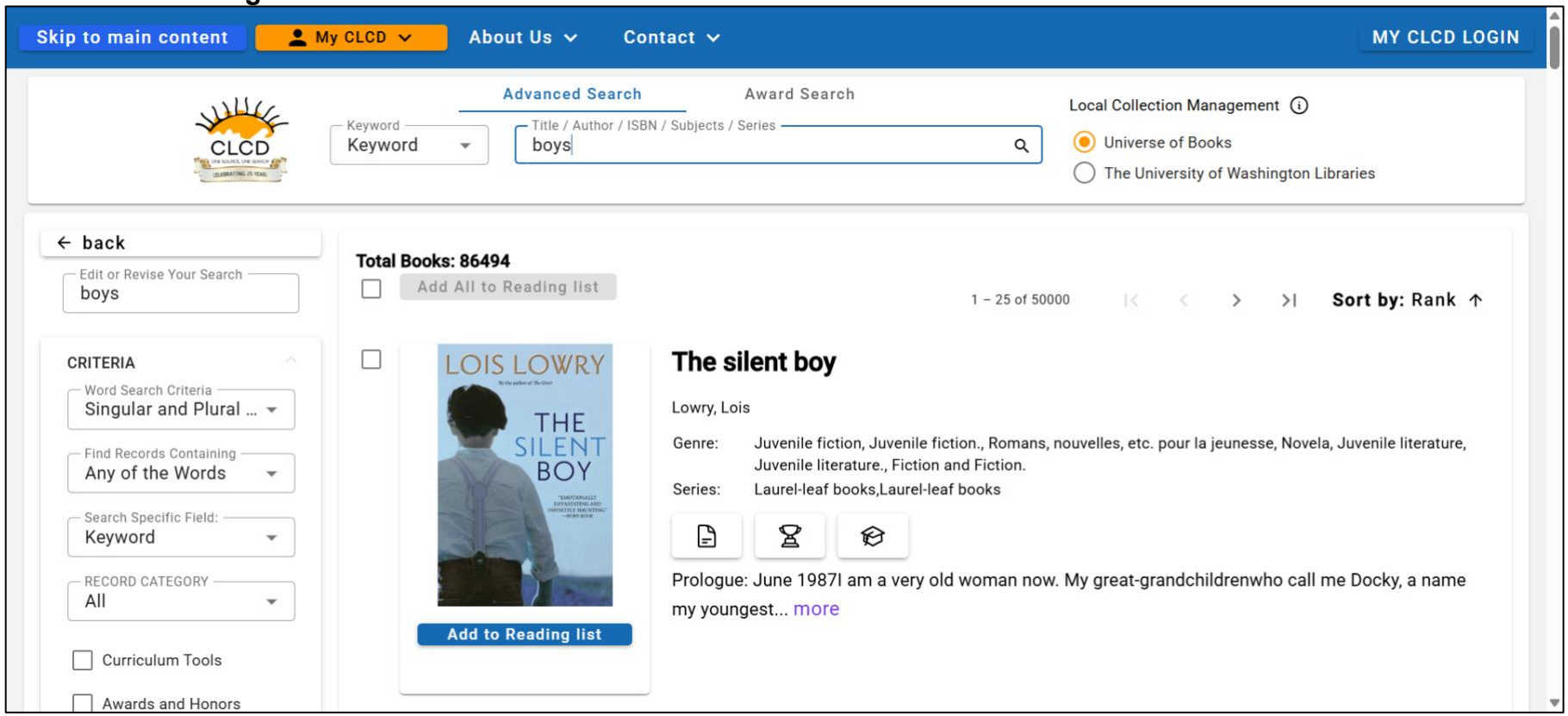

Figure 2. Figure 1. The CLCD search results page displays search refinement options on the left and book results with cover images in the main area.

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Book Detail Page

Issue	WCAG Success Criteria	Description	Example
Icon-only Buttons	**1.1.1 Non-text Content (A)**	Action buttons use icons without text alternatives	Copy, Add to Reading List, and Share buttons lack accessible names
External Links	**3.2.5 Change on Request (AAA)**	External links open without warning	"View in Amazon" opens new window without notification

Impact Summary: The book detail page contains rich information but relies heavily on visual icons for actions. Screen reader users can access the book information but may struggle with the icon-based interface for understanding that these are for the saving and sharing features.

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Book Detail Page Screenshot

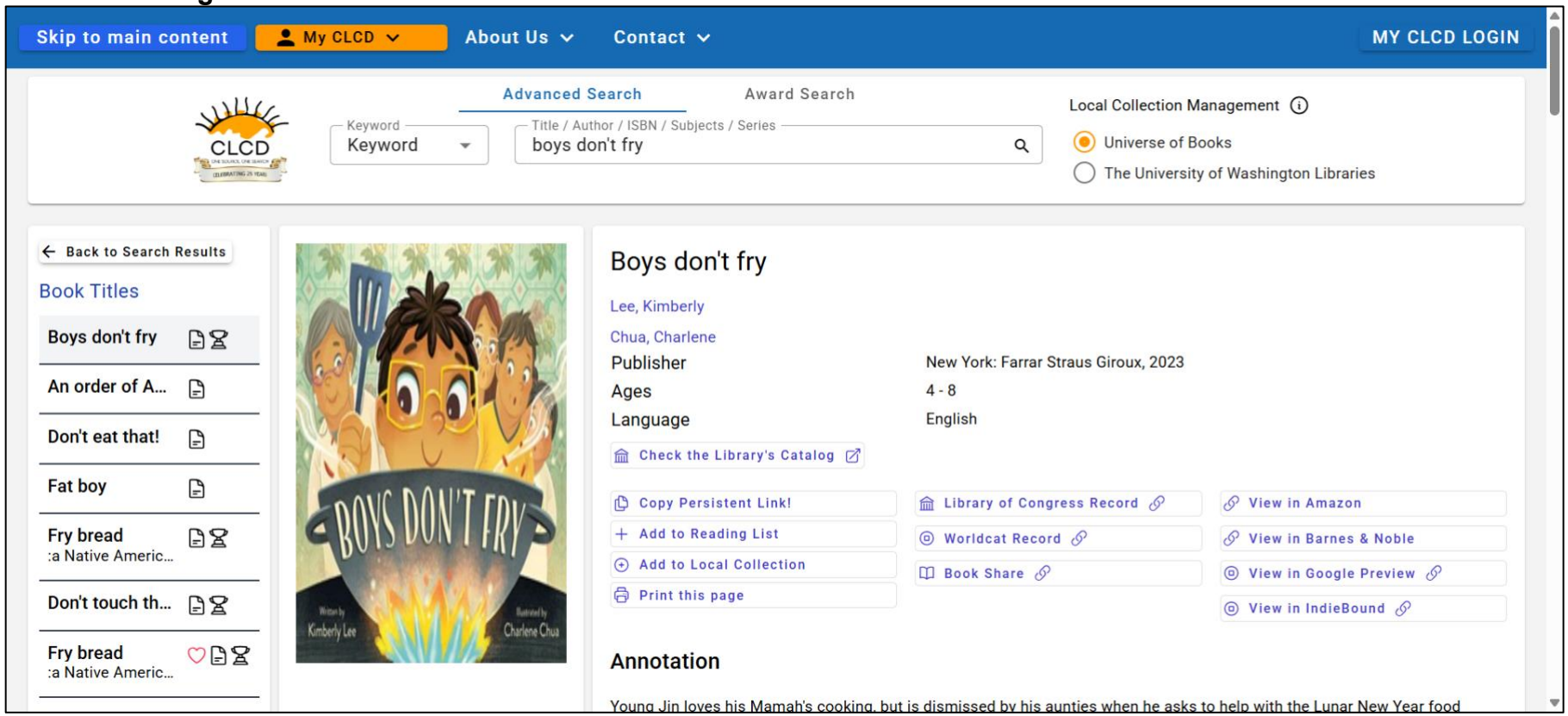

Figure 3. The book detail page provides comprehensive information about "Boys Don't Fry" with multiple action options and external links, which are not announced when they open in a new tab/window.

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Advanced Search Functions (Main Landing Page)

The advanced search functions exist on the main landing page and were tested separately from the basic search function.

Issue	WCAG Success Criteria	Description	Example
Slider Controls	**4.1.2 Name, Role, Value (A)**	Range sliders don't announce current values	Age range slider doesn't communicate selected values to screen readers
Grouping	**1.3.1 Info and Relationships (A)**	Related form fields not programmatically grouped	Reading metrics section lacks fieldset/legend structure
Instructions	**3.3.2 Labels or Instructions (A)**	Complex filters lack usage instructions	No guidance on how multiple filters interact

Impact Summary: The advanced search functionality offers powerful filtering capabilities, but the complex interface lacks sufficient guidance and proper ARIA implementation for the slider controls, making it difficult for screen reader users to utilize these features effectively.

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Advanced Search Functions Screenshot

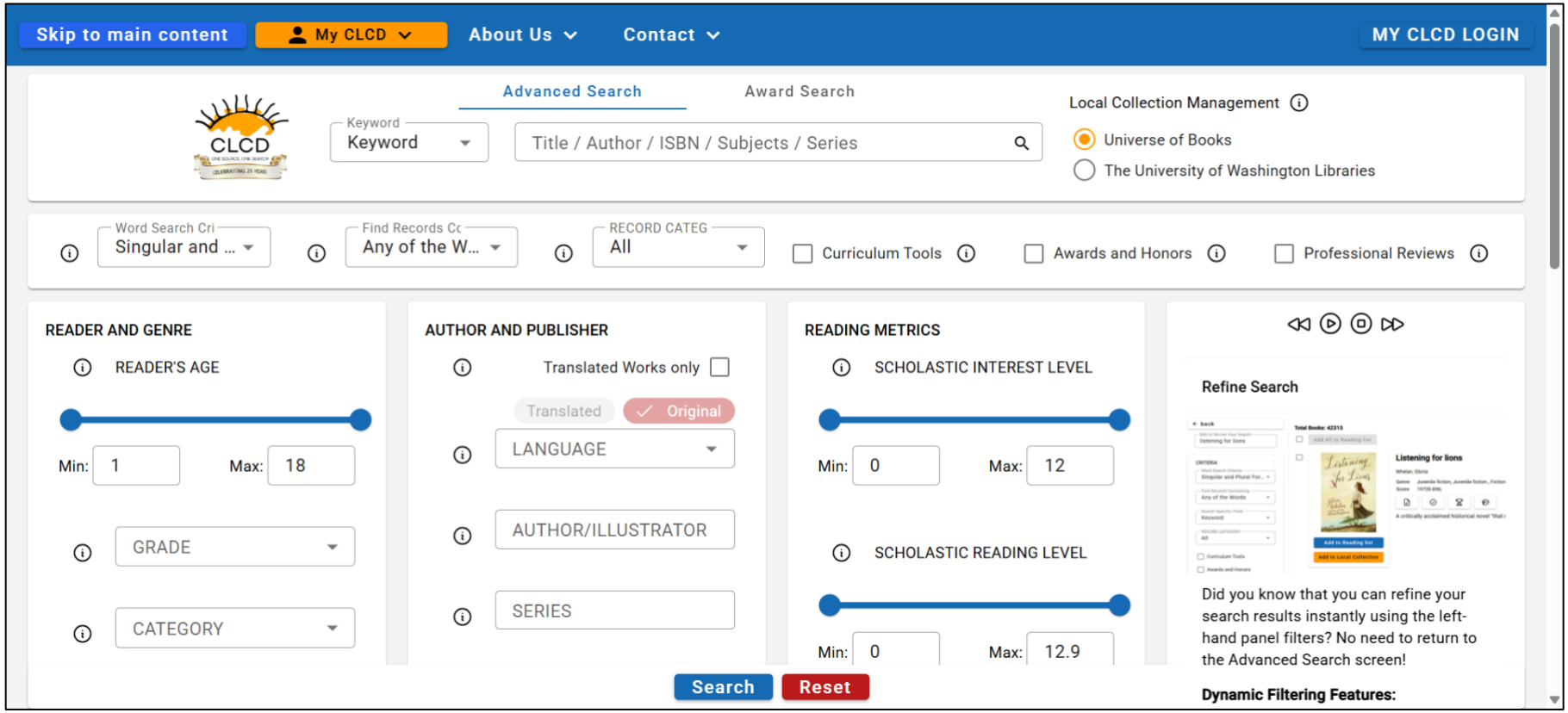

Figure 4. CLCD's Advanced Search functions demonstrate the extensive filtering options evaluated for accessibility compliance.

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Award Search Page

Issue	WCAG Success Criteria	Description	Example
Image Alt Text	**1.1.1 Non-text Content (A)**	Award logos lack descriptive alternative text	Award images only identified by filename rather than award name
Grid Navigation	**2.1.1 Keyboard (A)**	Visual grid layout not keyboard accessible	Cannot navigate between awards using arrow keys as expected in grid

Impact Summary: The award search page's visual presentation works well for sighted users but lacks the semantic structure needed for screen reader users to understand the relationship between awards and their temporal organization.

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Award Search Page Screenshot

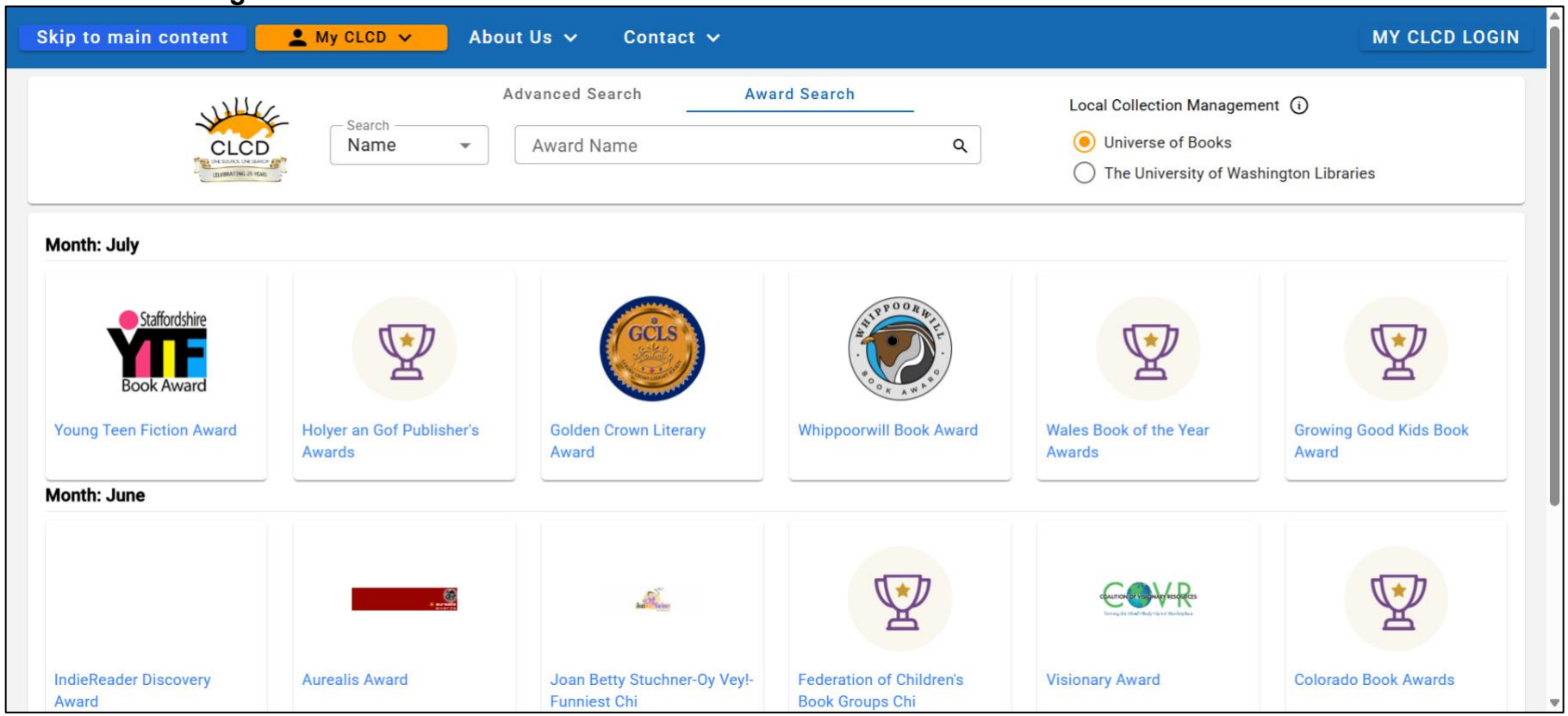

Figure 5. The award search page presents literary awards in a visual grid format, organized chronologically by month.

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Code Snippets

Low Contrast Button (1.4.3)

```
<!-- Current problematic implementation -->
<button class="my-clcd-btn" style="background: #FDB813; color: white;">
  My CLCD
</button>

<!-- Recommended fix -->
<button class="my-clcd-btn" style="background: #D4941E; color: white;">
  My CLCD
</button>
```

Missing Form Labels (1.3.1)

```
<!-- Current problematic implementation -->
<select class="keyword-dropdown">
  <option>Keyword</option>
  <option>Title</option>
  <option>Author</option>
</select>

<!-- Recommended fix -->
<label for="search-type" class="visually-hidden">Search Type</label>
<select id="search-type" class="keyword-dropdown">
  <option>Keyword</option>
  <option>Title</option>
  <option>Author</option>
</select>
```

Inaccessible Slider (4.1.2)

```
<!-- Current problematic implementation -->
<div class="age-slider" role="slider"></div>


<!-- Recommended fix -->
<div class="age-slider"
    role="slider"
    aria-label="Age range"
    aria-valuemin="1"
```

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```
    aria-valuemax="18"
    aria-valuenow="10"
    aria-valuetext="10 years"
    tabindex="0">
</div>
```

Ambiguous Link Text (2.4.4)

```
<!-- Current problematic implementation -->
<a href="/book/12345">more</a>

<!-- Recommended fix -->
<a href="/book/12345" aria-label="More about Boys don't fry">more</a>
<!-- Or better yet -->
<a href="/book/12345">Read more about Boys don't fry</a>
```

Missing Focus Indicator (2.4.7)

```
/* Recommended addition */
.interactive-element:focus {
  outline: 2px solid #0066CC;
  outline-offset: 2px;
}

/* For better visibility */
.interactive-element:focus-visible {
  outline: 3px solid #0066CC;
  outline-offset: 2px;
  box-shadow: 0 0 0 4px rgba(0, 102, 204, 0.25);
}
```

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Final Thoughts and Recommendations

The Children's Literature Comprehensive Database provides a valuable resource for educators and librarians, with generally good accessibility for basic search and browse functions. The platform demonstrates commitment to accessibility through features like skip navigation links and logical content structure. However, addressing the identified issues would significantly improve the user experience for people with disabilities.

The most critical improvements needed involve enhancing form accessibility, improving color contrast, and ensuring all interactive elements are fully keyboard accessible. These changes would not only benefit users with disabilities but would improve usability for all users, particularly in challenging viewing conditions or when using alternative input methods.

Recommended Fixes

- **Implement comprehensive form labeling:** Add clear, descriptive labels to all form controls, particularly in the advanced search interface. Use fieldsets and legends to group related controls.
- **Improve color contrast:** Review all text and interactive elements to ensure they meet WCAG AA contrast requirements. Pay special attention to the yellow branded elements and link colors.
- **Add keyboard focus indicators:** Ensure all interactive elements have visible focus indicators that meet contrast requirements. Consider implementing a consistent focus style across the platform.
- **Enhance slider accessibility:** Implement proper ARIA attributes for range sliders, including aria-valuemin, aria-valuemax, aria-valuenow, and aria-valuetext to communicate current values.
- **Provide clear instructions:** Add help text and instructions for complex interface elements, particularly in the advanced search section.
- **Fix ambiguous link text:** Ensure all links have unique, descriptive text or use aria-label to provide context for generic link text like "more."
- **Add semantic structure:** Use proper heading hierarchy throughout the application, particularly in search results and filter sections.
- **Test with assistive technologies:** Conduct regular testing with screen readers and keyboard-only navigation to identify and address accessibility barriers.

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Disclaimer

Accessiblü prepared this report as a high-level accessibility evaluation of the Children's Literature Comprehensive Database (CLCD) platform. The evaluation utilized industry-standard testing methodologies, including screen reader testing (JAWS 2025), keyboard-only navigation, and manual inspection for select WCAG 2.2 AA success criteria.

This report does not represent a comprehensive WCAG compliance audit and should not be seen as a certification of accessibility compliance. While we have identified significant accessibility concerns and usability barriers, this evaluation was limited in scope and may not encompass all accessibility issues on the platform.

No Legal Liability:

Accessiblü offers this report for informational purposes only. It assumes no legal responsibility for accessibility violations or compliance failures resulting from its use. Organizations seeking formal certification should conduct a comprehensive audit and user testing with individuals with disabilities.

Limitations of Testing:

This evaluation was conducted at a specific time, and platform updates may have occurred after testing was completed. Additionally, while automated tools and expert reviews were utilized, real-world users with disabilities determine the true measure of accessibility.