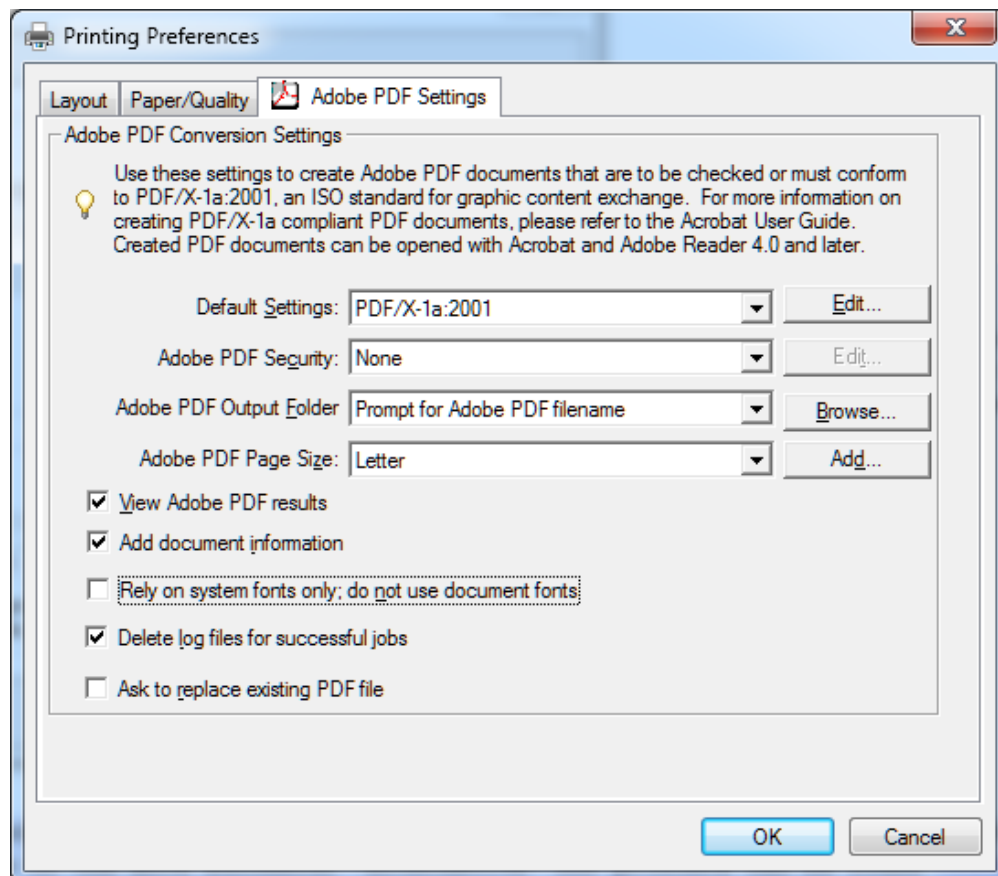# File Submission Guidelines

You must submit a press-ready PDF of the interior of your book. Here are some tips on how to ensure the PDF document you submit will work with our printer's requirements.

PDF File Preparation

We recommend the use of the PDF X-1a file format. This PDF format is available with Adobe's professional design software such as Acrobat Professional, InDesign, and Distiller. The X-1a format helps ensure that photos, images, and drawings are rendered correctly and that the desired fonts are embedded. However, the printer we use is also able to work with PDFs created through Word or other PDF creation tools that do not produce X-1a formatted files.

Creating PDF X-1a Files

Adobe Distiller is usually the best printer to use to create PDF files. Whether you are preparing files in InDesign, Illustrator, Word, or any other program on your computer, this tool can act as a print driver to prepare press ready PDFs. When printing to Adobe PDF Distiller, you need to set several options for best results. After selecting "Adobe PDF" as your printer, click "Properties". From here, set "Default Settings" to "PDF/X-1a:2001(CMYK)", and uncheck "Rely on System Fonts". Under the "Paper/Quality" tab select "Black & White" for book bodies and "Color" for covers.

What is trim size?

The trim size is another way to say page size. Most chapter books are 6 x 9 and children's books are 8 x8. Ask us for more info if your project needs a different trim size. Your file needs to be set up so that the page is the exact size you want for your printed book. Refer to the question about "bleed" to get more information on how to set up your file correctly.

What is bleed and how does it affect the printing of my book?

A bleed is a printing term referring to printing that goes beyond the edge of the sheet after trimming. Bleed ensures that the color on the page goes all the way to the edge and no "white appears at the edge." The recommended bleed is 0.25" on all sides.

When designing a book, the bleed should be designed into the trim size if there are illustrations or photos that need to go all the way to edge of the pages. For a book that is 8" x 8" (the traditional size for a children's book), each page should be 8.5" x 8.5" to allow for the 0.25" bleed all the way around.

What should my margins be?

The recommended margin (or white space) is 0.25" on all sides. That means including the bleed, they should be 0.5".

Where should I place my page numbers?

The easiest place to include page numbers is in the bottom center of each page. However, you may want to consider having the even numbers on the outside left and the odd numbers on the outside right. Make sure you leave enough room so they are not too close to the trim or edge of the page.

What does font embedding mean?

Font embedding means that the font files used in a document will appear in the final PDF the same way as they were used in the original document. The inclusion makes the user who receives the PDF file see exactly what the file designer intended with it.

What font and size of font should I use?

We recommend using a font that is easy-to-read. Some good fonts to consider include Cambria, Garamond, Century Schoolbook, Calibri or Helvetica. Headlines should be at least 14 pt. and bold and body copy should be at least 11 pt.

Can I use photos or illustrations in my document?

The answer is yes. However, there are a few things to keep in mind. If the final book is going to be printed in black and white, all photos and scans of illustrations also need to be black and white. Also, any photo or scan of an illustration needs to be hi-resolution. This means they need to be at least 300 dpi in order to be able to be high enough quality to print. A photo found on the web is not high enough quality to use. But, a photo downloaded from a digital camera will work. A simple rule of thumb is to look at the size of the file. If it is under 1 MB, most likely the image will not be high enough quality to use.