Wanna See a UFO?

Team Members: Connor MacKenzie, Tom Sipe, Marisabel Matta-Hyams, Amy Wagar Cinch, Brian Bates

People want to see aliens! Other than a real-life visit, the next best option is to sight a UFO. Using the dataset on UFO sightings from the National UFO reporting center, we plan to do an analysis and gain insight into trends in UFO sightings from around the world. The data contains info on location, date/time, duration of the sighting, reported shape, and any comments from the observer.

Our analysis will help us determine the best way to get yourself right into a good old-fashioned UFO sighting with a story worthy of the front page news.

We have a variety of questions to look at and start our analysis, each of which have tie ins to other datasets, data cleaning, and other analysis techniques.

Does the population of city/state/country affect the rate of UFO sightings?

Using the UFO data and population from the US Census or other datasets, we plan to see if a higher population creates a higher rate of UFO sightings, or if a more sparsely populated area produces more UFO sightings.

What are the most common shapes?

Cleaning up the shape data of our dataset to combine similar values, we can run an simple analysis to find what the most sighted shapes of UFO are.

What times of day produce more UFO sightings?

By grouping our data into specific time periods (day vs. night, dusk vs. dawn, middle of the night, etc.), we can narrow down what the best time to be looking up at the sky is.

Are there any common themes in the descriptions of the UFO sightings?

The comments provided by the observers can be analyzed for complexity using a word count, average word length, and possibly other features to help find more probable encounters that are worthy of a story.