

Some questions to ask yourself when evaluating plots

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Purpose: This set of questions is meant to help you think about data visualizations (which we will refer to as “plots”).

1. What message is this plot trying to convey? (What question or questions is this plot trying to answer, and what data is it trying to communicate?)
2. What does this plot do **effectively**? In other words, what visual elements are well-chosen and help to convey information successfully? (Think about this in terms of both specific plot elements as well as general principles for the design of data visualization.)
3. What does this plot do **poorly**? In other words, what visual elements have been chosen in such a way that it fails to effectively convey information?
4. What would you recommend that the creators of this plot do in order to **improve its effectiveness**? (This could include improving its clarity, aesthetic appeal, adding or removing data, or choosing a different means of data representation entirely.) What should be added, removed, or modified in order to more clearly communicate its message?
5. Overall, do you feel that the visualization clearly addresses/answers the question(s) that it intends to?