Synopsis

The goal of our project *Food For Thought* is to tell a story through an interactive visualization that allows users to explore meal choices around the world, and learn more about the food components on a plate. We want to take users on a tour of what representative cultural dinners (e.g. signature dishes) look like in different parts of the world, to the analysis of the ingredients comprising a particular meal. This will be followed by a deeper dive into nutrition, which in turn will lead to an analysis of the environmental impact of the production of individual ingredients.

In totality, we want our visual representation to tell a meaningful story that both satisfies our users’ curiosity as well as leads them to valuable insights related to food production and consumption. In order to enhance user experience, we will focus on user journeys when collecting and manipulating data, building personas, conducting usability tests, and designing, building, and refining our visualization.

Reflection

There are commonalities between the reflections of our group members. All team members drew a map of some sort in their sketches, as well as pie charts. Perhaps this implies that these are 2 forms of visualizations we, as a group, hope to include in the visualizations.

There are a lot of components that we want to include in our project, as well as different types of representations. We will use personas and user tests as a practical way to keep the user’s journey in mind while designing our visualization, and to help us decide which features and details to include.

Our concept flow takes a top-down approach starting from a comprehensive overview of meal choices around the world and then diving deeper into individual ingredients, nutrients and environmental impact. We believe we have richly segmented multivariate data to support our concept and explore the food-related dimensions from the environmental, economic, geographic and cultural perspectives.

In Interactive Dynamics For Visual Analysis, Heer & Shneiderman provide a valuable set of guidelines that we can use to ensure our visualization is highly effective and interactive. Since we plan to leverage Tableau public for our final presentation, a lot of Heer & Schneiderman's tips have already been implemented and are present in the functionality of Tableau Public. For example, Tableau Public views can be manipulated, drilled into, and saved for posterity. As such, this seems to be an ideal tool to use for our final concept.