Creating Infographics with Canva

Presented by DITI Consultants
Emily Sullivan and Claire Lavarreda
LCWRI5250: Electric Frontiers
Prof. Kemp
Fall 2024

Northeastern University
NULab for Texts, Maps, and Networks

Feel free to ask questions at any point during the presentation!

Workshop Agenda

- Learn about dynamic and static modes of conveying information
- Review best practices of visualizing data
- Explore how to make visualizations using Canva, a free online tool
- Consider accessibility in designing presentations and infographics

Slides, handouts, and data available at

https://bit.ly/fa24-Kemp-LCWRI5250-Canva

SDG Report 2020

Feel free to ask questions at any point during the presentation!

Infographics

Northeastern University
NULab for Texts, Maps, and Networks

Feel free to ask questions at any point during the presentation!

Infographics Basics

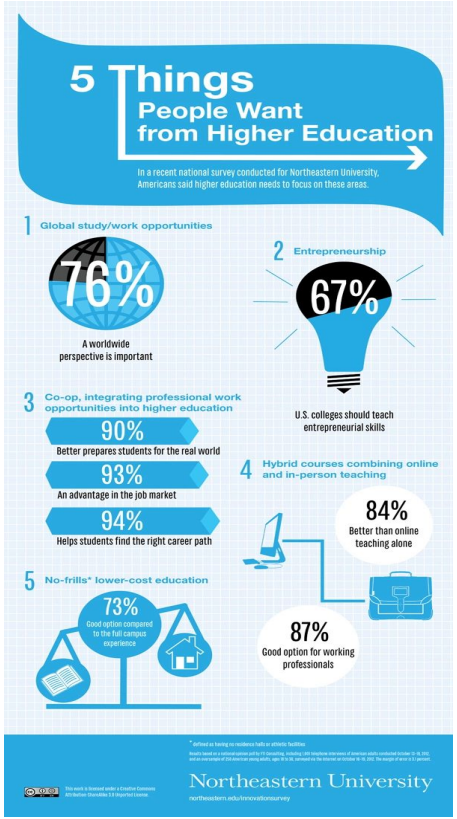
- Infographics present complex information quickly and clearly.
- They tell a story with **structure** and **sequence**, and are most often images combined with numbers, charts, graphs, and summary text.
- They **concisely** convey information and data to different audiences **across platforms and media** (i.e., digital or print).
- They have **narrow** focus or subject matter, **short** and accessible titles, and provide **citations** for all of the information included.
- They consider **accessibility**: Make sure text is not cut off or covered by image, add descriptive alt-text to your infographic image.

For more information on **accessibility**, please see: **DITI accessibility handout**

Infographics Examples

[Education First]

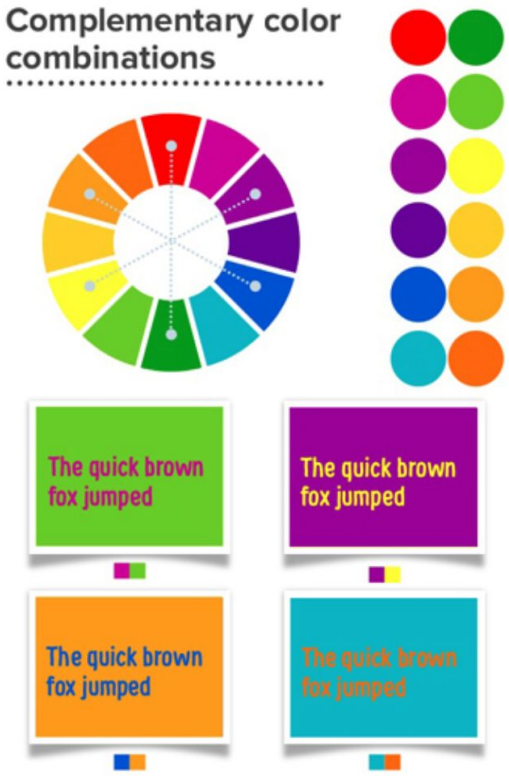
[History.com & Column Five]



[Northeastern University College of Professional Studies]

Keep it Visible: Colors

- Make color choices that are accessible to everyone (and appropriate for the infographic).
- Ideal color schemes are **high contrast** (use a contrast checker).
- Think about limiting your palette (3 colors can be effective).
- Find complementary colors (e.g. use this tool).
- NU Colors provides the Northeastern University palette.



Feel free to ask questions at any point during the presentation!

Data Privacy

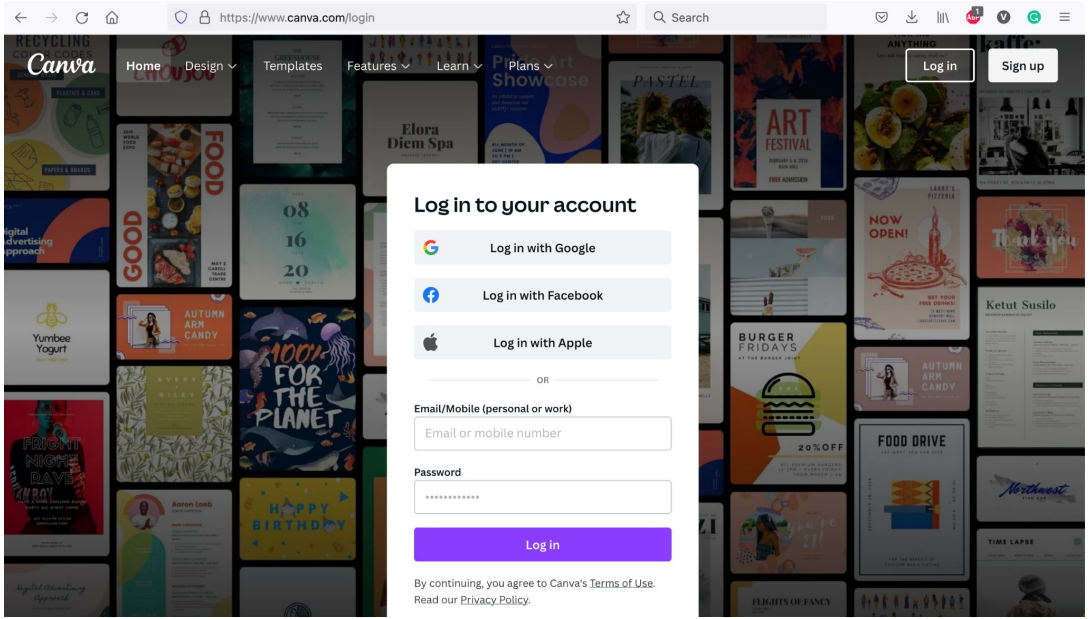
- It's important to pay attention to data privacy when using digital resources
- At its simplest, **data privacy** is a person's ability to control what of their personal information is shared and with whom.
- To help you make informed decisions about interacting with digital tools in ways that honor your boundaries with your data and/or personal information, The DITI has prepared a handout on **Data Privacy**

Getting Started with Canva

Northeastern University
NULab for Texts, Maps, and Networks

Sign up/Login

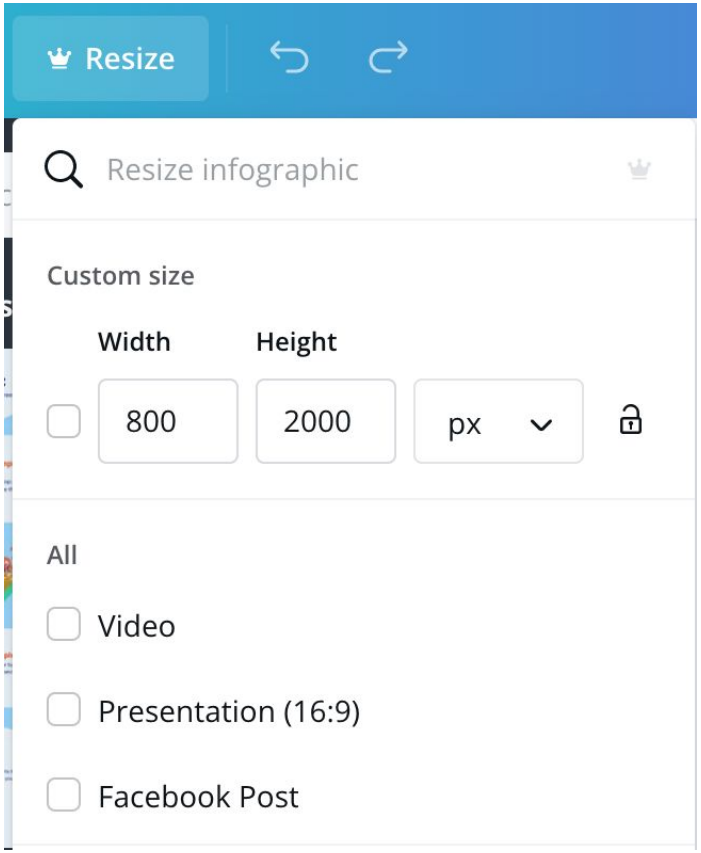
- Canva is a free online infographic maker.
- Use your Gmail/Facebook/Apple ID to sign up or create an account.
- Click “Create A Design.”



Feel free to ask questions at any point during the presentation!

Starting Up...

- First, pick your canvas dimensions. Canva features a curated ‘infographic’ size, but you can customize the width and length when opening a new graphic. You can also add more ‘pages.’
    - Unfortunately, resizing and adding pages in an already existing graphic is only available in paid subscriptions.
- Infographics work best when presenting information through one direction, so it might help to size your canvas as being long either vertically or horizontally.



Feel free to ask questions at any point during the presentation!

Pick a Style

- Infographics work best when presented in a uniform style.
- Try to get your information and your design to work together!
- If you need some help or inspiration, Canva offers several infographic templates you can start from.

Feel free to ask questions at any point during the presentation!

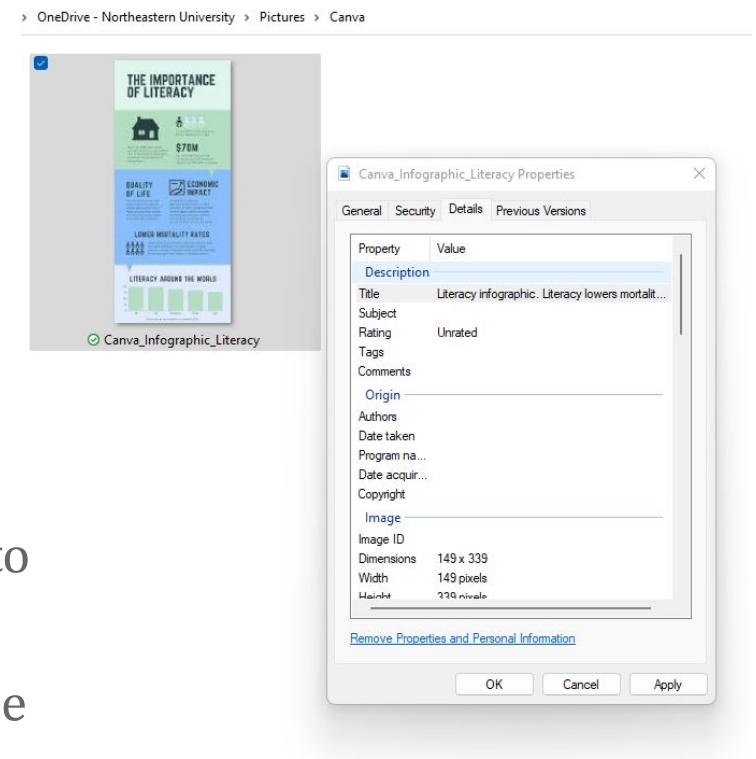
Layers

- Canva works by combining several graphic layers.
- Layers can be anything that shows up on the canvas—elements, charts, text, etc.—and can be customized in many ways. You can drag them around, change their colors, resize them, and more!
- Remember that you can always send a layer ‘forward’ or ‘back’ relative to other layers with a right click on PC, control click on Macs

Feel free to ask questions at any point during the presentation!

Alt-Text

- Alt-text is a description of an image that conveys the image content and meaning. This descriptive text is attached to the image's file properties.
- People with low or no vision can use assistive technology like screen readers to hear the alt-text description of digital images. When a screen reader reaches the image, it will read the alt-text description out loud.

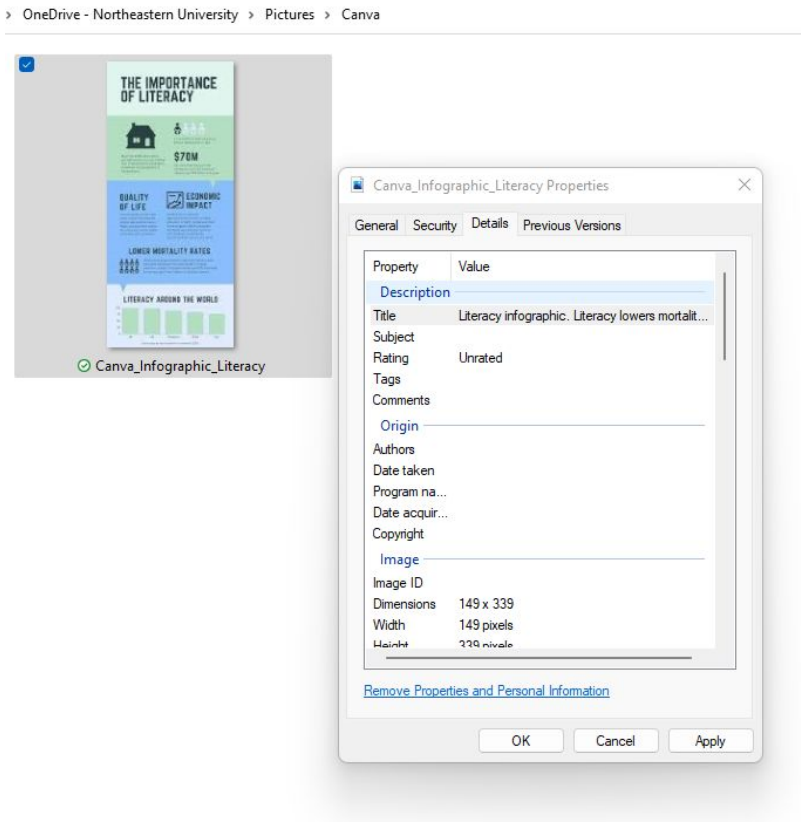


Based on : [Microsoft's How to write effective alt-text]

Feel free to ask questions at any point during the presentation!

Adding Alt-Text

- You can export your infographic as an image and then add alt-text.
- Find the image in your file directory.
- On PC: Right-click the image and select ‘Properties.’ Choose the ‘Details’ tab and click on the ‘Title’ field.
- On Mac: Control-click the image and select ‘Get Info’ on Macs, then edit the ‘Comments’ field.
- Write a description of and insights from your infographic.

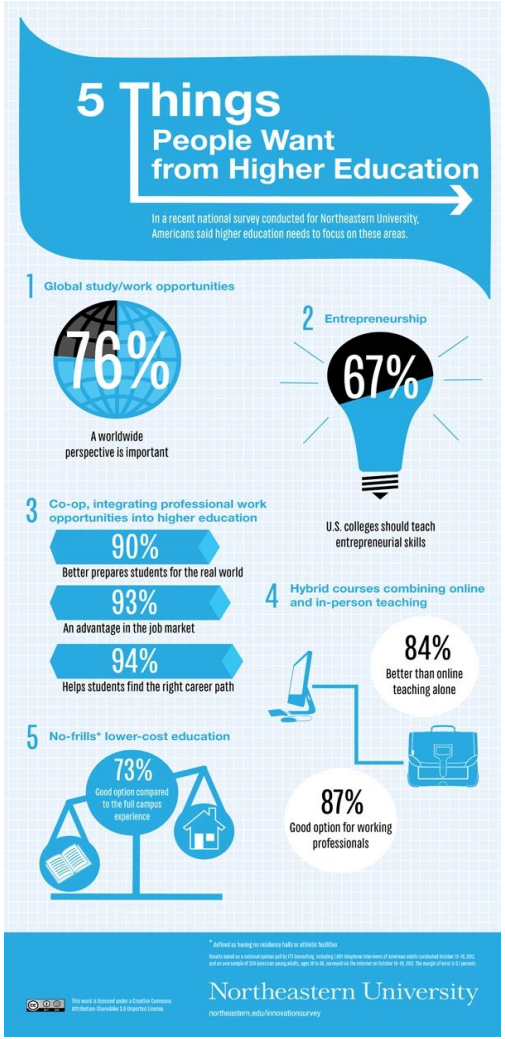


Feel free to ask questions at any point during the presentation!

Example: Alt-Text

What are 2-3 takeaways from this infographic?

What information do you think is important to include in alt-text for this infographic?



Northeastern University
College of Professional Studies

Your Turn! Practice creating an infographic in Canva

Northeastern University
NULab for Texts, Maps, and Networks

Hands On

Questions to consider as you work:

- How can visuals enhance your writing?
- What elements of your writing do you think could be improved by being presented in an infographic format (ie. thesis, structure, flow, etc)?
- What are some obstacles you might face when converting your writing to an infographic format?

More Tips & Info to Consider:

Northeastern University
NULab for Texts, Maps, and Networks

Build a coherent argument or narrative

- Treat your infographic like any other form of argument, explanation, or narrative—be **intentional**, and **organize** your points chronologically or as ordered steps in a process.
- Put **main ideas front-and-center**, and consider having your points progress down orders of importance.
- Use **signposts** or **sections** to orient your audience, i.e. pairing each point with numbers, shifting color gradients, etc.

Feel free to ask questions at any point during the presentation!

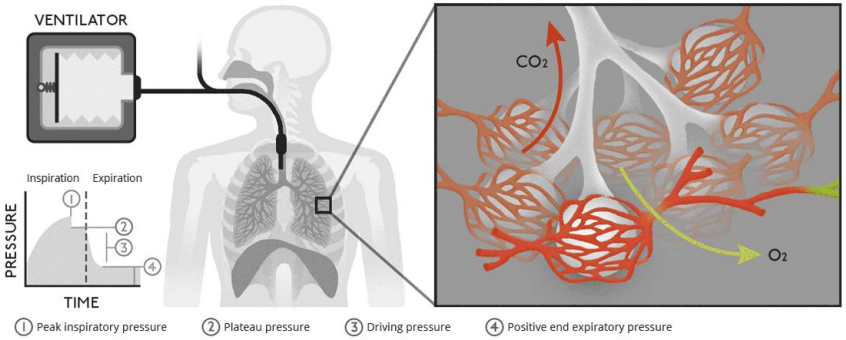
Some more tips

- Draw up an outline or storyboard **before** you build the graphic.
- Have a specific and **clear title**.
- Use **carefully-proofed syntax and vocabulary**, and explain terms/jargon.
- Have **proper citations**.
- Don’t mix too many visual types within your infographic. Keep a consistent font, color scheme, animation effects, design, formatting, etc.
- Limit text—keep negative space for the graphical component.

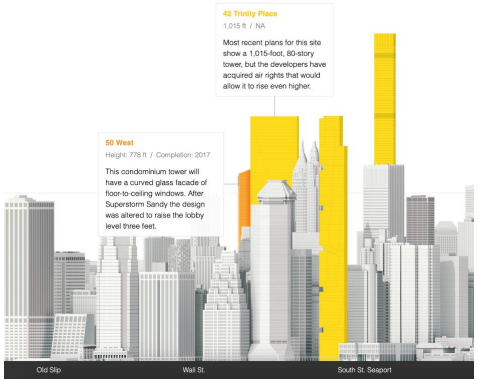
Feel free to ask questions at any point during the presentation!

Infographic Formats

- **Static** infographics:
  - Typically fixed information a still image.
- **Motion** infographics:
  - Typically fixed information. Display output is animated, or moving.
- **Interactive** infographics:
  - Can be fixed or dynamic information input.
  - User interaction consists of searching for specific data, actively shaping the content displayed, and choosing which information is accessed and visualized.



"Biology of ventilation," tapletopwhale.com



From "The New New York Skyline," *National Geographic*

Feel free to ask questions at any point during the presentation!

For Further Exploration

Here are links to the handouts presented in these slides:

DITI-infographics-handout

DITI-accessibility-handout

DITI-data-privacy-handout

NULab Meet the Method: Canva

See also the Beginner's Guide, published by Canva

Feel free to ask questions at any point during the presentation!

Thank you!

Developed by DITI Research and Teaching Fellows Emily Sullivan, Claire Lavarreda, Carlos Arriaga Serrano, Kasya O'Connor Grant, Dipa Desai, and Javier Rosario

- For more information on DITI, please see: https://bit.ly/diti-about
- Schedule an appointment with us! https://bit.ly/diti-meeting
- If you have any questions, contact us at: nulab.info@gmail.com
- Link to Online Materials: **https://bit.ly/fa24-Kemp-LCWRI5250-Canva**

Northeastern University
NULab for Texts, Maps, and Networks

Feel free to ask questions at any point during the presentation!

For Further Consideration: Accurately Representing Data in Visuals and Infographics

—Developed in collaboration with BARI

Northeastern University
NULab for Texts, Maps, and Networks

Data Presentation Tips

- **Create your own tables**, or make sure to use only images that are shared with permissions that support reuse—and always cite your sources!
- **Be sure to present your data *accurately***—be mindful that your charts, graphs, maps, and infographics are scaled and structured to present data and conclusions *completely* and *correctly*.
- **Use visual representations of numbers**—this will help concretize abstract concepts.
- **Label judiciously**, but don't overwhelm the viewer with dense text.
- **Beware of trying to make too many points in one graphic**—focus on the big takeaways.

Feel free to ask questions at any point during the presentation!

Limitations of Some Data Presentation Methods: Charts, Graphs, Diagrams, Maps

- The **structure** and **scale** of charts and graphs could be **manipulated** to amplify or diminish differences.
- **Different types** of graphs and charts work better for some types of data than others—for example, a pie chart and a line graph might not both be able to represent the same data accurately.
- A chart with **too much information** will be difficult to understand, but **too little information** could be an indication that data has been cherry-picked to support an argument.
- There is **limited space** in an infographic for in-depth analysis; nuances can be flattened and obfuscated.

Feel free to ask questions at any point during the presentation!

Misrepresentation of Data

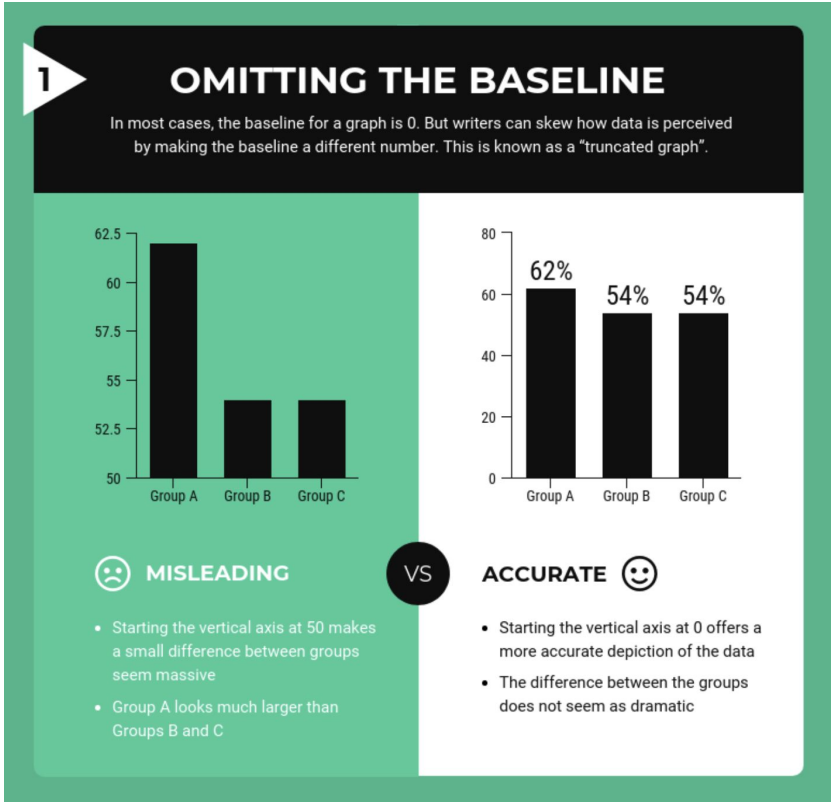
From D.B. Resnik, in the *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*, 2001:

"The concept of 'misrepresentation,' unlike 'fabrication' and 'falsification,' is neither clear nor uncontroversial. Most scientists will agree that fabrication is making up data and falsification is changing data. **But what does it mean to *misrepresent* data? As a minimal answer to this question, one can define 'misrepresentation of data' as 'communicating honestly reported data in a deceptive manner.'"**

This **online book from The Data School** covers some common ways data could be misrepresented at multiple points in the process of gathering, analyzing, and presenting findings on data-based research.

Feel free to ask questions at any point during the presentation!

Limitations of Charts, Diagrams, Graphs, & Maps

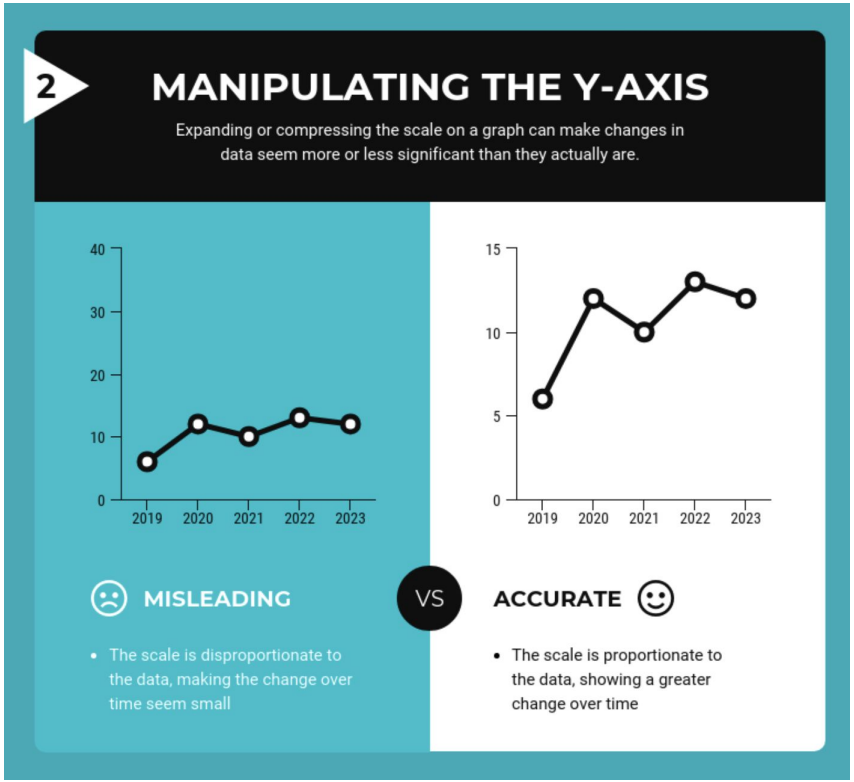


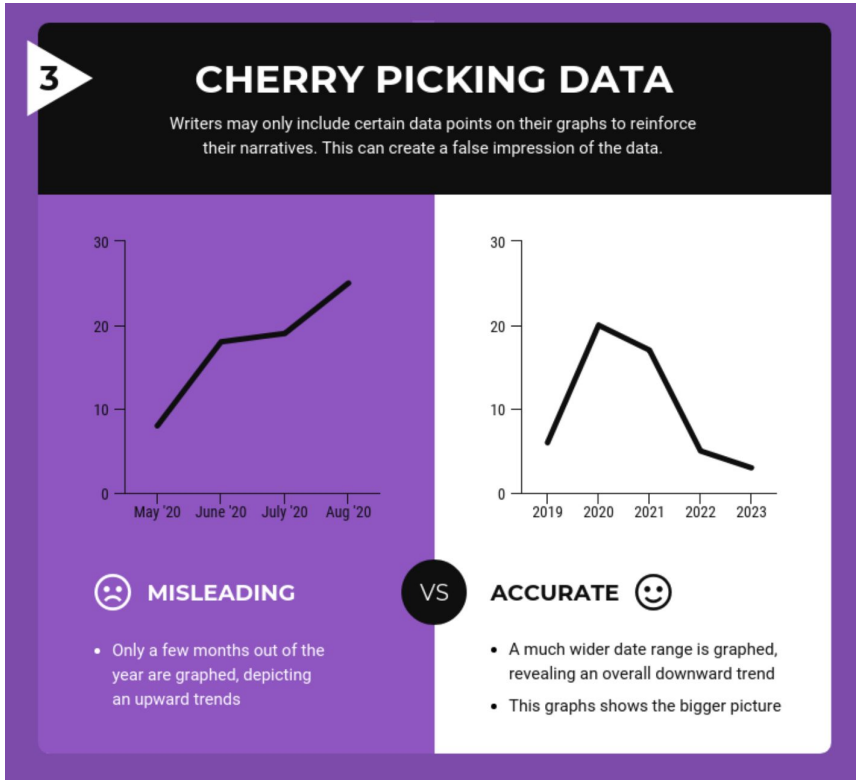
Consider these questions as you review the examples in this section:

- What **commonalities** do you notice among the more misleading and more accurate versions of graphs and charts in these examples?
- How would you define "**accuracy**" in the context of data presentation? Why is that question essential to ask?
- In what **contexts** does it make the most sense to use these kinds of visuals to present data? Are there other times where they're inappropriate? How so?

Feel free to ask questions at any point during the presentation!

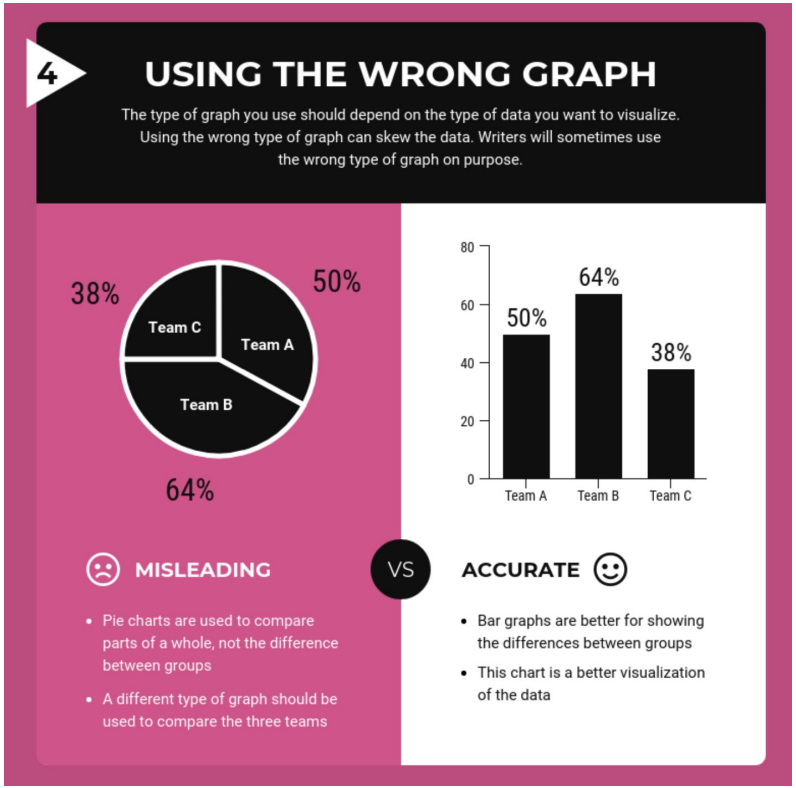
More limitations with presenting data using **CHARTS and DIAGRAMS:**

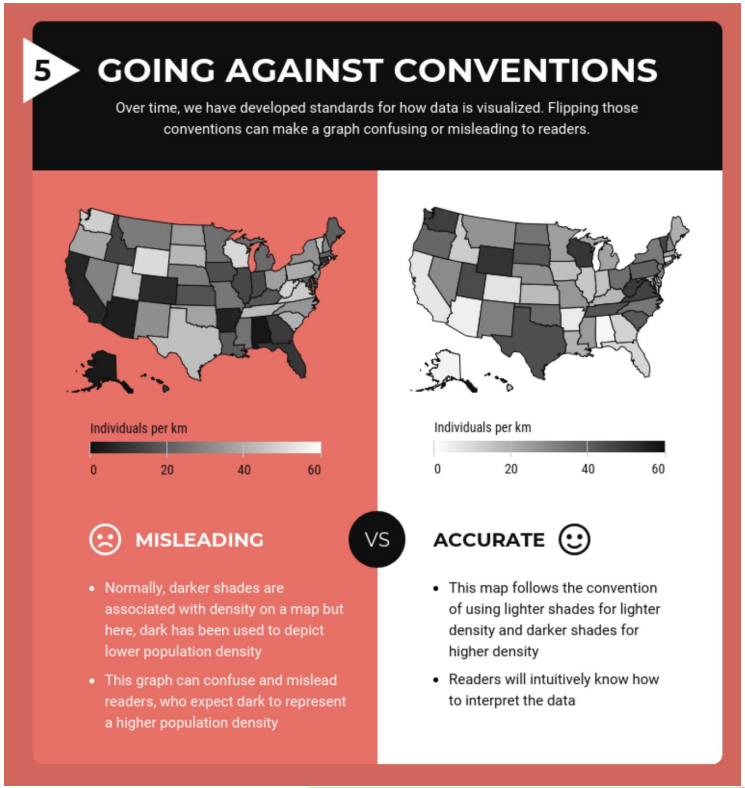




Feel free to ask questions at any point during the presentation!

Limitations with presenting data using **GRAPHS and MAPS:**





Feel free to ask questions at any point during the presentation!