

# Presenting Information with Canva

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SOCL2358 Current Issues in Cities and  
Suburbs  
Spring 2023



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# Workshop Agenda

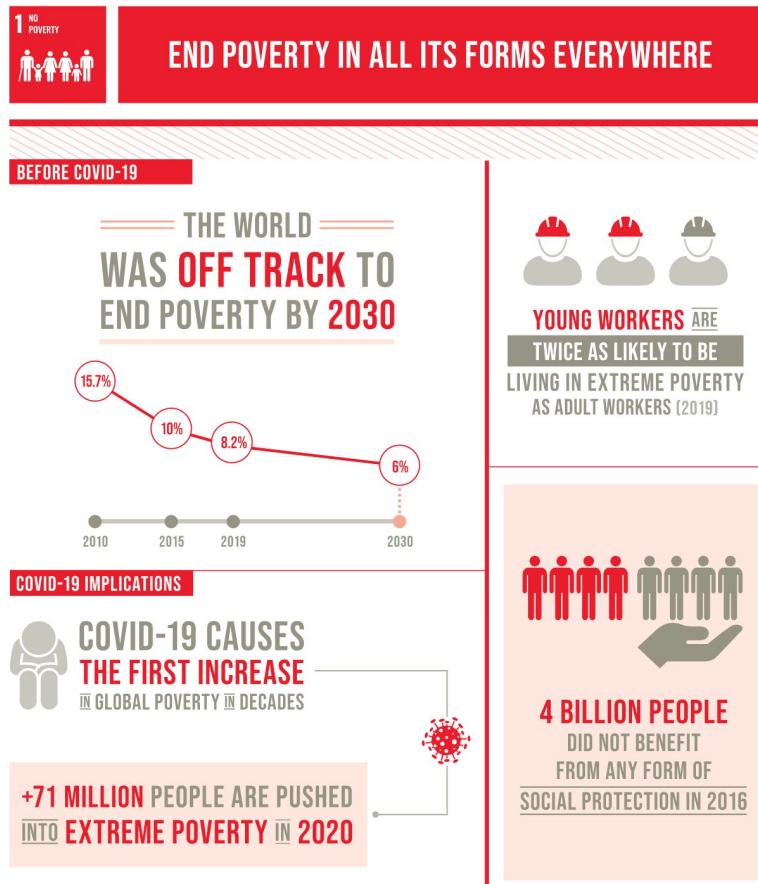
- Learn about dynamic and static modes of conveying information.
- Review elements, formatting, and best practices of visualizing data.
- Explore how to make visualizations using a Canva, a free online tool.
- Consider accessibility in designing presentations and infographics.
- Discuss big takeaways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

All materials available at:

[bit.ly/sp23-rabrenovic-canva](https://bit.ly/sp23-rabrenovic-canva)



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SDG Report 2020

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# Presentations



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# Discuss: What design features make for an effective or ineffective presentation?



# Organize your points

- Treat your presentation like any other form of argument, explanation, or narrative—be **intentional**, and **organize** your slides carefully.
- Put **main ideas front-and-center**. Additional detail can go in the “Notes” section.
- Use **signposts** or **sections** to orient your audience.



# Keep it simple

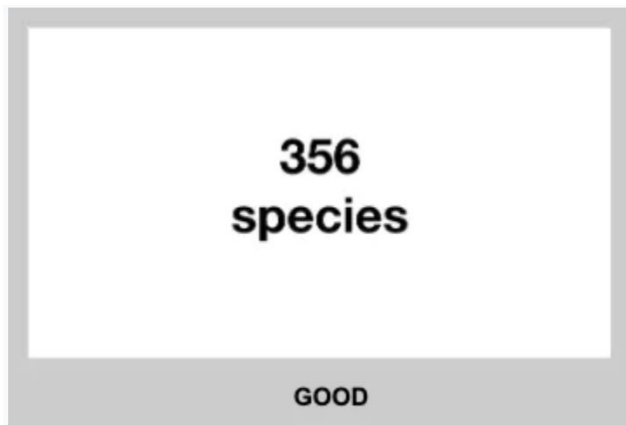
- **Less is more.**
- Slides should be **clear**, **concise**, and **intelligible**.
- Nothing in your slide should be superfluous, ever!
- Slides need plenty of negative space.



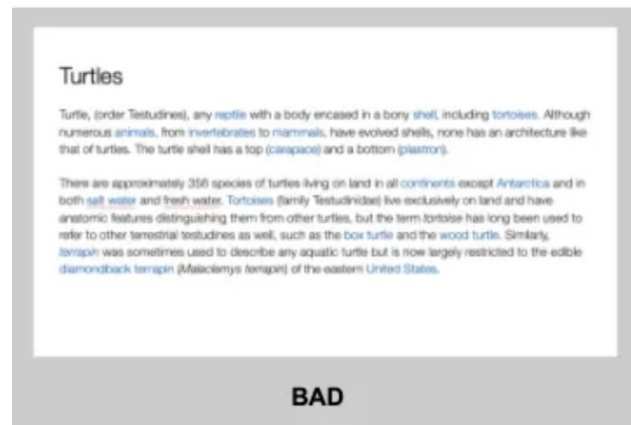
[TED Masterclass](#)



# Limit bullets and text



VS.



- You want your audience to be listening to you, not reading your slides.

[TED Masterclass](#)



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# Keep it visible: fonts

- **Sans serif** fonts are typically the best for presentations.
- Be generous with spacing.
- No more than two complementary fonts (e.g., Arial and **Arial Bold** for emphasis).
- Use mixed case, not all CAPS.
- **Bold** vs. Underline vs. *Italics*.

Times New Roman: Keep it visible

EB Garamond: Keep it visible

Arial: Keep it visible

Droid Sans: Keep it visible

*Caveat: Keep it visible*

Comic Sans: Keep it visible

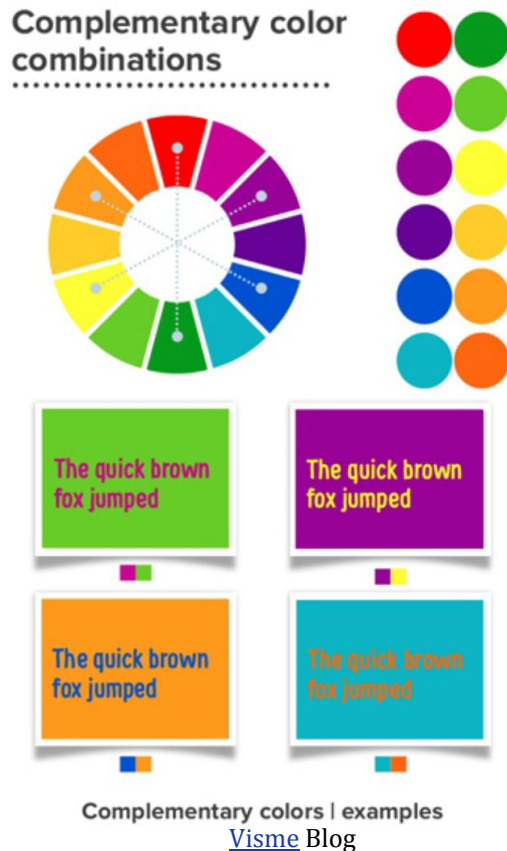
Cambria: Keep it visible





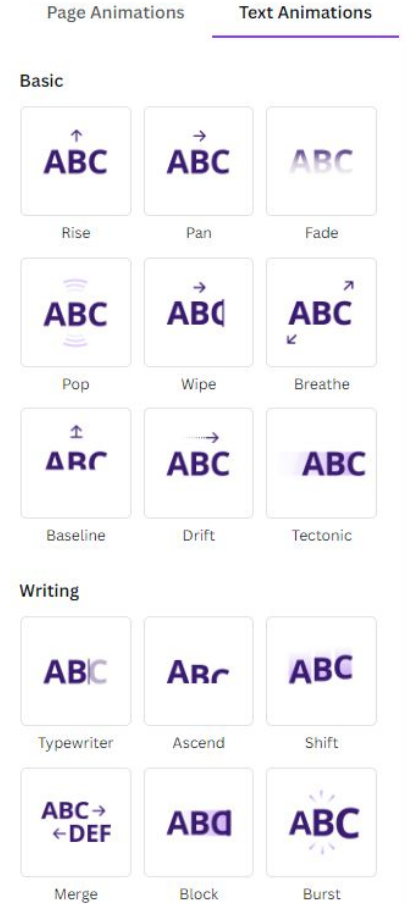
# Keep it visible: colors

- Make color choices that are accessible to everyone (and appropriate for the presentation).
- 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. using [this tool](#)).
- [NU Colors](#).



# Use animations judiciously

- Animations can add **flair** to your slide transitions.
- However, using too many can be **distracting** and undermine a professional tone.
- The type of animation matters—use them to **enhance** the points you're making.
- Preview and customize animations to make sure the presentation is easy to follow.



# Be consistent & organized

- Be **intentional** about design choices, and *keep it simple!*
- Be **consistent** in font, font size, color scheme, animation effects, design, formatting, etc.
- Set up a **presentation outline** before you build content slides.
- Organize content with section headers and **signposts**.
- **Choose images/graphics mindfully**, and **don't mix visual types** on a single slide.
- **Limit bullets & text** on slides—keep negative space.



# Infographics



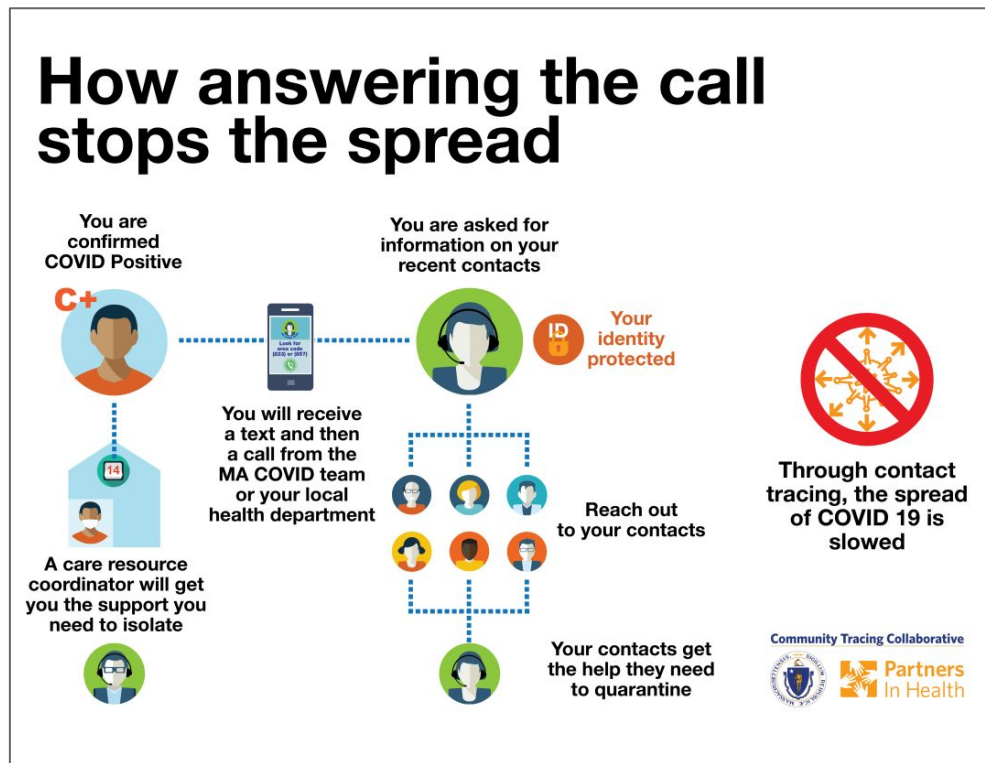
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# Infographics



<https://venngage.com/gallery/post/true-colors-what-your-brand-colors-say/>



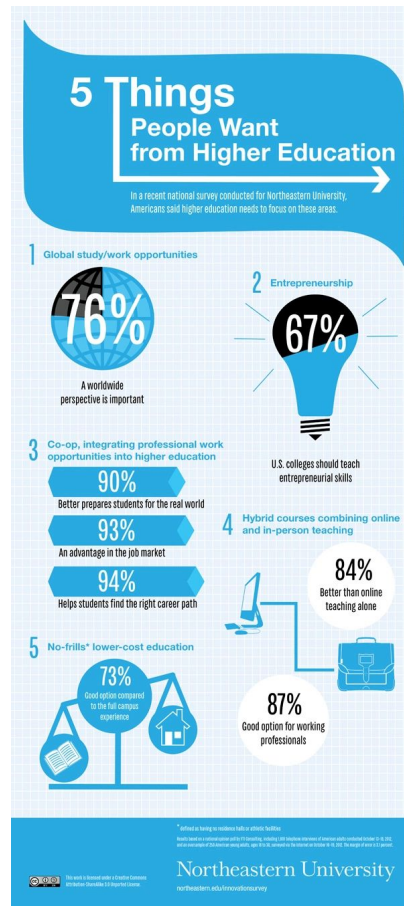
<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/learn-about-the-community-tracing-collaborative>

# What is an infographic?

- Presents complex information quickly and clearly.
- Tells a story with information, mostly images: numbers, charts, graphs, summary text.
- Can be as simple as a road sign or as complex as a visual analysis of global economies.
- Easily conveys information and data to different audiences.



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# Why create an infographic?

- **Catch the attention** of new users/audiences.
  - **Present more information** without overloading audiences; they summarize and synthesize “need to know” information.
  - **Develop concise and simple visuals** to help audiences navigate and engage with larger datasets and more research.
  - **Reach across platforms and media.**
- Infographics are well-suited for both print and digital presentation and sharing.



# Elements of infographics

- Infographics tend to or should have:
  - A **narrow** focus or subject matter.
  - **Short** and **accessible** titles.
  - **Visually interesting** components, either through data graphics or illustrations.
  - A particular **structure** and **sequence** to the information they present.
  - **Citations** for all of the information included.



[History.com & Column Five](https://www.history.com/history/infographics/10-facts-about-life-on-sailing-ships)



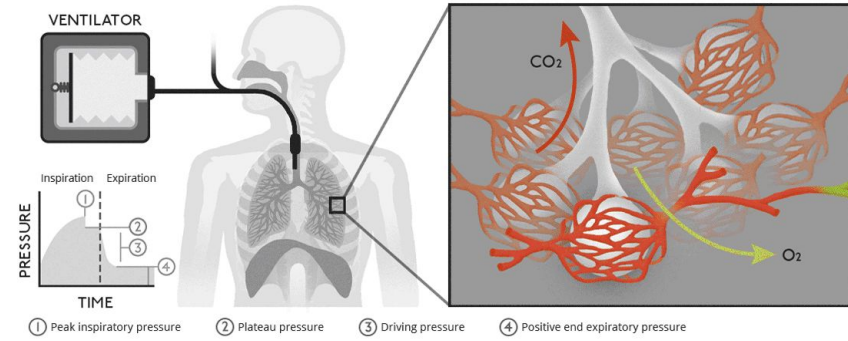
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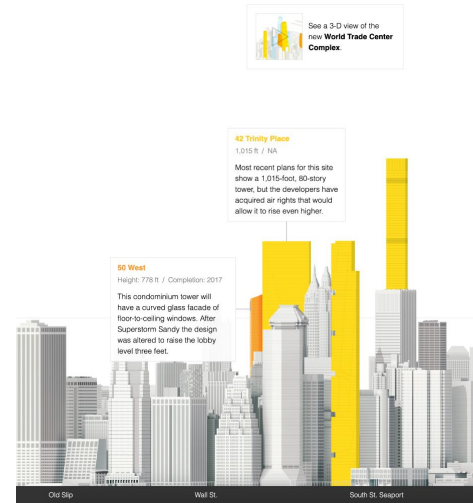


# Infographic formats

- **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](http://tapletopwhale.com)



From "[The New York Skyline](http://The New York Skyline),"  
[National Geographic](http://National Geographic)

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# What makes a good infographic?

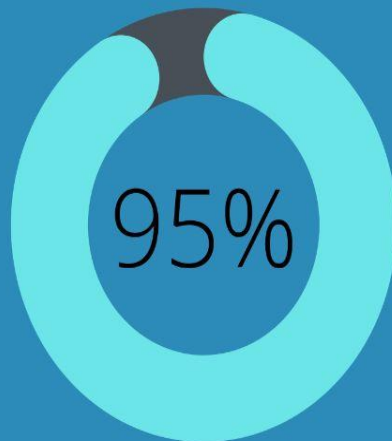


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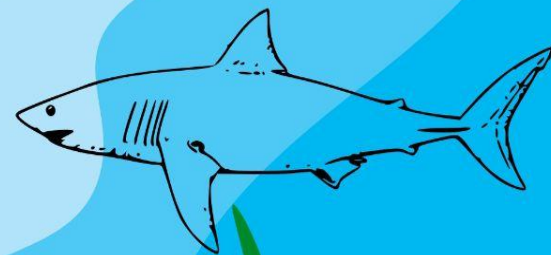
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**Millenials not  
saving adequately  
for retirement**



**Dolphin: horizontal  
dorsal fin**



**Shark: vertical  
dorsal fin**



# Tips for Designing Infographics

1 Pick a topic and a theme that "fit together"

Look at this one; the topic is a "how to" and the theme is that of a classroom chalkboard. This kind of synergy helps your message!



2 Structure it "chronologically"  
It helps readers to go in one direction; most people read from top to bottom, left to right, so that's the simplest place to start!

\* still, don't be afraid to get creative! What matters is that it's easy to follow!

3 \* graphic details like your use of font or elements should also fit your theme!



Lastly, Make it fun!

Do that little bit of extra effort to add in some small details throughout.

\* They might not directly help your argument, but will make your work pop and help folks appreciate what they're learning!



# What makes a good infographic

- **Clarity:** the visual design and data/text should be clear.
- **Usefulness:** whether an infographic is design to inform, narrate a story or present an argument, its usefulness should be plain.
- **Aesthetics:** good infographics are visually interesting, and balance graphics and text.
- **Accessibility:** make sure text is not cut off or covered by image, add descriptive alt-text to your infographic image.



# Canva Demo

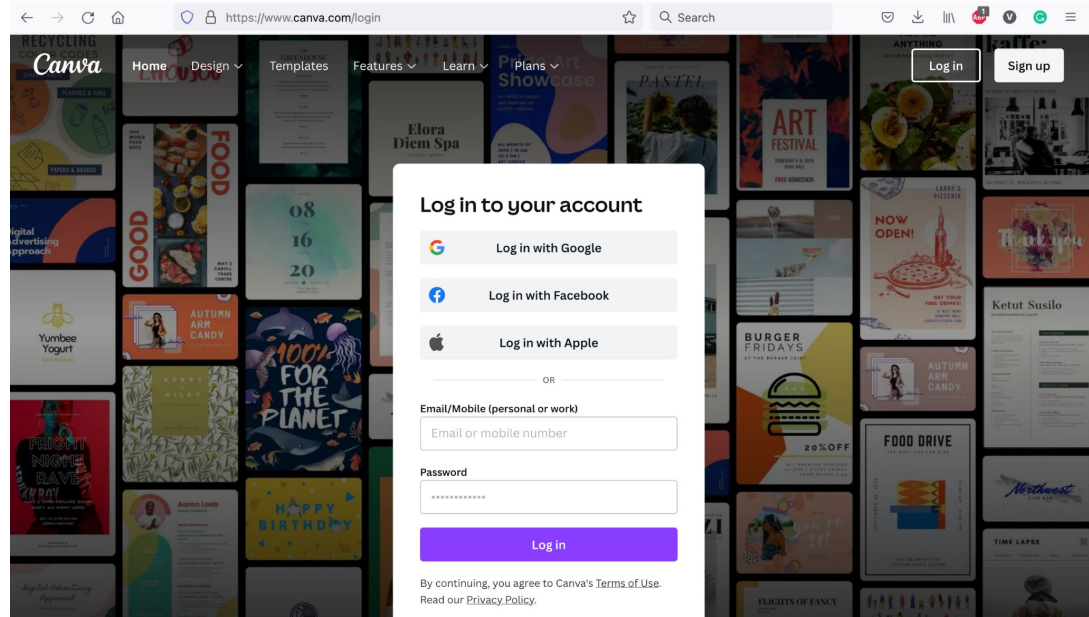


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# Sign up/Login

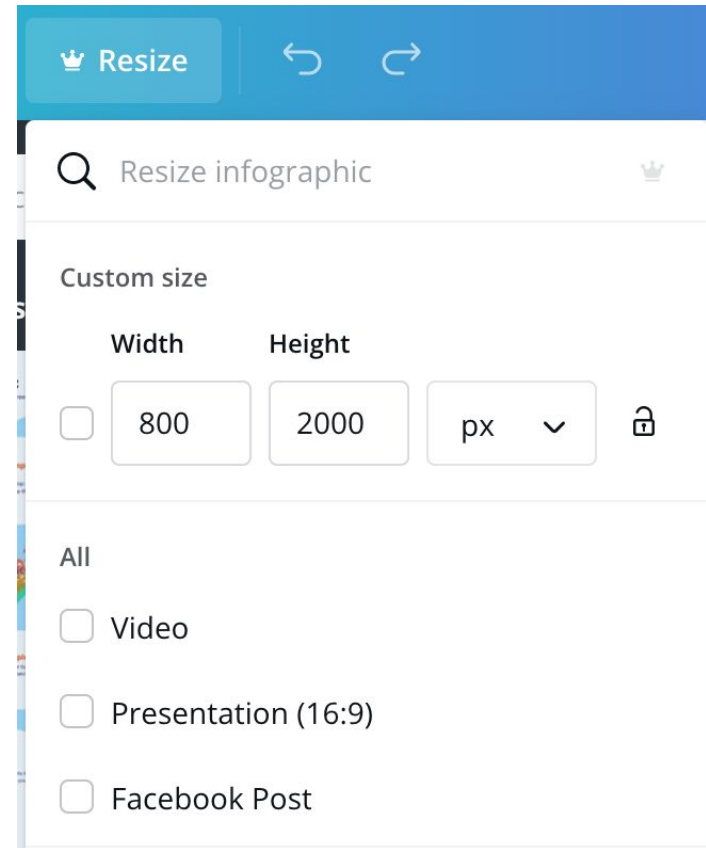
- Canva is a free online infographic maker.
- Use your Gmail/Facebook/Apple ID to sign up or create an account.
- Click 'Create A Design.'



# Starting up...

First, pick your canvas dimensions. Canva features a curated “infographic” size, but you can customize the width and length at any time with the resizing option. You can also add more “pages.”

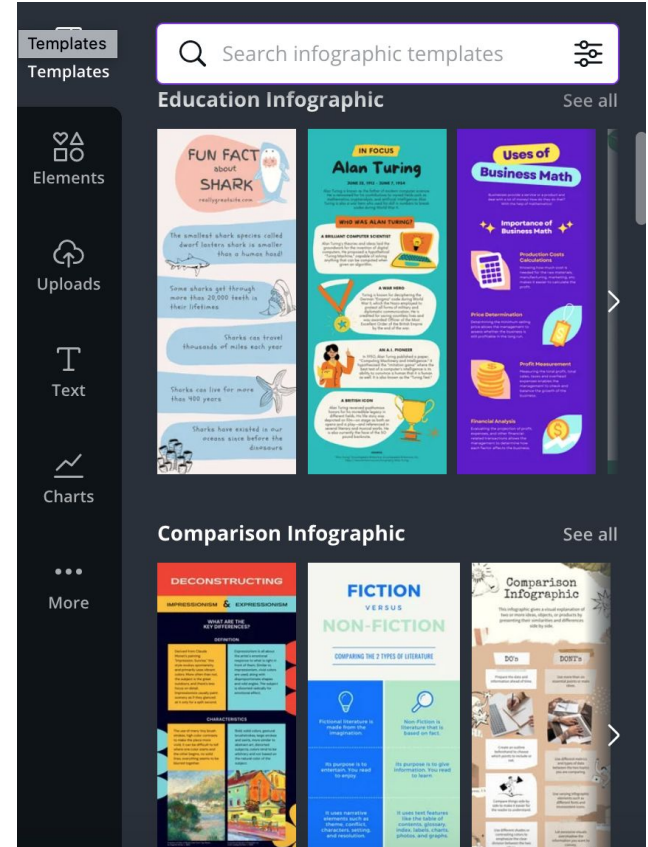
Infographics work best when presenting information through one direction, so it might help to size your canvas as being long either vertically or horizontally!





# Pick a style

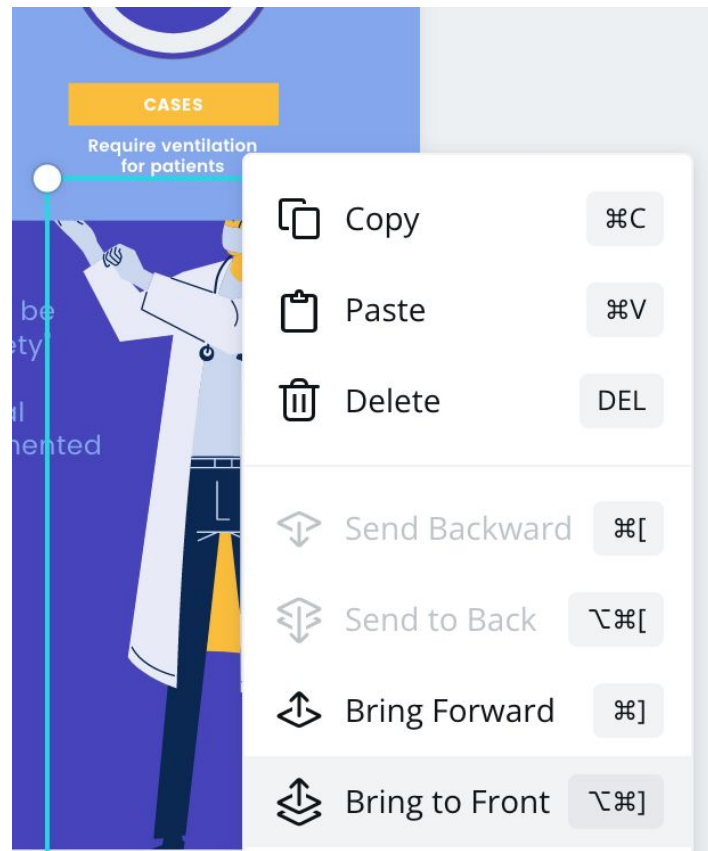
Infographics work best when presented in a uniform style. Try to get your information and your design to work together! If you need some help or inspiration, Canva offers several infographic templates you can start from.



# Playing with layers

Canva, like other infographic tools, 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 (or use the key commands shown at right) →

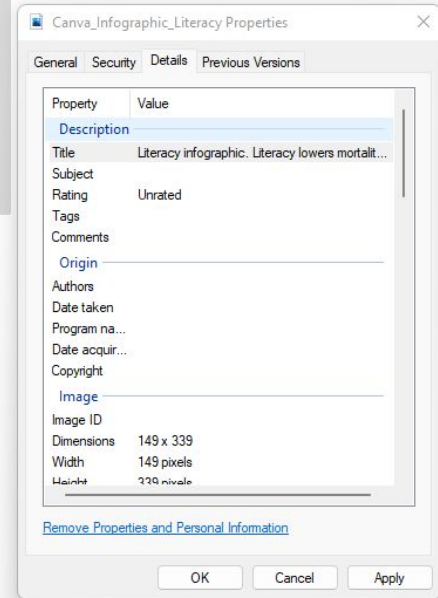


# Adding alt-text

Alt-text is a description of an image that conveys the image content and meaning. This descriptive text is attached to the image 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 aloud the alt-text description.

> OneDrive - Northeastern University > Pictures > Canva



# Adding alt-text

Once you have finished your infographic, you can export the file as an image.

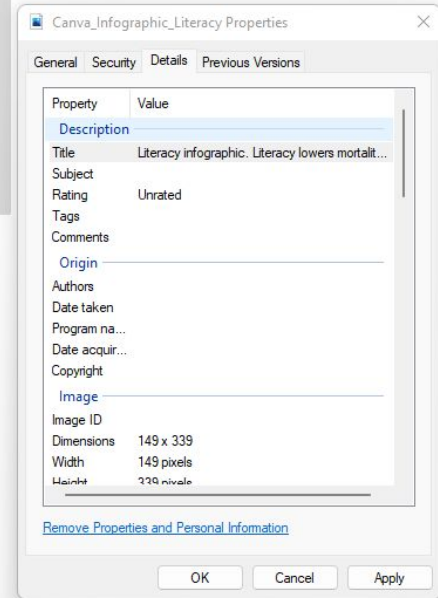
File>Download>Choose an image file (PNG, JPEG)

Share>Download>Choose an image file

Find the image in your file directory. Right-click the image and click 'Properties' if using a PC , or click 'Get Info' on Macs.

Choose the Details tab and click on the 'Title' field for PCs. On Macs, edit the 'Comments' field. Write a description of and insights from your infographic.

> OneDrive - Northeastern University > Pictures > Canva



# Canva Presentation

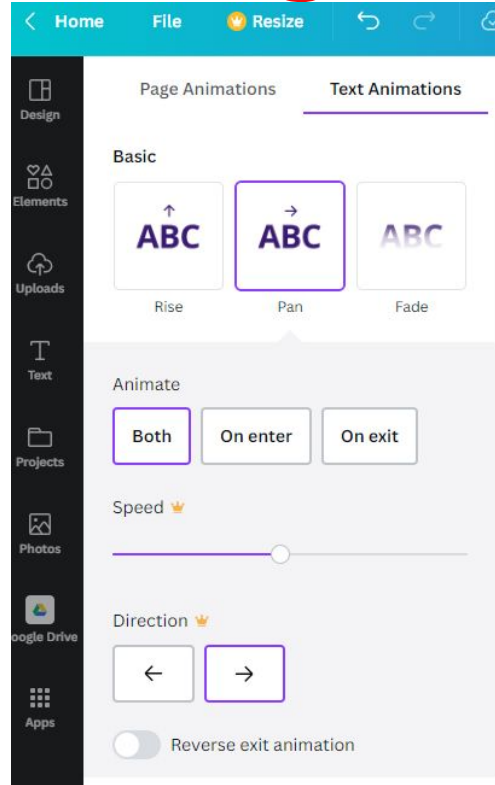
## Meta-Demo



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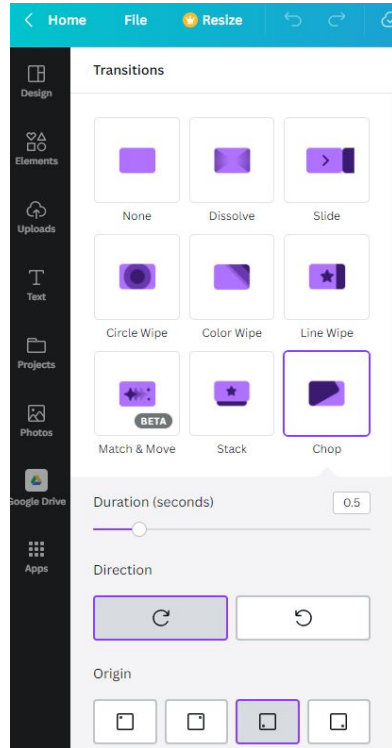
# Adding animation effects



- There are multiple types of animations on Canva.
- To use animations, click on and select the feature you want to animate.
- Click on “Animate” in the top menu, and review the types of Text Animations on the left-hand side of the screen. Hover your cursor over each type to preview how it looks.
- Page Animations apply the effect to all of the features on the slide.



# Adding slide transitions

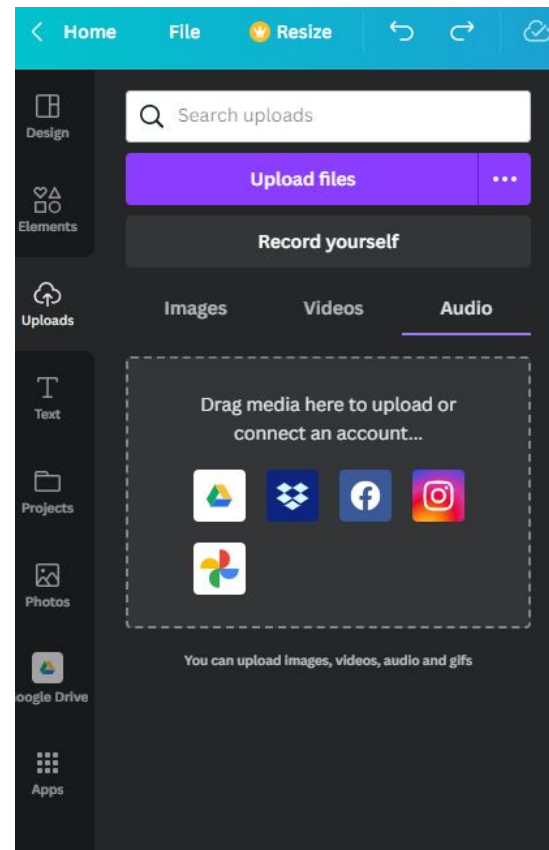


- Slide transitions animate the movement from one slide to the next.
- To use transitions on Canva, click on the three dots that pop-up above the slide in the preview deck at the bottom of the screen.
- Click “Add transition” and review the options on the left side of the screen. Hover your cursor over each option to preview the transition effect.
- Once you choose a slide transition, Canva will let you adjust the duration and direction of the transition.



# Use audio/video for impact

- When you add audio, you can upload it from your computer or record your own audio within Canva under the Uploads tab. Canva also has free audio and video you can use under the Elements tab.
- When you add video, you can upload one saved to your computer or link to an online video using Canva Apps tab that connect to YouTube and other platforms.
- Once you add in the audio or video to the Canva Presentation, you can click on the feature and customize audio and video effects.





# Data Presentation Considerations



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# Data Presentation Tips

- **Put your conclusions/argument in the title**—this will allow viewers to understand the gist of the information quickly.
- **Create your own tables**, or make sure 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.



# Misrepresentation of Data

From D.B. Resnik, in 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.



# 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 presentation 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.



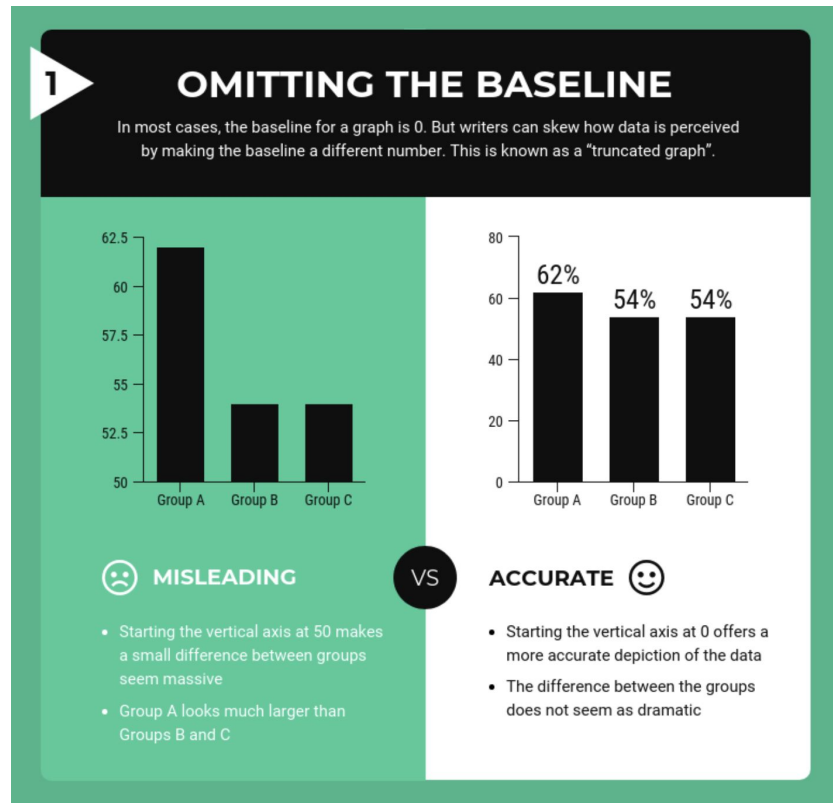
# Discussion: Accurately Representing Data in Visuals and Infographics



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# Limitations of Charts, Diagrams, Graphs, & Maps



## Discussion:

- 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?

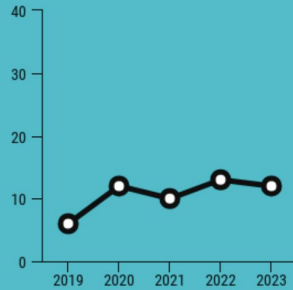


# More limitations with presenting data using CHARTS and DIAGRAMS:

2

## MANIPULATING THE Y-AXIS

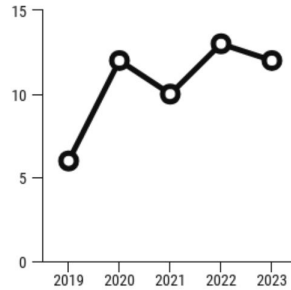
Expanding or compressing the scale on a graph can make changes in data seem more or less significant than they actually are.



MISLEADING

- The scale is disproportionate to the data, making the change over time seem small

VS



ACCURATE

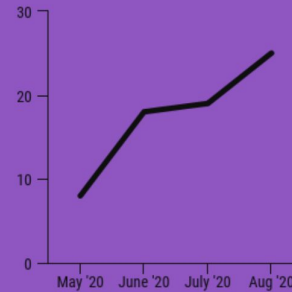


- The scale is proportionate to the data, showing a greater change over time

3

## CHERRY PICKING DATA

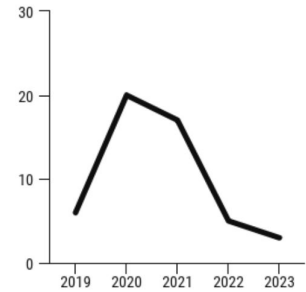
Writers may only include certain data points on their graphs to reinforce their narratives. This can create a false impression of the data.



MISLEADING

- Only a few months out of the year are graphed, depicting an upward trends

VS



ACCURATE



- A much wider date range is graphed, revealing an overall downward trend
- This graphs shows the bigger picture



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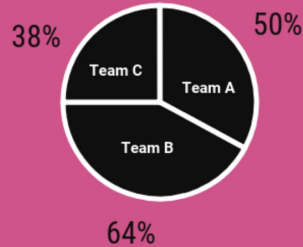
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# More limitations with presenting data using GRAPHS and MAPS:

4

## USING THE WRONG GRAPH

The type of graph you use should depend on the type of data you want to visualize. Using the wrong type of graph can skew the data. Writers will sometimes use the wrong type of graph on purpose.



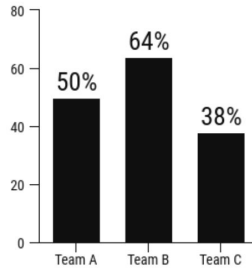
**MISLEADING**

- Pie charts are used to compare parts of a whole, not the difference between groups
- A different type of graph should be used to compare the three teams

VS

**ACCURATE** 😊

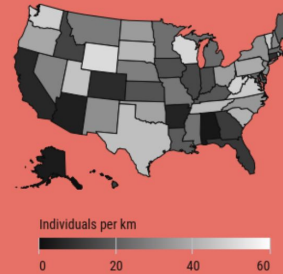
- Bar graphs are better for showing the differences between groups
- This chart is a better visualization of the data



5

## GOING AGAINST CONVENTIONS

Over time, we have developed standards for how data is visualized. Flipping those conventions can make a graph confusing or misleading to readers.



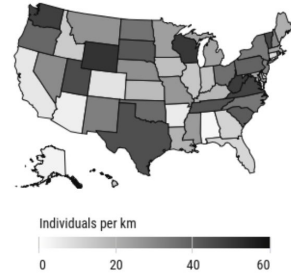
**MISLEADING**

- Normally, darker shades are associated with density on a map but here, dark has been used to depict lower population density
- This graph can confuse and mislead readers, who expect dark to represent a higher population density

VS

**ACCURATE** 😊

- This map follows the convention of using lighter shades for lighter density and darker shades for higher density
- Readers will intuitively know how to interpret the data





# Infographics Takeaways



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# Effective infographic projects

1. Contain **appealing** and **vivid details** (e.g. charts, visuals, alt-text).
2. Have a specific and **clear title**; concise and **brief set-up**.
3. Offer an effective **demonstration of project's goal** and provide information **aimed toward the proposed audience**.
4. Make the problem relevant and **appeal to the audience**.
5. Contain **excellent syntax and vocabulary**, explain terms/jargons, has **proper citation**.



# Thank you!

**Chris McNulty**

Digital Integration Teaching Initiative  
Assistant Director

**Dipa Desai**

Digital Integration Teaching Initiative  
Research & Teaching Fellow

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- If you have any questions, contact us at [nulab.info@gmail.com](mailto:nulab.info@gmail.com)
- Have questions? Schedule an appointment with us!

<https://calendly.com/diti-nu>

- Link to Online Materials:

[bit.ly/sp23-rabrenovic-canva](https://bit.ly/sp23-rabrenovic-canva)

- We'd love your feedback! Please fill out a short survey here:

<https://bit.ly/diti-feedback>



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