**How are the two main spreadsheet data file interchange formats (".csv and ".tsv) structured and formatted? Why would you choose one over the other for data interchange?**

The difference between the two is just a matter of how the delimiters are handled - .tsv uses tabs (“\t”) and .csv obviously uses commas (“,”).

One reason we may choose .csv over .tsv is the character length of an entry. .csv files would allow for really any number of a characters followed by a comma, whereas .tsv may get confusing if entries either run long – they may blend together – or are missing all together – difficult to interpret if there is no entry but multiple (“\t”) characters. In my experience, .csv files are also more common and familiar to people.

.tsv may be chosen over .csv because it is generally easier for human interpretability. Spacing is consistent between entries, so a human can look at a dataset and understand what entries fall into which columns. More importantly, though, is that literal commas in a .csv file can be difficult to interpret, both by a human and a machine. You may need to use an escape character when using a .csv file that also includes literal commas.