

# Interpreting Data

## Task 1: Writing about data (20 minutes)

Survey results must be communicated in an interpretable manner for them to influence the world. However, clearly communicating survey results can be challenging, particularly if the audience is not familiar with statistics and data interpretation. Using the crosstabs from CBS/YouGov, craft 1-2 paragraphs summarizing the main results from the survey. Your writing should be targeted at an educated, but not specialized audience—think for example of writing for someone who would read the New York Times or listen to the evening news.

In the two paragraphs make sure to address the following:

- The key findings from the study
- What the study does NOT show (ie., any important questions that remain unanswered)
- What does the study mean for the audience, policymakers or the real world more generally?

## Task 2: Comparing writing (10 minutes)

Swap your paragraph with the assigned partner. Read through one another's work and discuss the following questions:

- What did you find most challenging when trying to write about the survey findings? What was easiest?
- What did your partner do well?
- Where do you think your partner can improve his/her clarity or level of detail?

## Task 3: Reflection (20 minutes)

CBS published an article summarizing the findings from this survey data. Read through the article, and compare the write up CBS published to the two paragraphs you wrote. Discuss the following questions with your partner:

- How does the level of detail compare between your writing and CBS's writing?
- What is more successful about your writing? CBS's writing?
- How does CBS incorporate data and data interpretation into their writing? How does that compare to your strategies?
- Are there any exemplar sentences or paragraphs that stand out as particularly clear in communicating findings in either the CBS article? How would you update your own writing after examining the CBS newspaper article?
- What are the key takeaways from writing your own final report for this class?