

Displaying Data

Cross-Curricular Focus: Mathematics



There are many kinds of graphs that can be used to show information. Another name for information is **data**. Graphs make reports and science research more powerful. They let us see with our eyes what the numbers actually mean. They bring the numbers to life so we can **analyze** them. We can look at the results and understand them better.

You choose a graph depending on what you want to show. Certain kinds of graphs are better than others to make information stand out. When you have data to include in a report or presentation, choose the one that fits your data best.

A pie chart is good for showing a part of a whole. A line graph is an excellent choice if you want to **describe** how something changes over time. It is also good for showing big differences. Use it to compare the **highest** and lowest numbers or the **shortest** and **tallest** plants. Data is represented with pictures or symbols on a pictograph. Each picture or symbol can represent whatever number of items you choose. A colorful bar graph can show changes over time. You can also use it to make comparisons between two or more things. A Venn diagram uses two overlapping circles. They are perfect for sorting information. You can use them to sort plants, for example. Plants with green leaves go on the left. Plants with flowers go on the right. Plants with both go in the middle where the circles overlap.

Choosing the right graph can help you create a better project. Your data will be displayed clearly for others to understand.

Name: _____

Answer the following questions based on the reading passage. Don't forget to go back to the passage whenever necessary to find or confirm your answers.

1) Why should you use graphs to display your data?

2) If you wanted to show how much of your allowance you spent on each thing you bought, which graph would be a good choice?

3) Which kind of graph allows you to use lots of color to display your data?

4) How is a Venn diagram used?

5) What kind of graph would you be willing to try using on your next project? Why?

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Name: **Key**

Answer the following questions based on the reading passage. Don't forget to go back to the passage whenever necessary to find or confirm your answers.

Actual wording of answers may vary.

1) Why should you use graphs to display your data?

so we can understand the numbers

2) If you wanted to show how much of your allowance you spent on each thing you bought, which graph would be a good choice?

a pie chart

3) Which kind of graph allows you to use lots of color to display your data?

a bar graph

4) How is a Venn diagram used?

to sort information

5) What kind of graph would you be willing to try using on your next project? Why?

student's choice