Describing Graphs
(analysis & evaluation)

Presentation skills

This lesson begins with describing basic graphs and suggesting what they could represent. It then provides the language necessary for describing, analysing and evaluating with a guided practice. This is followed by students researching and analysing graphs/charts/tables from the Office of National Statistics (ONS) and giving a short presentation on their findings.
Teacher’s Notes

**Aim:** to develop the students’ ability to describe graphical data and practice the key skills of analysis and evaluation.

**Level:** *** [B1/ B2/C1/C2]  Lesson Time: 1-2 hours

**Graphical Analysis & Evaluation Lesson Plan**

1. **Lead in (10 minutes)**
   i. Ask students to look at **Graph 1** (worksheet) and explain the graph to your partner.
   ii. Teacher elicits the most significant points from the graph [answers: peaks in Feb, April, Dec].
   iii. Asks students to suggest a reason for these peaks and what could the product be.
      - Product is flowers (Feb=Valentine’s day / April = Easter / Dec = Christmas).
   iv. Highlight that **analysis** is identifying key highs and lows and **evaluation** is the reasons why.
      - [Disclaimer: There are different understandings of analysis & evaluation – this is one way]
   v. Do the same with the **Bar Chart 2** (explain it, highs and lows, why? = ice cream sales).
   vi. Labelling graphs: explain the key points (1-4) that must be said before analysing a graph.

2. **Language Sheet 1: Describing / analysing and evaluation graphical data. (10 minutes)**
   i. Students read through the language sheet.
   ii. Ask students to practice the phrases (choral drilling with teacher if necessary).
   iii. **IMPORTANT** – highlight the three key stages [describe, analyse, evaluate].
   iv. **Extra:** describing graphs activity: www.academic-englishuk.com/graphs

3. **Worksheet 2: Example Graph 1 (10+ minutes + feedback)**
   i. Give out worksheet 1 with Example Graph 1 and ask students to fill in the information.
   ii. Feedback using the model answer.
      - Note: students may need help and guidance with the evaluation section.

4. **Graphical Data: preparation: (20 minutes)**
   i. Give each student one of the web links to graphs from ONS.
   ii. Show the students how to find the information: go to webpage / click on the specific section key / find the figure number.
   iii. Allow 20 minutes for students to prepare a 1 to 2-minute mini presentation of their graph.
   iv. Ask for 2/3 pieces of key data to be described only.
   v. They must follow the 3 key stages (describe the key elements (labelling), analysis and evaluation).

5. **Presentation (30 minutes)**
   i. Students present their graph slide in front of the class – show webpage graph on board.
   ii. Teacher can give feedback.

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Graphs and Statistics

- Describe these graphs (analysis) and then suggest the reasons for these trends (evaluation)

Graph 1

Bar Chart 2

Labelling Graphs

Source: Wills (2012) MDX Index – variables in supply chain
Language Sheet 1: Describing graphs and charts

1. Describe the graph layout (title / source / axis / key)

The graph from (source) presents data on (title)...
The graph from (source) shows/illustrates (title)...
If we look at this graph on (title) from (source) you can see...
The y axis (vertical) is... and the x axis (horizontal) is...
(Graph) These lines represent... (Bar) These Columns are... (Pie) These segments are... (Table) These rows are...

2. Analysis: describe key points from the graph

Overall summary: Overall, there is / has been... / Generally, there is...
What you can see is... / From the graph we can see...
I’d like to focus your attention on...
If you look at this... you’ll see / notice / understand
(Not all phrases are shown – all in paid version)
A key significant area is... / Two ...
An important point is... / Two important ....
What is... An interesting ...
An analysis ...

Useful Graph Vocabulary

UP: increase / rise / grow / went up / soar / double / multiply / climb / exceed /
DOWN: decrease / drop / fall / decline / plummet / halve / depreciate / plunge
UP & DOWN: fluctuate / undulated / dip /
SAME: stable (stabilised) / levelled off / remained constant or steady / consistent
(Not all phrases are shown – all in paid version)

CHANGES: gently ...
CHANGES: suddenly .....
TOP: reached a peak /......
BOTTOM: bottomed out / ......

3. Evaluation: give reasons for the data

This seems to suggest that...
This is possibly because of...
This is (clearly) due to...
(Not all phrases are shown – all in paid version)
One reason ...
An evaluation of this ...
To provide evidence ...
Overall, this highlights ...
Therefore, this provides ...
A possible future ...

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**Worksheet 2: Example Graph 1**

**Language:** Describe the graph using the phrases below to help you (write in your answers)

The graph from (source) shows/ illustrates (title)...

The y-axis is... and the x-axis is...

Overall, GDP has remained... between...

*(Not all phrases are shown – all in paid version)*

I’d like to focus your ...

*(Analysis)* The first one is ...

*(Evaluation)* This is/was ...

*(Analysis)* The second ...

*(Evaluation)* This is / was ...

Overall, this graph ...

A future prediction ...

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Example ANSWERS

The graph from The Office of National Statistics (2015) shows GDP growth in the UK over the years 1990 to 2015.

The y axis is the percentage of growth while the x axis is the individual 15 years.

**Analysis:** Overall, GDP has remained reasonably stable from 1993 to 2007 and again in 2013 to 2015 within the 2-4% range.

I’d like to focus your attention on two key significant areas.

**Analysis:** The first one is in 1991, where as you can see GDP fell to -1 and then dramatically soared to 4% within two years.

**Evaluation:** This was possibly because of the UK suffering a small recession caused from high interest rates and limited availability of credit. The government lowered the interest rates shortly after this and this would explain the sudden rise in 1992.

**Analysis:** The second interesting point is the sudden drop in GDP in 2007 .......(answers in paid version).

**Evaluation:** This is clearly due to the 2007/8 global financial crash, where the many countries suffered what is now being called .....(answers in paid version).

**Evaluation:** Overall, this graph highlights the evidence that global markets and recession ....(answers in paid version).

**Prediction:** There is a possibility that with such uncertainty in the world financial markets that .....(answers in paid version).
Graph Data Analysis

Task: Analyse and evaluate an Office of National Statistics (ONS) graph / chart / table and give a 1-2-minute presentation on your findings.

Guidelines

i. Your teacher will allocate one of the graphs / charts / tables below.
ii. Open the specific ONS webpage link and find the specific section and graph / chart / table.
iii. Analyse and evaluate the graph / chart / table using language sheet 1.
iv. You must follow the 3 key stages (describe the key elements (labelling), analysis and evaluation).
v. You may need to do some internet research to help your understanding / evaluation.
vi. Give a 2-minute presentation of your graph using your own analysis and evaluation.

ONS website: [https://www.ons.gov.uk](https://www.ons.gov.uk)
Office of National Statistics (ONS) Data links

Graph 1
Unemployment Rates [Free Example]

Figure: Employment rate (aged 16 to 64, seasonally adjusted)

https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployee
types/timeseries/lf24/lms

Graph 2
Crime Survey [Free Example]

Section 5: An overview of crime

Figure 1: Crime estimated by the survey has not changed over the last year

https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/bulletins/crimeinengl
andandwales/yearendingseptember2018#overview-of-crime

Bar Chart 3
Aging Population

Section X: The 90 years and over population is getting older.

Figure X: Number of people aged 90 years and over by age group, selected years, UK, 2002 to
2017

https://www.ons.gov.uk/

Graph 4
Tourism trends

Section X: What are the main trends in visits and spending?

Figure X: Overseas residents’ visits to the UK and UK residents’ visits abroad by month

https://www.ons.gov.uk

# There are 20 graphs / charts / tables in the paid lesson version
Other topics: life satisfaction / divorce / religion / mental health / alcohol / mobile phones / murder /
technology / leisure / population growth / life expectancy / etc..

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