Creating and Using Graphics

Decide where to incorporate graphics by looking for places where they support the text.

Graphics are important because they

- Catch the reader's attention and interest
- Help writers communicate information that is difficult to communicate with words
- Help clarify and emphasize information
- Help communicate information to multiple audiences with different interests and aptitudes

Graphics do things words cannot.

- Demonstrate logical and numerical relationships
- Communicate spatial information more effectively
- Guide readers through the steps of a process
- Save space and translation costs

Here are some guidelines for using graphics to enhance or clarify your message.

Guideline One.

- A graphic should tell a simple story.
- Readers should be able to grasp the point of a graphic quickly.

Guideline Two.

- A graphic should reinforce, not replace, a written text.

- Think of graphics as support for the text.

- Refer readers to the graphic and provide any necessary explanation.

  - "Figure two shows the relationship between…"

Graphics need to be integrated with text

- Place the graphic in an appropriate location
- Graphics that
  - are central to the discussion belong in the text
  - Elaborate a point belong in an appendix

Guideline Three

- A graphic should be ethical.
- Do not hide or distort information through misleading charts or graphics.

Guideline Four.

- A graphic should be properly labeled and placed in the text.

- Use consistent labels.

- Put a graphic on the page that references it or on the following page.

- Well done graphics flow seamlessly with the text.

Refer to the graphic in the text

- Figure 2 shows the relationship of cars to parks or
- (See Figure 2)
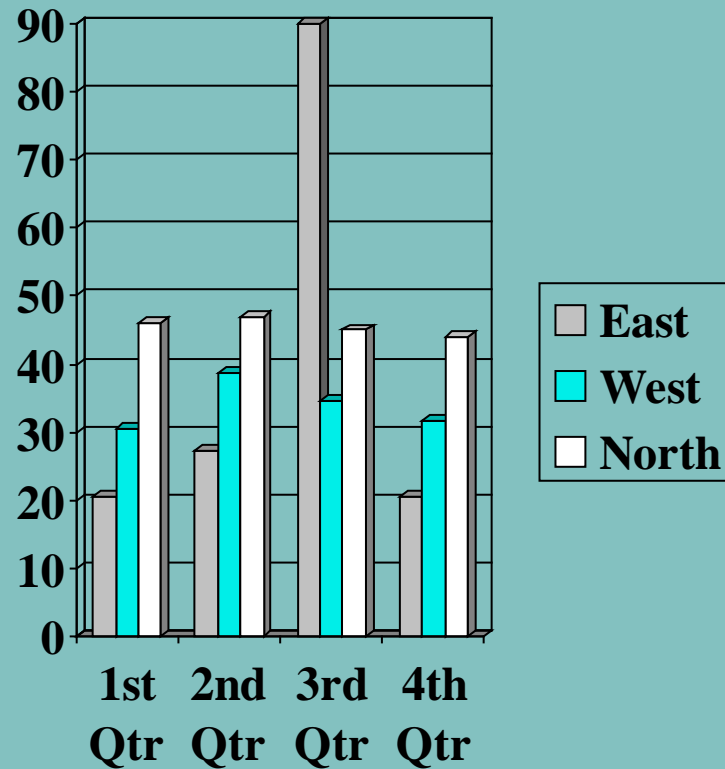- Use numbers for clarity; Appendix uses A, B. etc.

- Choose the type of graphic based on the data .

A table shows exact numbers; a bar graph highlights relationships.

- Company Earnings—East

- 1st 2nd 3rd 4th
- 22   28   90   19

Graphics can include

- Pictures
- Photographs
- Screen shots

For Photographs

- Outside shots have better light
- Try to capture people in action, in close-up
- Objects work best in close up with a minimum backdrop (often a white sheet)
- Places are more dynamic if people are included

For Illustrations

- Line drawings or diagrams work well
- They can be done in close up
- They can be easily labeled
- They highlight only the most important features of the subject

Icons and Clip Art

- Icons are international symbols used to convey a message without words

Clip Art

- Be careful of clip art
- It can be useful

■ Or silly

Do not use silly clip art. Do not put in graphics just for decoration.

Screen Shots

- Are pictures of what is on your computer screen.
- Great for directions or reproducing a web page in a text

Symbols can be useful cross-culturally

- There are internationally recognized symbols
- But otherwise be careful

Using Symbols Cross-Culturally

- Keep human icons simple-pictograms are safer:

- Use hand signals carefully

- Avoid culture specific icons

- Avoid religious symbols

- Avoid animal symbols and mascots

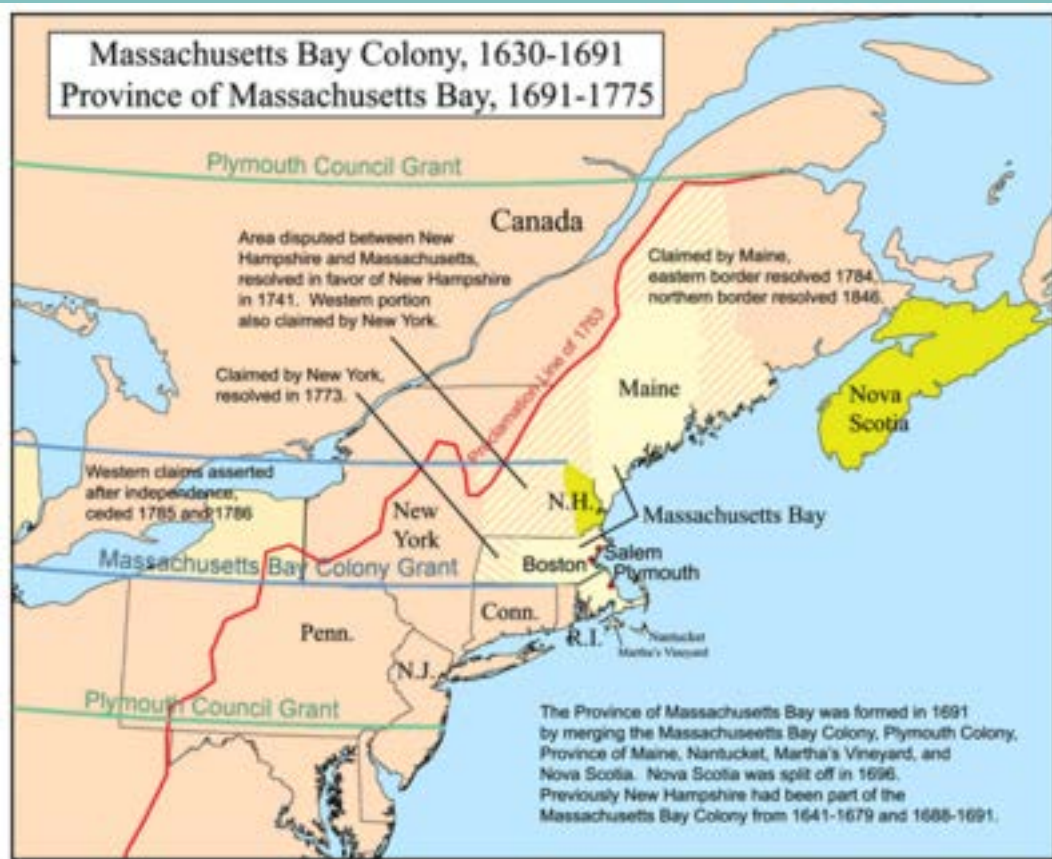# Planning Graphics Means Thinking About

Audience

- What is their knowledge base?

- Do they know standard icons in the field?

- How motivated are they to read and decipher text?

Purpose

- What is the point of information?

- Different types of graphics highlight different information.

What kind of information you want to communicate dictates the graphic.

Massachusetts Bay Colony, 1630-1691
Province of Massachusetts Bay, 1691-1775

Plymouth Council Grant

Canada

Area disputed between New Hampshire and Massachusetts, resolved in favor of New Hampshire in 1741. Western portion also claimed by New York.

Claimed by Maine, eastern border resolved 1784, northern border resolved 1846.

Claimed by New York, resolved in 1773.

Maine

Nova Scotia

Western claims asserted after independence, ceded 1785 and 1786

Massachusetts Bay Colony Grant

New York

N.H.

Massachusetts Bay

Boston Salem
Plymouth

Conn.

Penn.

R.I.
Nantucket
Martha's Vineyard

N.J.

Plymouth Council Grant

The Province of Massachusetts Bay was formed in 1691 by merging the Massachusetts Bay Colony, Plymouth Colony, Province of Maine, Nantucket, Martha's Vineyard, and Nova Scotia. Nova Scotia was split off in 1696. Previously New Hampshire had been part of the Massachusetts Bay Colony from 1641-1679 and 1688-1691.

- **Timeline**

  1565   Founding of St. Augustine
- 1607 Founding of Jamestown
  1620 Pilgrims Land at Plymouth Rock
- 1630 Founding of Massachusetts Bay Colony
- 1632 Founding of Acadian colony (now Nova Scotia)

To Create Graphics

for our class

- You may use existing graphics, scanned or photocopied. Cite source.

- Modify existing materials. Scan and color or take a table and turn it into a bar graphic. Cite: Use "Adapted from:" instead of "Source:". Graphic will also be cited in References.

Applying Design Principles to Graphics

- Color draws attention to information, but must be used wisely.

- Do not overdo color. Limit design to 2 to 3 colors.

- Let color emphasize. Highlight text or rules.

- Remember that 5% of your audience may be color blind.

Visually Impaired Readers

- Do not forget that some readers may be visually impaired and rely on text reader programs to read for them.

- Since a graphic should reinforce, not replace, a written text, make sure important information is not only found in a graphic.

Using Color Effectively

- Use color to create patterns. Think repetition.

- Use contrast effectively. Visibility depends on contrast. Size up when necessary.

- Take advantage of symbolic meaning of color. Pink for Susan Komen; green for environmentally friendly, etc.

Before deciding on a type of graphic, review the possibilities.

There are two basic types of graphics:

- Tables—list of data, usually numerical
- Figures—everything else, graphs, charts, maps, photos, line drawings, etc.
- Number separately.
- Figure 1. Map of England in 1607
- Table 1. Immigration Patterns into London

When it comes to graphics, lots of things work.

- Choose wisely, thinking of audience and purpose.
- Create a pattern and consistent style, even if you have to adapt graphics to make them fit.