



## NONFICTION EDITING 101

Instructor: Erin K. Brown

### LESSON #3

#### Graphics

##### Introduction

What do you think of when you hear or read the word *graphics*? For our purposes, tables, graphs, illustrations, photographs, and art all fall under the category of graphics.

The nonfiction manuscript you are working on might contain graphics, which may or may not be included with the manuscript in the editing stage. If they are, you will edit them. Therefore, the editor must understand their purpose and structure.

Graphics are expensive to produce and reproduce, so their use is sometimes limited. If you're working for a publisher, the PM (project manager) may decide if, when, or where to use graphics. Of course, if you discover that a large amount of text can be presented more clearly and succinctly in a table or graph, you are wise to suggest it.

Any graphics included with the manuscript will need to be copyedited for content, relevance, placement, spelling, punctuation, and numbering. The good news is that the editor does not design graphics.

##### Tables

Tables use columns and rows to present information sequentially. We read down columns and across rows, comparing one bit of information with another. Tables are best used when

- comparing individual values;
- presenting precise values; and
- applying multiple units of measures.

## Parts of a Table

Rows (horizontal) and columns (vertical) comprise tables, as do titles, heads, subheads, and data. Typically, two sets of variables are presented in tables.

Let's look at this basic table from [http://nces.ed.gov/statprog/2002/appc\\_tables.asp](http://nces.ed.gov/statprog/2002/appc_tables.asp):

SAMPLE TABLE				
Table 6. Number of public high school completers, by state: School year 1999–2000				
State	High school completers			
	Total	Diploma recipients	Other high school completers	High school equivalency recipients <sup>1</sup>
U.S.	—	2,546,102	41,638 <sup>2</sup>	—
Alabama	43,459	37,819	2,535	3,105
Alaska	7,968	6,615	53	1,300
Arizona	—	38,304	375	†
.				
.				
.				
Wyoming	—	6,462	27	—

—Not available.  
† Not applicable, no equivalency program.  
<sup>1</sup>Total other high school completers does not include New Hampshire, New Jersey, Washington, and Wisconsin.  
<sup>2</sup>Includes recipients age 19 or younger, except in Minnesota, where they are age 20 or younger.  
NOTE: High school completer categories may include students not included in 12th-grade membership.  
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data, "State Nonfiscal Survey of Public Elementary/Secondary Education," 2000–01.

TITLE

BOXHEAD:  
SPANNER HEAD

COLUMN HEADER

TABLE BODY  
(Universe data)

SPECIAL NOTES

REFERENCE NOTES

GENERAL NOTE

SOURCE NOTE

The table parts are labeled, but I want to point out that because this is from the GPO (Government Printing Office), the title is in sentence style rather than headline style. Some publishers use headline style for tables. My point? Whenever you edit for a publisher, know and follow its house style.

## Editing Tables

Use this checklist while editing tables. You may have to make several passes because you must look for several things.

- Make sure the table makes sense. It should stand on its own without any explanation from the text.
- Make sure the table is relevant to the text.
- Make sure the table content does not conflict with the text.
- Check for any inconsistencies between the text and table.
- Check that the table is near the relative text.
- Check that all tables within the manuscript are formatted consistently.
- Make sure the table number matches the reference in the text (i.e., "See Table 2.1" in the text refers correctly to the table labeled *Table 2.1*).

- Check that all spelling is correct.
- Make sure math content is correct. (You are not responsible for accuracy in statistics or numbers used, only that any math is correct. If it is not, bring it to the author's/PM's attention.)
- Check that all sources are correctly marked and formatted.
- Make sure the legend matches the variables.

If you discover that the content of a table can be clearly stated with the desired effect in a sentence or two, then certainly draw the author's/PM's attention to it. And if textual material could be better presented in a table, mark the text to be converted into a table and add your comment.

## Graphs

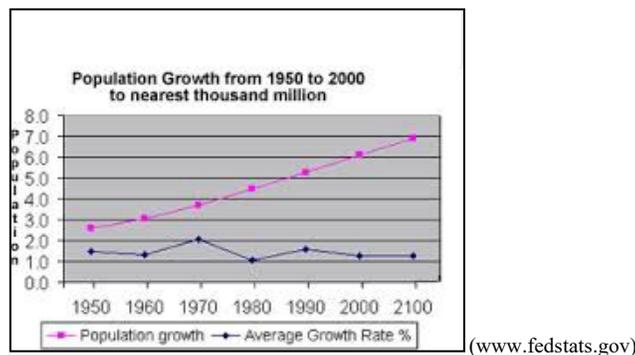
Graphs “speak” to the visual. Numbers are displayed as shapes or lines. A visual representation of the relationship between numbers is more readily understood and remembered than columns of figures. There are a variety of graphs:

- Line
- Bar
- Area
- Pie chart
- X-Y (Scatter) plot

Let's look at each of these types of graphs and learn when to use which graph.

### Line Graph

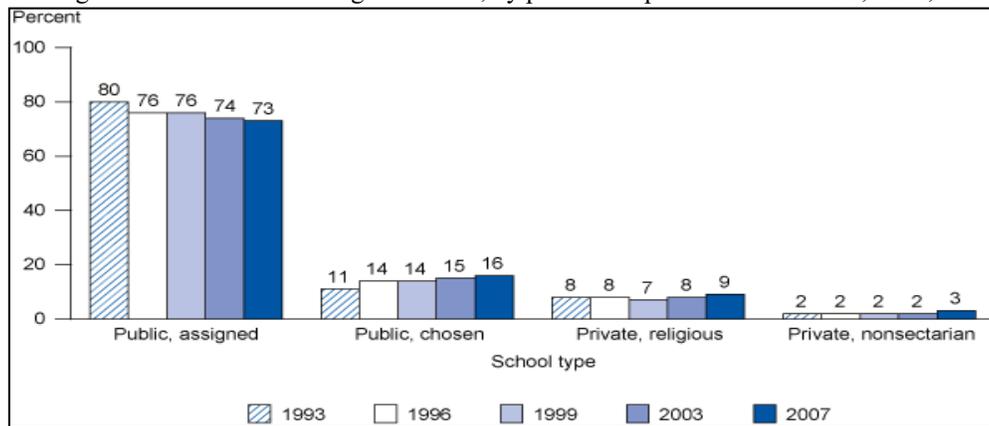
Use a line graph to track changes over time or to show small changes. Line graphs are preferable when comparing changes over the same time periods for more than one group.



### Bar Graph

Bar graphs compare things between different groups over a period of time. A bar graph can be used to measure large changes over time.

Figure 1. Percentage of students enrolled in grades 1–12, by public and private school: 1993, 1996, 1999, 2003, 2007

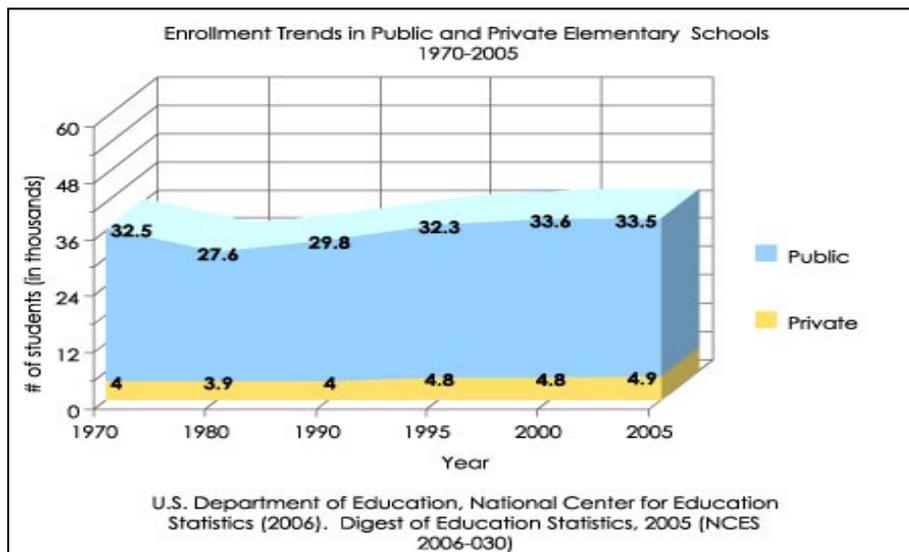


NOTE: Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, School Readiness Survey of the National Household Education Surveys Program (NHES), 1993; School Safety and Discipline Survey of the NHES, 1993; Parent and Family Involvement in Education Survey of the NHES, 1996; Parent Survey of the NHES, 1999; Parent and Family Involvement in Education Survey of the NHES, 2003; and Parent and Family Involvement in Education Survey of the NHES, 2007.

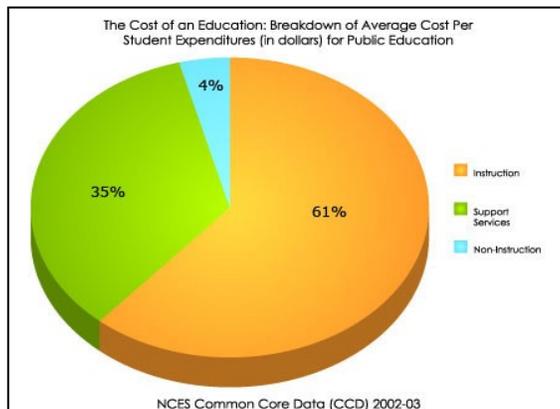
### Area Graph

Similar to line graphs, area graphs are suitable when showing changes in two or more related groups that comprise one category. (See below.)



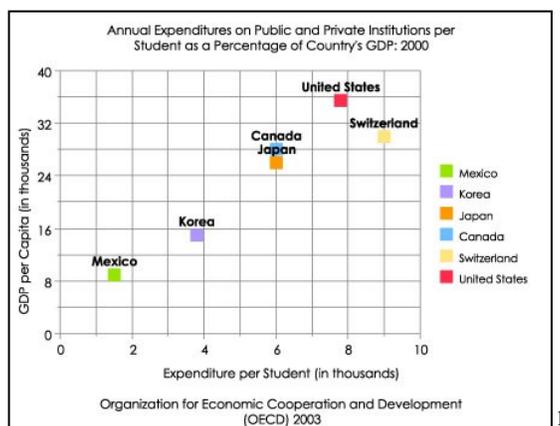
### Pie Charts

Pie charts show how the parts relate to the whole, or percentages of the whole, at a point in time. No changes over time are tracked with pie charts.



### X-Y (Scatter) Plots

This graph is less commonly used. It demonstrates the relationship between two things—how one event affects another. If both variables increase at the same time, they have a positive relationship. If one event (variable) increases while the other decreases, they have a negative relationship. If no pattern is discerned, the variables have no relationship.



### Editing Graphs

Follow the same steps outlined in “Editing Tables” above.

## Illustrations, Photographs, and Art



Sunset behind Bitterroot Mountains, Montana  
Photograph by author

Whenever illustrations, photographs, art, maps, drawings, etc., are included with the manuscript, the editor treats them similarly to graphs and tables. They should each have a caption, which is to be edited for the following:

- Mechanical style (spelling, punctuation, capitalization)
- Any text that appears within the art
- Relevance to the art and that it supplies necessary information for reader understanding
- Credit line<sup>2</sup>

You'll notice the credit line of the above photograph says "Photograph by author." If someone else wanted to use this photograph, they would have to get written permission from me to use it, and the credit line would say: Reproduced by permission from Erin K. Brown. If the picture came from a book or internet source, that information must be included and formatted correctly (more on documentation in Lesson 4).

As a freelance editor, I've never had to do much with art (photographs, maps, drawings, etc.) other than what I've listed in the bullet points above. I've worked on manuscripts that will eventually contain art, but none were included with the manuscript at the editing stage. The publisher's art/design department handles the manuscript's art. The PM, of course, oversees the manuscript's progress throughout all steps to publication. Editing is one of the earlier steps in the publication process. The final edit of art falls to the proofreader, who steps in toward the end of production. (See *CMOS* 2.2)

With the surge in self-publishing, please be aware that including graphics in an e-book increases the file size, which is likely to increase the cost of uploading it to online booksellers. It is the author's responsibility to format them:

- [https://kdp.amazon.com/en\\_US/help/topic/G200645710](https://kdp.amazon.com/en_US/help/topic/G200645710)
- [https://kdp.amazon.com/en\\_US/help/topic/G200730380](https://kdp.amazon.com/en_US/help/topic/G200730380)

Following is an example of an illustration from a book. It has no caption. The only way to understand it is to read the accompanying text.

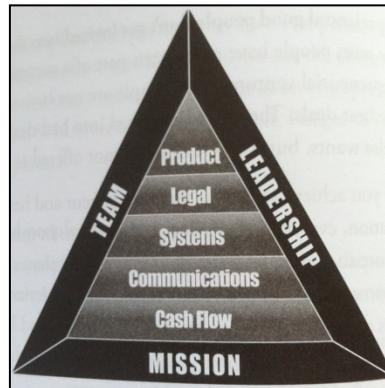


Figure 3.1. From *Midas Touch* by Donald J. Trump and Robert T. Kiyosaki (Plata Publishing, 2011) and is a registered trademark of CASHFLOW Technologies, Inc.

A caption would not have helped the reader understand this illustration because it is simply a visual representation of eight integrated business systems that required several pages of text to explain. Without the illustration, the authors would have needed to write many more words of explanation of how these systems relate to each other, and the readers would then have to work harder to interpret the authors' intent. This illustration, sans caption, coupled with minimal text helps readers easily grasp the authors' message.

One of the first books I edited was on financial management. The manuscript began with the concept that financial management encompasses all of life: marriage, family, home, and more. The author used several "pillars" in his program. I suggested he find a picture or draw an illustration of a building with columns that effectively represented his vision of these concepts that together create solid financial management. With the visual, we were able to cut unnecessary explanations. Dare I use a cliché? *A picture is worth a thousand words.*

It is the author's responsibility to supply all high-quality graphics. PMs have the final say as to what will be included in the book.

I encourage you to read these articles discussing the overview of art and graphs in publishing. Note that these are directed to authors who intend to submit their manuscripts to particular publishing houses. Though you don't need to know how art and graphs are processed for reproduction, it's smart to have a grasp on publishers' expectations so you can pass the information on to your clients.

- <http://www.press.uchicago.edu/infoServices/prep-art.html>
- <http://www.wiley.com/legacy/authors/guidelines/stmguides/2frames.htm>

## Applying Numbering to Graphics

Every graph, table, photograph, etc., receives an identifying number so that it can be referenced in the text. (For example: See figure 1.) If the manuscript doesn't contain many graphics, it's okay to number them sequentially from the first one to the last one of the book.

If, however, the text contains lots of graphics, you should use the double numeration system. Each graphic is assigned a number that coincides with the chapter number, followed by a period then another number. If you see "figure 4.6" in the text, it means that this is chapter four and the sixth figure in the chapter.

If the manuscript contains several types of graphics, you can further divide them and label them table 2.1, illustration 3.2, figure 5.4, and the like.

## Summary

In this lesson, we discussed graphics and learned the value of putting large amounts of material into a visual representation of the facts. We learned that tables and graphs convey numerical data in a systematic format that helps readers quickly interpret the facts without having to rely on text.

Unless you specialize in a nonfiction field other than the general market, you may not encounter many graphics. Even if the manuscript will contain graphics, you may never see them because the publishing company's art/design department is working with the author on them while you are editing the manuscript.

From this lesson and what you learned in the internet articles, as well as what you will learn from the assigned *CMOS* readings (below), you can inform your authors as to what publishers require to include art in their manuscripts.

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## NOTES

1. <http://nces.ed.gov>
2. Sometimes credit lines appear on the copyright page.

\* \* \*

## **LESSON #3 ASSIGNMENTS**

### **Assignment #1**

Study these sections of *CMOS*:

- Tables: 3.47–88; 8.157–167.
- Charts: 3.41–46.
- Illustrations, photographs, art: 3.15–40.
- Numbering: 3.8–14.

### **Assignment #2**

What graph (X-Y, Bar, Line, Area, Pie) best represents the following data? Explain your choice.

- a. stock market ups and downs
- b. power usage by month
- c. percentage of a budget by category
- d. number of high school graduates over several years
- e. relationship between the number of murders and the number of robberies at the same time and in the same place
- f. a survey in which people rank something as very poor, poor, fair, good, very good
- g. gross domestic product by year
- h. slugging history of MLB
- i. tracking blood pressure

### **Assignment #3**

Assume the following pictures (on the next page) are part of the same manuscript. The author has placed them on the appropriate page in this way. Edit them.



Seagulls playing tag



Let's Ride!



California windfarm