

The blindfold line-graph activity by Tim Barton

Age: Adults
Level: Pre-intermediate +
Time: 20-30 minutes
Objectives: To review describing graphs and product performance
Key skills: Speaking
Materials: Simple line graphs (see full explanation below); a blindfold (optional; otherwise, students can simply close their eyes)

Preparation

You will be splitting your class into teams (even numbers of students are best) and each member of a team will need one copy of a different graph to describe during the game. So, for example, in a class of eight, you could split the students into two teams of four. You would then need four different graphs, two copies of each.

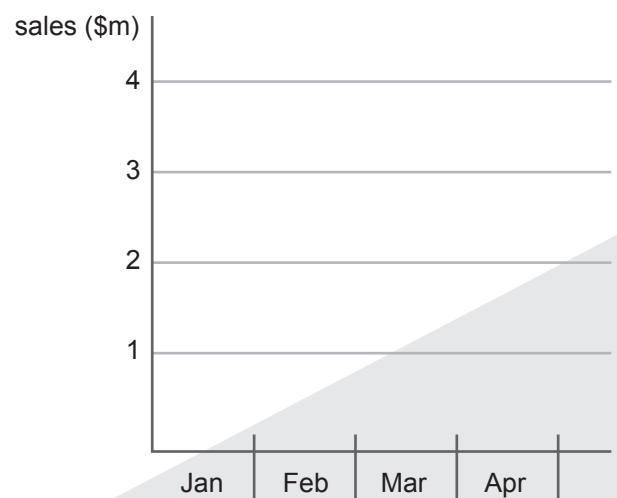
There are two graphs on the worksheet for you to use. You will need to create or find any additional graphs yourself. For lower level groups, you will also need to provide a summary of each graph, like the ones on the worksheet. With higher level groups, you might want to omit the summaries and challenge students to describe the graphs themselves during the game. The graphs should ideally show a short period of company or product performance (about four months).

Procedure

- The level of this lesson is adaptable to your students' abilities. Review the following language from the worksheet, if necessary:
 - the phrases *fell* or *rose sharply / slightly / steadily* and *remained constant* (The students will have to use these phrases in the game, in sentences such as 'In January, sales rose slightly to just under \$2 million, while, in February, they remained constant.')
 - the prepositions *by*, *to* and *at*, which can indicate movement of sales performance
- Assign the students to teams. Even numbers are best but not essential. In each team, give graph A with its summary to the first student, graph B

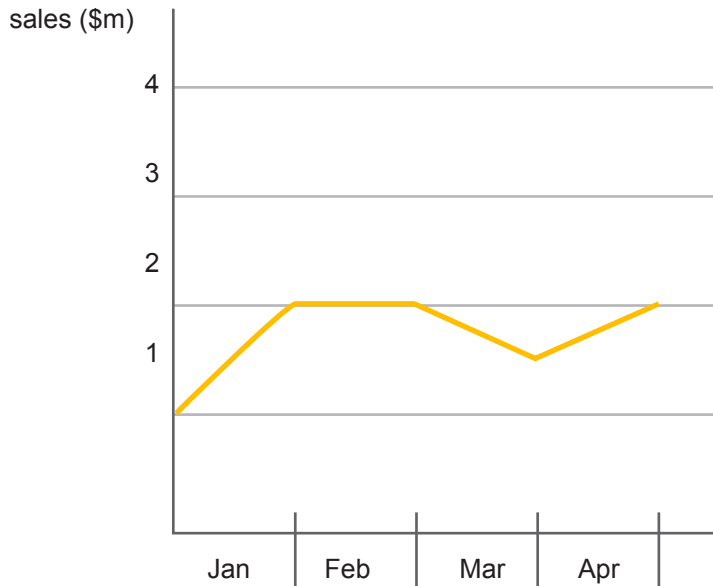
with its summary to the second student and so on. Each member must keep their graph hidden from the other members of the group so that the actual competition is more challenging and has an element of surprise.

- Draw onto the board one empty graph per team of students, like the one below. The graphs should include monetary values and months, with grid lines or at least clear markings.



- Have one student from each team approach their graph, take chalk or a marker and close their eyes. Now, have the students with graph A in each group describe their graph. With lower level groups, have students just read out the summary and offer any other guidance their teammate may need. Challenge higher level groups by getting them to describe the graph themselves. The students are each describing the *same* graph so expect it to get noisy! Using complete sentences, the students must include the periods (months) and monetary values.
- Once finished, the students drawing can open their eyes and check their work. The best graphs can be awarded points or this activity can simply be done for fun! Then, it's the turn of the next student. Continue until all the students have had a turn at describing and drawing.

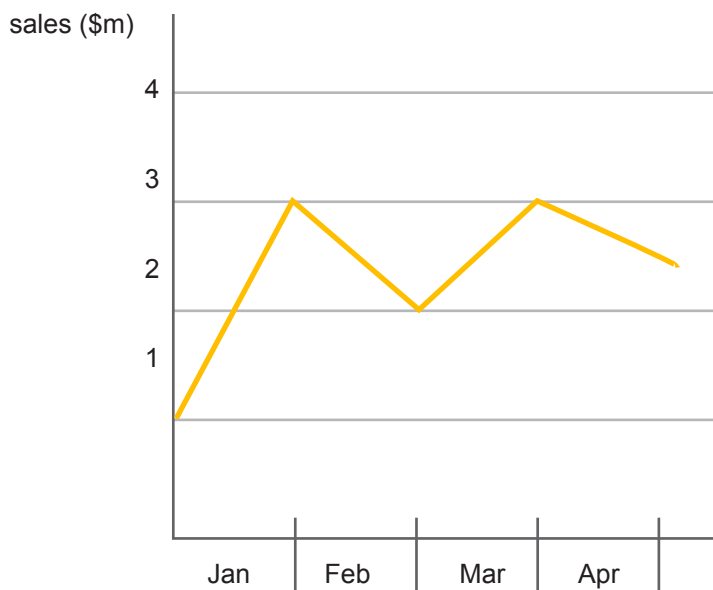
Graph A



Summary – graph A

In January, **sales rose steadily by** \$1 million, while in February they **remained constant at** \$2 million. However, in March sales **fell slightly by** about \$0.5 million and then **rose slightly** in April **to** \$2 million.

Graph B



Summary – graph B

In January, sales **rose sharply by** \$2 million, while in February they **fell steadily to** \$2 million. However, in March, sales **rose steadily by** \$1 million. In April, they **fell slightly to** \$2.5 million.