Kids InfoBits Toolbox - Creating a Visual Representation

The *Kids InfoBits Toolbox* tip sheets are designed to help young researchers prepare a written report. This document will explain **what a visual representation of data is and how to create one**.

> Need more help with your report? Visit http://solutions.cengage.com/gale-training/materials/tip-sheets/ for more **Kids InfoBits Toolbox Tip Sheets**!

When you read a book, a magazine article, or an encyclopedia entry, there are almost always pictures to go along with the story. Pictures help you to understand what the article is all about. When you write a report, you probably are not going to draw pictures to go along with it. But, there are things that you can add to your report that make it easier to explain information and add interest for the reader.

The best way to show your information is in the form of a graph. There are many different types of graphs. You have probably learned about some of them in math or while reading a social studies or science book. The graphs you are most likely to use in a report are bar graphs or pie charts.

Bar graphs are used to show the amount of items and types of items. Pie charts are best used to show percentages. Both are easy to make using a computer. All you need is the data or information.

Let's pretend that you are writing a report on cats. During your research, you find out that more people in the United States own cats than any other type of pet. You might wonder if this were true for the students in your class. You could ask your class members if they had pets and what kind of pets they owned. Let's make up some information to put into a graph.
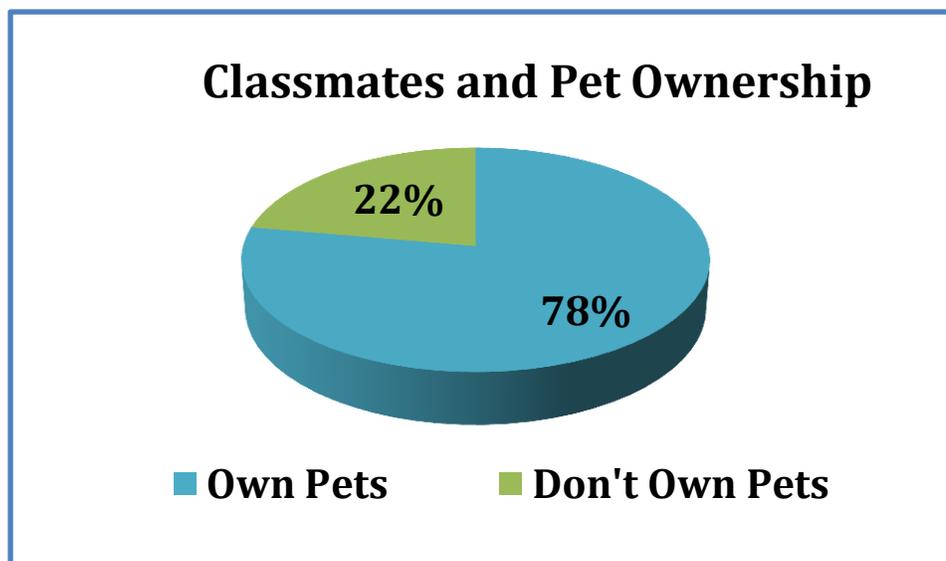
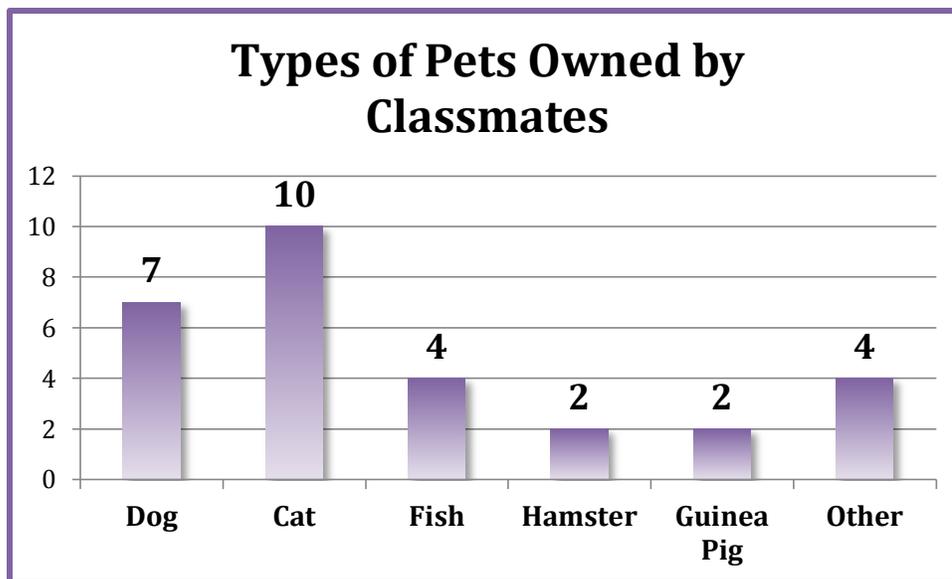| Number of classmates who own pets	Number of classmates who do not own pets
21	**6**

This information is easy to show in a graph. The percentage of pets owned by classmates is quick to figure out. The information shows that 21 students have pets and 6 do not. That means there are 27 students in the class. Another way of saying 21 out of 27 have pets is to use a percentage. You can figure out the percentage by dividing 21 by 27. The result is 77%. You can figure out how many don't have pets the same way. 6 divided by 27 is 22%.

Classmates and Pet Ownership

22%

78%

■ **Own Pets**   ■ **Don't Own Pets**

Type of Pet	Number of classmates who own that pet
Dog	7
Cat	10
Fish	4
Hamster	2
Guinea Pig	2
Other	4

You can most easily graph the information about the number and type of pets owned by your classmates. The best graph to show this kind of information is a bar graph.

Types of Pets Owned by Classmates

Pet	Count
Dog	7
Cat	10
Fish	4
Hamster	2
Guinea Pig	2
Other	4

Making the actual graph is easy if you are using a computer with Excel. If you have never made a graph, use the Help icon to get you started. If you are not using a computer, graphs can be hand drawn.

You can download a worksheet to help you make visual representations of data here:
http://assets.cengage.com/training/CreateVisualRepWksht.pdf

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