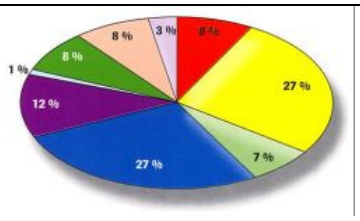
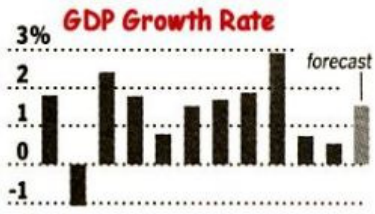
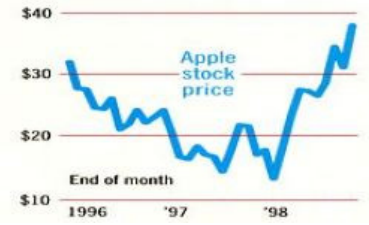
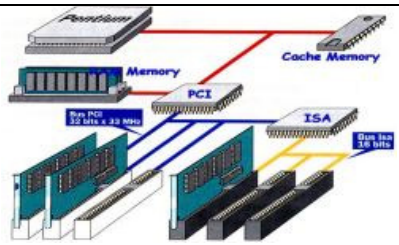
HOW TO TALK ABOUT A VISUAL AID

1. Choosing the right visual aid

A **flow chart** is a diagram showing the progress of material through the ***steps*** (*étapes*) of a manufacturing ***process*** (*processus*) or the succession of operations in a complex activity	A **pie chart** displays the ***size*** (*taille*) of each part as a percentage of a ***whole*** (*un tout*).	A (vertical or horizontal) **bar chart** is used to compare ***unlike*** (*different*) items
		
A **line chart** depicts changes over a period of time, showing data and trends	A **table** is a convenient way to show large amount of ***data*** (*données, informations*) in a small space	A **diagram** is a drawing showing arrangements and situations, such as ***networks*** *(réseaux)*, distribution, fluctuation ...
		

2. Presenting a graph

Introduction	Topic	Circumstances
This graph **shows** ...	the results of our products ...	over 10 years.
The diagram **outlines** ...	rates of economic growth ...	between 1990 and 1996.
This table **lists** ...	the top ten agencies ...	in the industrial world.
This pie chart **represents**	the company's turnover ...	for this year in our sector.
This line chart **depicts** ...	the changes in sales ...	over the past year.
This chart **breaks down** (*ventile*) ...	the sales of each salesman ...	during the past ten weeks.

3. The four basic trends (*tendances*) are :

- upward movement : ↗
- downward movement : ↘
- no movement : ➔
- change in direction : ↘ or ➔

4. Indicating upward movement : ↗

Verbs		Nouns
Transitive	**Intransitive**	
(to) increase	(to) increase	(an) increase
(to) raise	(to) rise (rose, risen)	(a) raise (US), a rise (UK)
(to) push/put/step up	(to) go/be up	(an) upswing
	(to) grow	(a) growth
(to) extend, (to) expand	(to) extend, (to) expand	(an) extension, expansion
	(to) progress	(a) progression
	(to) boom/soar/climb	(a) boom
	(to) jump, (to) skyrocket	(a) jump
	(to) reach a peak, (to) peak	(a) peak
	(to) reach an all-time high	

5. Indicating downward movement : ↘

Verbs		Nouns
Transitive	**Intransitive**	
(to) decrease	(to) decrease	(a) decrease
(to) cut, (to) reduce		(a) cut, (a) reduction
	(to) fall (off) (fall, fell, fallen)	(a) fall
	(to) plunge, to plummet	(a) plunge
	(to) drop (off)	(a) drop
	(to) go down	(a) downswing
	(to) decline	(a) decline
	(to) collapse	(a) collapse (dramatic fall)
	(to) slump, (to) go bust	(a) slump
	(to) bottom out	

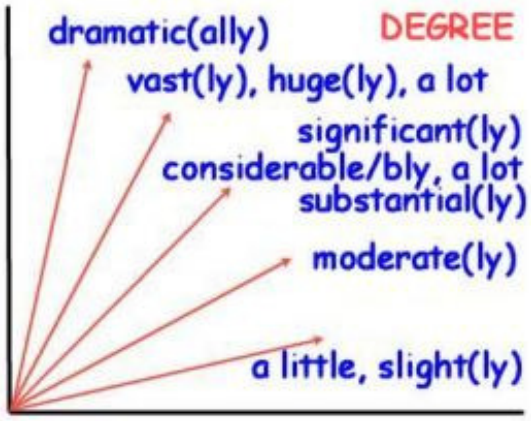
6. Indicating no movement : →

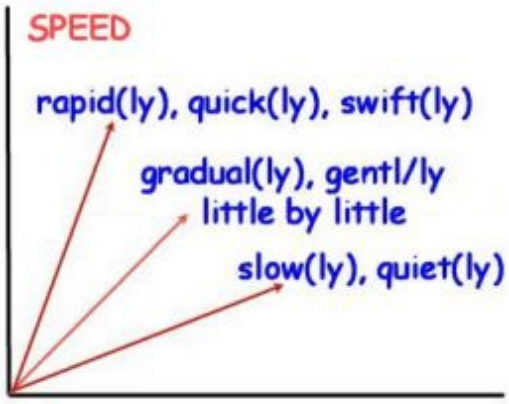
Verbs		Nouns
Transitive	**Intransitive**	
(to) keep ... stable	(to) remain stable	
(to) hold ... constant	(to) stay constant	
(to) stabilize	(to) stabilize	stability

7. Indicating a change of direction : ↘ or ← ...

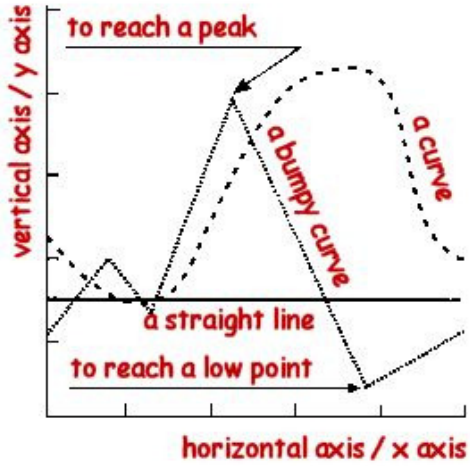
Verbs		Nouns
Transitive	**Intransitive**	
(to) level off	(to) level off/out, to flatten out	(a) levelling-off
	(to) stop falling/rising	(a) change
(to) stand at	(to) remain steady	
	(to) stop falling and start rising	
	(to) stop rising and start falling	

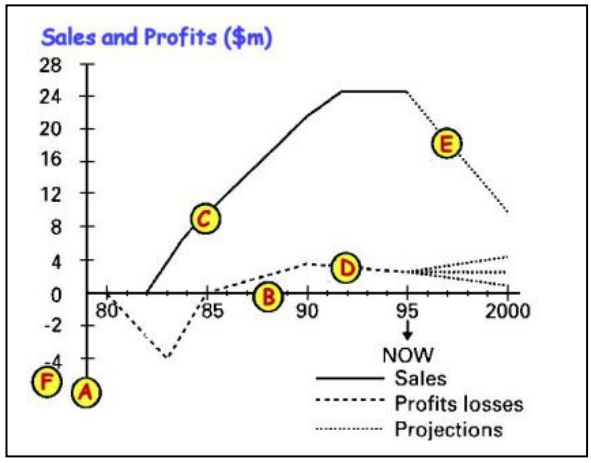
8. Indicating the degree or the speed of change





9. Describing the elements of a graph



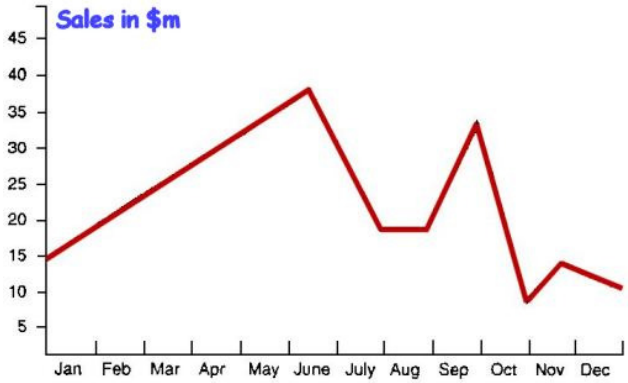


Look at the graph and write the appropriate letters in front of each definition :

- ❍ : the horizontal axis (or the x axis)
- ❍ : the vertical axis (or the y axis)
- ❍ : the scale
- ❍ : a solid line
- ❍ : a broken line
- ❍ : a dotted line

10. Analysing an example

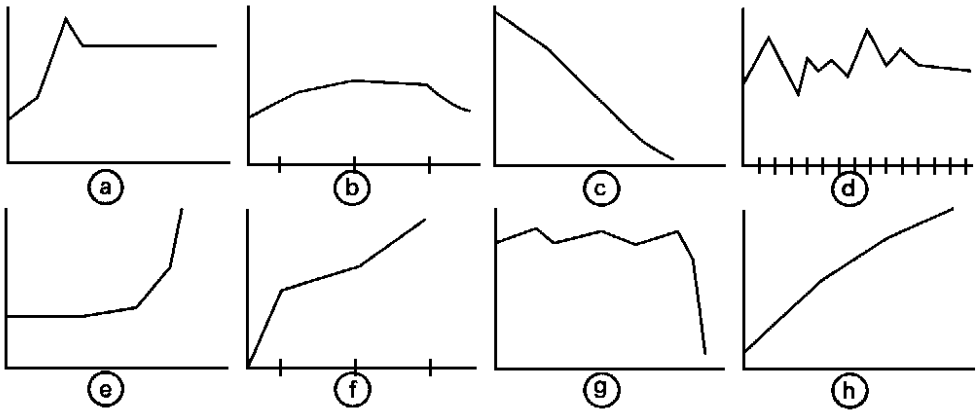
The x axis of this graph shows the twelve months of the past year while our sales in millions of dollars appear on the y axis. It may be seen clearly that sales rose steadily in the first half of the year (from January to May) and reached their peak in June. Then they dropped off in July and levelled out in August. After rising sharply during September, they suffered a **dramatic** (*spectaculaire*) fall in October but then made a **significant** (*sensible*) **recovery** (*redressement*) in November. However, the year ended with a slight downturn.



DESCRIBING GRAPHS AND TRENDS (EXERCISES 1)

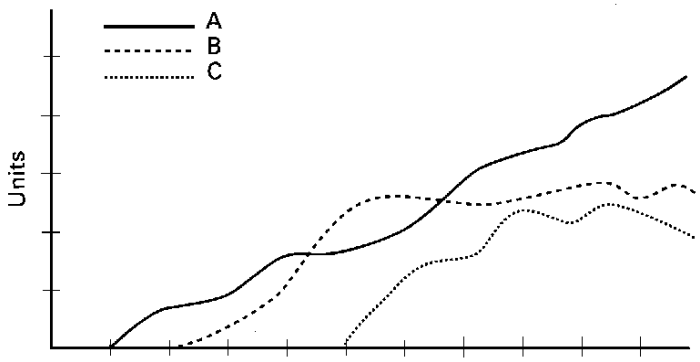
NAME : FORM : DATE :

1.Match each sentence below with one of the following graphs



1. ❍ The investment level rose suddenly.
2. ❍ The sales of our products fell slightly in the final quarter.
3. ❍ The Research and Development budget has stabilized over the past few years.
4. ❍ At the end of the first year, sales stood at 50 per cent of the present level.
5. ❍ The price reached a peak before falling a little and then maintaining the same level.
6. ❍ There has been a steady increase in costs over several years.
7. ❍ The sudden collapse in share prices has surprised everyone.
8. ❍ The value of the shares has shown a steady decline.

2. Look at the graph below, then complete the sentences.



1. The ..... compares three products : A, B and C.
2. The ..... shows time over ten years while the ..... shows sales in number of units.
3. As you can see, product A is represented by the .....
4. The performance of Product B is shown by the .....
5. And a ..... has been used to show the results of Product C.
6. Clearly, ... is the most successful product .....
7. Sales of Product B ..... in recent years while sales of Product C .....
8. On the contrary, product A has shown a .....

DESCRIBING GRAPHS AND TRENDS (EXERCISES 2)

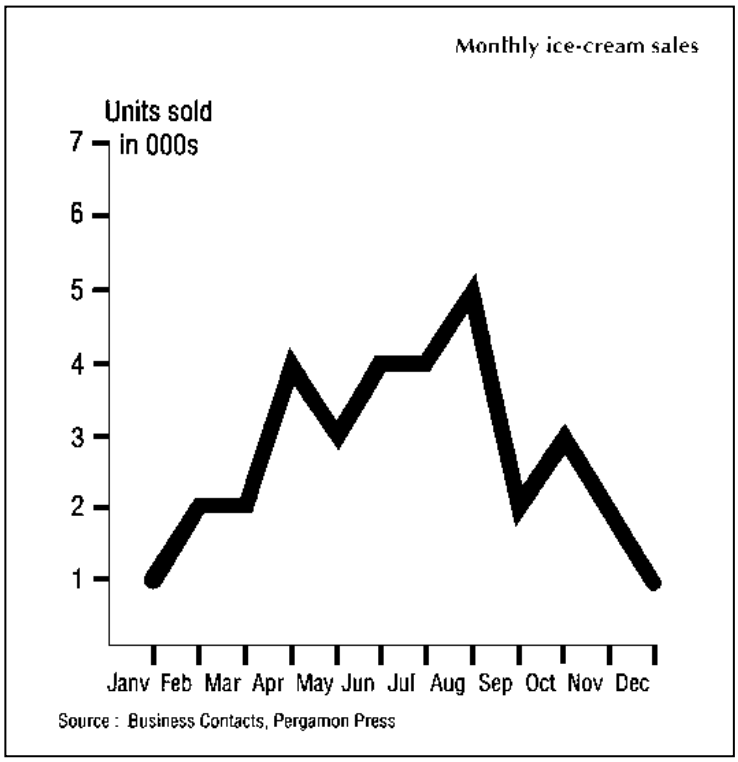
NAME : FORM : DATE :

3. Read the following text and draw the corresponding graph on the right.

The graph opposite covers the years 1976 to 1995. It shows that the number of television viewing hours rose steadily and steeply during that period in the US, starting at just under 5 hours a day to reach more than 7 hours in 1995. There was a slight increase in 1982 and sharper falls in 1986 and 1991. The next decrease, in 1994, is **hardly** (*à peine*) significant. Though we do not have the latest figures, it is unlikely that the trend will have reversed.

4. Comment on the graph below using and organising the following expressions :

Sales rose / went up /
increased / climbed ...
+ adverb (slowly / steadily /
rapidly / gradually ...)
Sales stood at ...
Sales peaked / peaked out
Sales levelled out / flattened out
Sales bottomed out
This was due to ...
This was the result of ...
This caused ...
This led to ...

Avoid repetitions !

Conclude by saying whether this graph is typical or not; Justify your answer.