



Dear Data

Purpose of Dear Data

1. **Develop understanding of how to collect data** (deciding parameters, categories, etc)
2. **Practice with categorizing and encoding** (where are the connections? How can you show those connections?)
3. **Practice giving instructions on decoding** (develop a key and explain how to read your visual)
4. **Learn to tell a story with data and share insights.**

Data Collecting: One Sitting

- **your body** (how do you feel about different body parts, parts that have been injured, parts most grateful for, etc)
- **birthdays** (birthdays you know off-hand and birthdays you SHOULD know off-hand, date, category of person)
- **how music makes you feel** (listen to different genres, and record emotion every 15 seconds of the song...note your favorite part)
- **your phone apps** (genres, how often you use it, favorites, most embarrassing to tell others about)
- **your friends** (when you met them, last saw them, male/female, things you talk about, type of friend)
- **your books** (genre, physical vs digital, if you've actually read it, gift, like/disliked)
- **your camera roll** (timespan, location of photo, type of photo - selfie, group photo, landscape, documentation, if it's worth keeping)
- **your closet** (wear regularly, solid/striped/patterned, type of garment)
- **your past** (define eras in 5 year segments, important people, life-changing moments...)
- **sounds around you** (set timer for defined time - like 20 mins, record sounds, categorize by natural/mechanical...)
- **your emails** (promotional, spam, social notification, work, school...)

Data Collecting: One Day

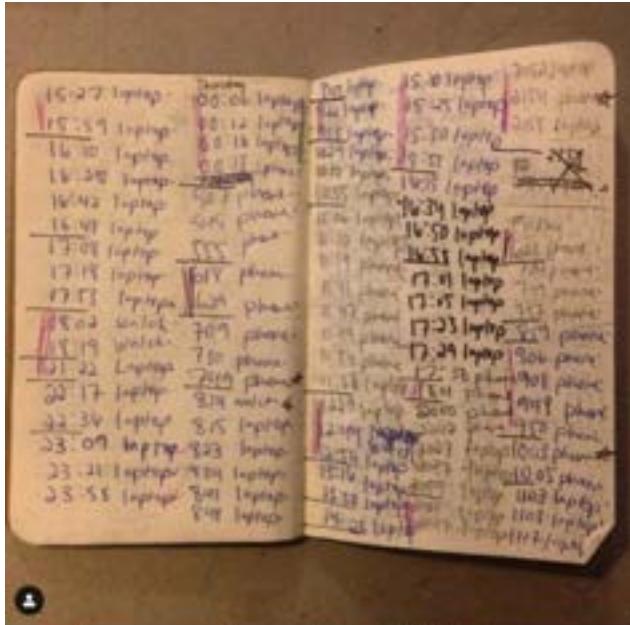
- **your inbox** (who mail is from, respond, delete, cc'd others, waiting for response...)
- **your communications** (texts, emails, calls, social media, etc)
- **what you listen to** (podcast, Netflix, music, work call, radio in car...)
- **Smiles, swears, saying thank you** (feeling at the time, who was it to...)

Data Collecting: Multiple Days (5-7)

- distractions
- mindfulness
- envy
- complaints
- quarantine life/social distance
- emotions
- worries
- weather mood
- balancing your schedule
- what you eat
- exercise and/or healthy habits (steps, sleep, water, etc)

How to Collect Data

- Paper/notebook
- Your phone's calendar
- Note-taking apps
- Taking photos



Encoding

- **Color variation**
 - Indicate groups or categories
 - Categorical, sequential, diverging
- **Symbol variation**
 - Indicate different instances (and extra sub-instances)
 - Start simple: squares, circles, triangles and lines offer tons of opportunity for encoding
- **Thickness and length**
 - Show increasing durations or intensities
- **Left and right**
 - Before and after



Progress in two directions to represent values and intensities that move in directions away from central value.

diverging colors



Progress in one direction and indicate increasing values and intensities

sequential colors



Categories that are very different from each other

qualitative colors

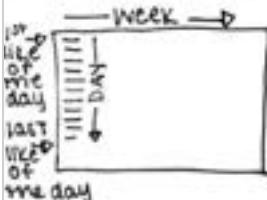
DEAR DATA - WEEK 1

a week of social media

WHAT I DID:

Throughout the week, I tracked each and every post on Instagram in chronological order from Monday to Sunday.

HOW TO READ IT:



Different Categories:

LETTERING

FRIENDS

MEME

FOOD

INFLUENCER

VIDEO

Different Symbols:

— Line through means I saved the post

— — — — — If post was from an influencer or friend

||||||| Post was of them

ooooo Post was of scenery or other object



DEAR DATA

in a week of text messages!

WHAT I DID:

Throughout the week, I tracked the texts sent to others.

HOW TO READ:

TO whom:

- my mom
- my boyfriend
- Kelsey (my bff)
- roommate group chat
- friend
- acquaintance (don't text often)

what

▲ = greeting

△ = goodbye

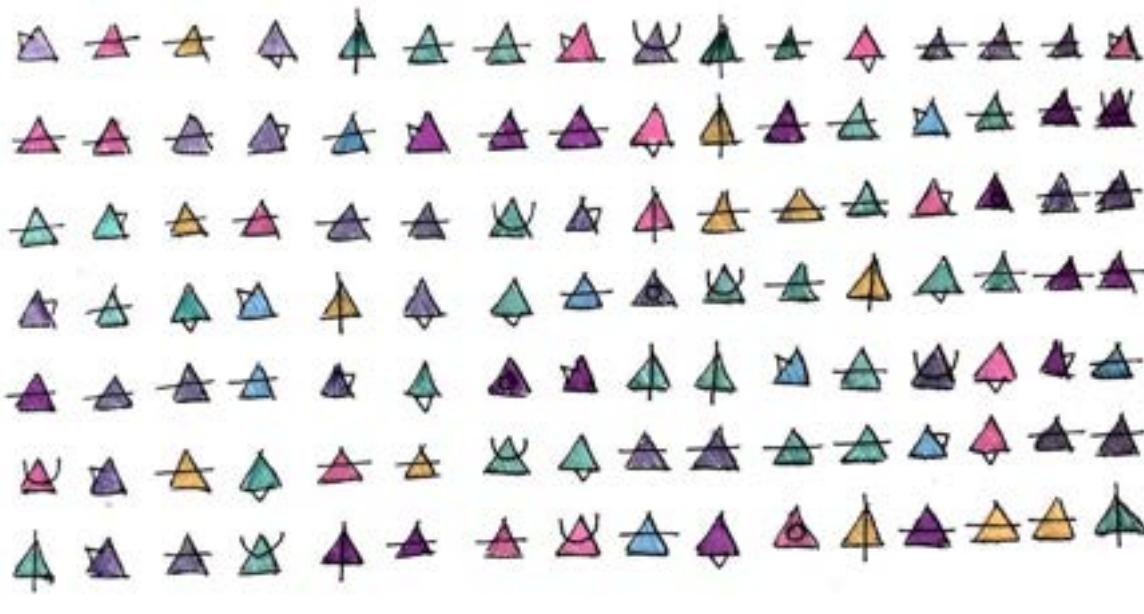
△ = question

△ = respond to them

▽ = photo/attachment

▽ = school/work

△ = making plans



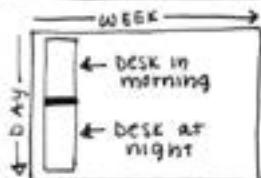
DEAR DATA

a week of geospatial data
(aka all the random stuff on my desk)

WHAT I DID:

Throughout the week, I tracked what items were on my desk each morning before I left for class, and before bed.

HOW TO READ IT:



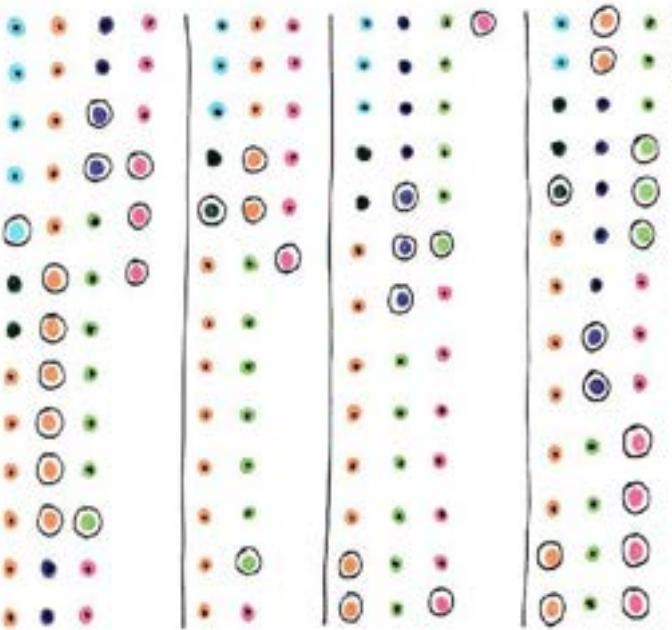
Things on my desk:

makeup
keys
Airpods
pens
bullet journal
straightener
Random papers

yarn
nail polish
Chapstick
mug
water bottle
IPad
laptop
wallet

Symbols:

X = put away after tracking
● = left there (lazy)
■ = took with me
(only relevant in the morning)



DEAR DATA

a week of community news!

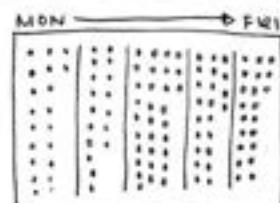
WHAT I DID:

Throughout the week I tracked WFSB's Facebook page to see what types of stories they were posting each day.

I categorized each post into 6 categories → weather, traffic, crime, politics, health, and entertainment.

I also tracked whether or not I read the story.

HOW TO READ IT:



Categories:

weather

traffic

crime

politics

health

entertainment

Symbols:

● = didn't read article

○ = read article

••••• MY BOOKS

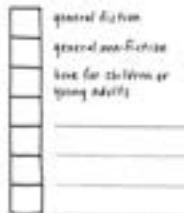
What does your last sentence reveal about you?

Take stock of your book collection (both digital and physical), making notes if needed. List, organise and draw your books on the page.

2. Books are organized and stored on the "bookshelf" in the center of your chart.



7. Cost + the book's genre



C. **BLACK** DEFINING:



3. SHAPE: whether the book is physical



4. Fill the books
you're actually reading.



6. ANNOTATE your drawing with additional information that's important to you!



data collected on _____

#08 WHAT MY CAMERA SEES

What do you normally train your camera on?

open the photo
album on your
phone and/or
computer



Choose a time
period you want
to sorting (choose
now for 360 photos),
and add your date
to the drawing.



Each photo is represented
by a **Color** and a **Shape**.



1. Color = the location
of the photo



2. The Shape = the type
of photo you took



3. Connect multiple photos
taken at the same time.

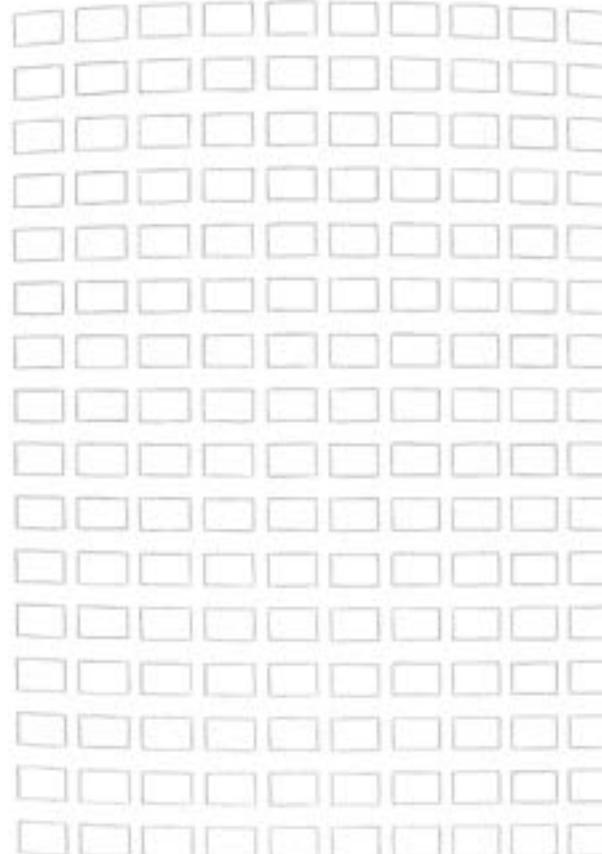


4. Underline the photo actually
worth keeping for the future.

5. Add additional notes
in the margin near
the photo.

6. Go Holiday in Greece

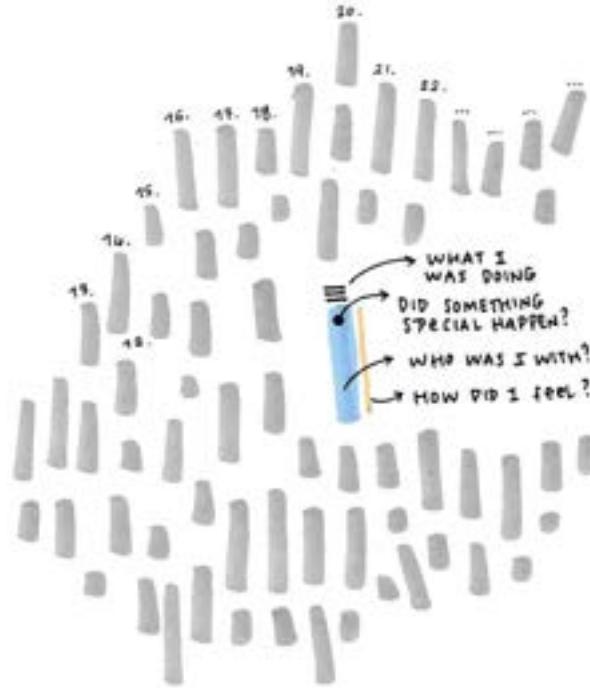
Photos were taken from _____ to _____.



IT IS ONLY
BY ADDING
**PERSONAL
CONTEXT**
THAT YOU GET
CLOSER TO REAL
MEANING



AS WE BEGIN COLLECTING DATA
ABOUT OURSELVES, IT'S CRUCIAL
TO ADD CONTEXT AND DETAIL TO
OUR LOGS IN ORDER TO TURN THE
STORY AND MAKE IT PERSONAL, LEARN
MORE ABOUT INDIVIDUALS, AND SNAP
FIRMER VIVID HISTORIES.

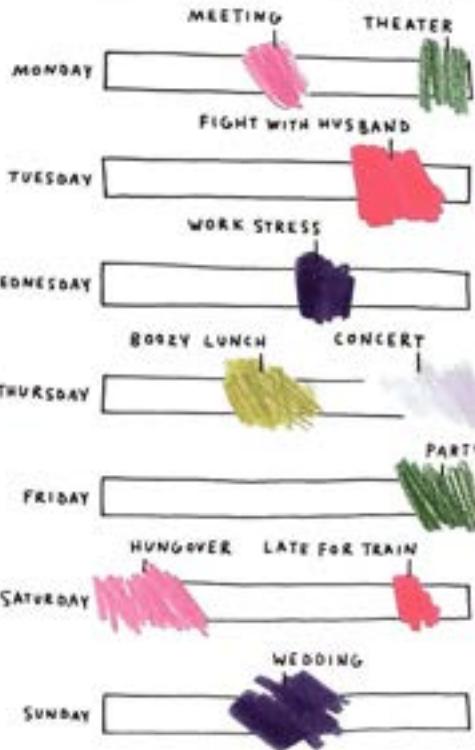


Data are just numbers.
Interpretation and context
are what create meaning.

MOMENTS YOU
DON'T NOTICE
ARE AS TELLING AS
THOSE YOU DO.

Looking closely at the reasons for "data voids" in your life is another way to learn more about yourself.

A WEEK OF DATA VOIDS



#22 WHAT I EAT

Use your phone's camera to take a photo of everything you eat or drink for one week (including water).



Refer to these photos at the end of the week (or end of each day) when drawing, according to the rules below.



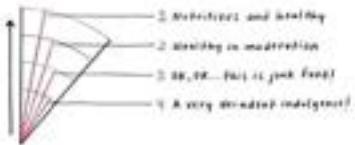
1. LINES = each item of food and drink

Lines are drawn in the same place where they were eaten.



ONE DAY OF MEALS

2. Line LENGTH represents how nutritious the food is {Be honest!}



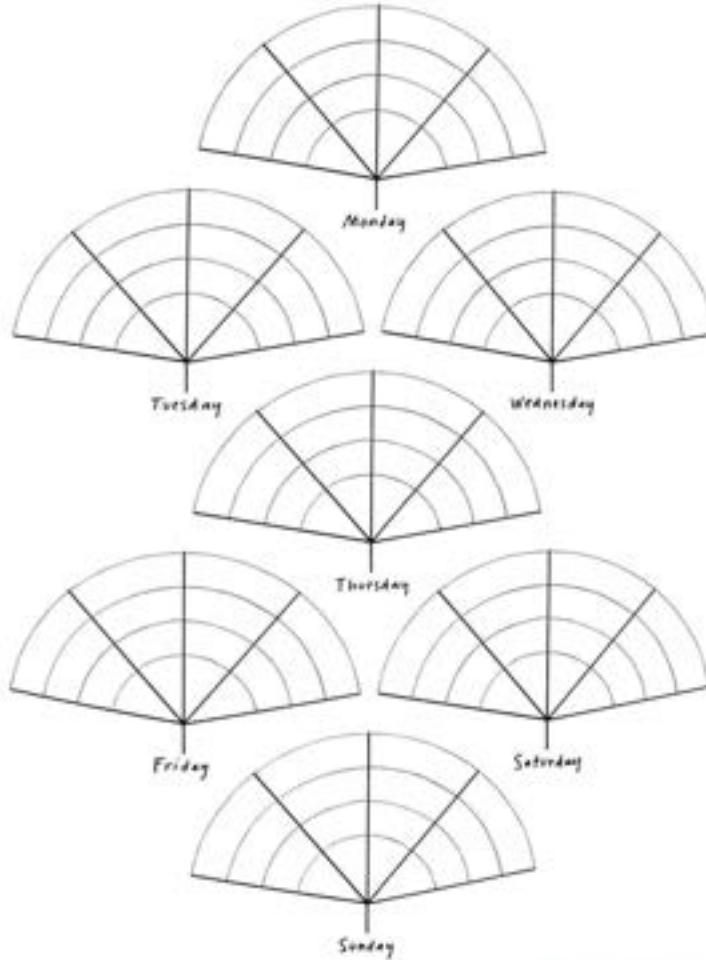
3. Line COLOR and TEXTURE = the type of food consumed



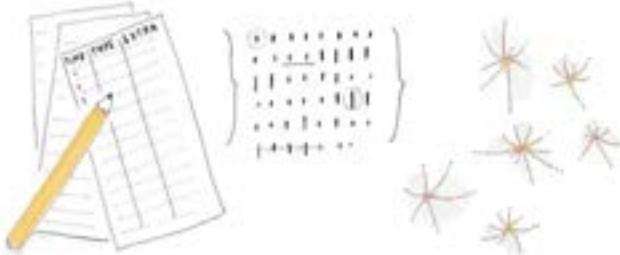
4. DOT at the end of the line = highly processed food with a long list of ingredients



Data collected from _____ to _____



SEE THE WORLD AS A DATA COLLECTOR



DATA IS EVERYWHERE AND DATA LIVES,
IT'S JUST A MATTER OF LEARNING HOW TO
RESPONSE TO IT.

BEGIN WITH A QUESTION

BEGIN WITH A PRIMARY QUESTION:
WHAT DO YOU WANT TO KNOW AND EXPLORE?
THEN EXPAND THE PACE (AND SIZE) OF EXPLORE
DEPTHS BY ADDING ADDITIONAL QUALITY,
CONTINGENT QUESTIONS.



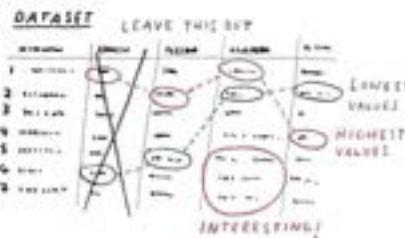
GATHER THE DATA

Collect your data however you choose,
all the while being immediate, thoughtful,
and considerate in your data-gathering.



SPEND TIME WITH DATA

Before starting to visualize, always analyze
and spend time with your data, searching for
patterns and trying to understand it at
a deeper level.



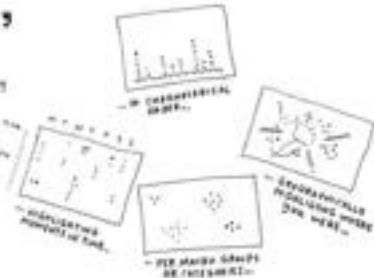
ORGANIZE AND CATEGORIZE

Often it's good to simplify the data by
grouping it into larger categories based
on what will best communicate the story.



FIND THE MAIN STOPS

[STARTING WITH PAPER]
DISCERN IN THE DATA,
DECIDE WHAT THE MAIN STOPS
ARE FOR THE DRAWING
FINDING THE DATA'S STORY
HIDES BEHIND THE LIGHT
ON A DATA DRAWING



GET VISUALLY INSPIRED

LEAVE YOURSELF IN IMAGINE,
HOLDING THE AESTHETIC
QUALITIES OF THE CENTERED
DATA AND RECALIBER IT AS A
VISUAL INSPIRATION FOR THE
DRAWING.



SKETCH AND DRAFT IDEAS

EXPLORE IDEAS BY SKETCHING AND
FINALLY, EXPERIMENTING WITH
FORM, COLOR, AND MATERIALS IN
A FRESHMAN FASHION AT HOW DECIDE
THE PICTORIAL ELEMENTS THAT WILL
REINFORCE THIS PART OF THE PAGE



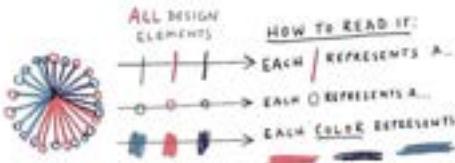
DRAW THE FINAL PICTURE

After sketching and testing ideas for a
data-drawing, you'll find an approach that works.
Then create your drawing, ensuring it conveys
all the big details, trying to make it as
beautiful (and as understandable) as you can.



DRAW THE LEGEND

Creating a legend starts with a question: "What
does someone need to read my data-drawing?"
In the legend, every design element that
represents data is linked to the reader
understands what everything means.



AND THAT'S IT!
YOU'VE CREATED
A DATA-DRAWING!

