Making Bar Graphs

How do you make a bar graph?

Graphs are useful for showing patterns in data. For this reason, you may want to graph data you have organized in a data table. There are several types of graphs. One is the bar graph. A **bar graph** compares data using bars of different heights or lengths.

A student gathered data about the maximum lengths of different whale species.

Steps in making a bar graph:

**Step 1** Think of a **title** for your graph. It should describe what the graph is showing. Write the title above the graph.

**Step 2** Decide what each axis, or side, of your graph will show. Here, the **horizontal axis** shows the names of different whales. The **vertical axis** shows the length in meters.

**Step 3** Choose a **scale** for your data. In this case, the scale goes from 0 m to 35 m, a number slightly larger than the length of the longest whale.

**Step 4** Finally, draw a bar for each whale. The top of each bar should line up with its correct length on the vertical axis. Write the name of each whale below its bar.

**Maximum Length of Whales**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Whale Types</th>
<th>Length (meters)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bowhead</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finback</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Show What You Know

1. Add bars to the graph to show the length data for humpback, minke, and right whales. Bars should indicate these lengths: humpback 15 m, minke 9 m, right whale 17 m.

2. Using the heights of the bars as a guide, list the whales in order from shortest to longest.