

Understanding and Interpreting Graphs and Tables

The ability to interpret graphs and tables is a necessary skill in science but also finds use in everyday life. In articles or textbooks you are likely to find graphs and tables. Understanding the article's message depends heavily on being able to interpret many different types of graphs and tables.

In science tables are used to provide information. Frequently one quantity in a table depends upon or is related to another. Data from tables can be graphed to aid interpretation. Graphs give a visual representation of the data that helps to reveal regularities and patterns.

INTRODUCTORY GRAPHING ACTIVITY

The data table in Figure 7 shows the relationship between the month of the year and the average water temperatures and average dissolved oxygen levels in the Snake River at Riverwood.

Month	Water Temperature (°C)	Dissolved Oxygen (ppm)
January	2	12.7
February	3	12.5
March	7	11.0
April	8	10.6
May	9	10.4
June	11	9.8
July	19	9.2
August	20	9.2
September	19	9.2
October	11	10.6
November	7	11.0
December	7	11.0

Figure 7 Snake River Data