25 Verb confusion 2 – describing charts and figures

1 Tick the correct sentence in each pair.

1 a In 2002 the figure increased from 30% to 25%.
  b In 2002 the figure decreased from 30% to 25%.
2 a The flow chart displays the quantity of electricity consumed each year.
  b The flow chart shows the quantity of electricity consumed each year.

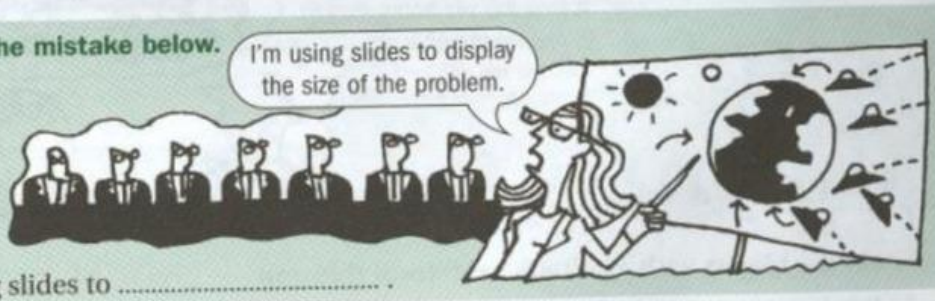
Describing charts

Graphs and charts can *show* facts:
*The two graphs **show** the number of people employed by the company in 1980 and 1990.*
We use *indicate* when we want to draw a conclusion about the figures in the charts:
*These figures **indicate** that the company is growing in size each year.*
We use *illustrate* to refer to evidence or proof of something:
*These figures **illustrate** the need for better management of our resources.*
We do not use *demonstrate, display* or *tell* to describe a chart. Compare the following:
*The salesman **demonstrated** the machine for us.* (= show how something works)
*Look at the figures **displayed** on the screen.* (= show on a screen)
*The girls' work was **displayed** for all to see.* (= make sure it can be easily seen)
*Did I **tell** you about my accident?* (= give a verbal or written account of a story)

Describing figures

If figures go up, we use *increase* or *rise*: *Temperatures **rose** in May.*
If the figures go down, we use *decrease* or *fall*: *The number of bats **fell** in 2004.*
If the figures stay the same, we use *remain steady* or *show little/no change*: *The figures **show little change** since 2001.*

2 Correct the mistake below.



I'm using slides to ..... .

3 Choose the correct verb to complete the sentences below.

1 The figures *illustrate* / *indicate* that enormous changes have occurred.
2 The book *demonstrates* / *tells* the story of a young boy and his life in Africa.
3 The greatest *increase* / *decrease* was in 1997, when it peaked at 56 tonnes.
4 The pie chart on the right *illustrates* / *tells* how serious this problem has become.
5 Most shops use shelves to *display* / *show* their products.
6 The figures reached a low in 2002, when they *fell* / *rose* to only 15%.
7 The two graphs *indicate* / *show* the total number of men and women enrolled.
8 If you are unsure how the camera works, I can *demonstrate* / *show* it to you.

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