

# Describing Graphs

Here are the words and phrases you need to talk about trends using graphs. Make sure you can translate these into your own language.

## UP – verbs

|          |          |          |         |        |
|----------|----------|----------|---------|--------|
| go up    | take off | shoot up | soar    | jump   |
| increase | rise     | grow     | improve | rocket |

## UP – nouns

|             |         |            |                 |
|-------------|---------|------------|-----------------|
| an increase | a rise  | a growth   | an improvement  |
| an upturn   | a surge | an upsurge | an upward trend |

## DOWN – verbs

|              |          |          |         |        |
|--------------|----------|----------|---------|--------|
| go/come down | fall     | fall off | drop    | slump  |
| decline      | decrease | slip     | plummet | shrink |

## DOWN – nouns

|            |                  |           |        |
|------------|------------------|-----------|--------|
| a fall     | a decrease       | a decline | a drop |
| a downturn | a downward trend |           |        |

## NO CHANGE – verbs

|                 |           |                        |
|-----------------|-----------|------------------------|
| remain stable   | level off | stay at the same level |
| remain constant | stagnate  | stabilise              |

## AT THE TOP – verbs

|              |      |         |
|--------------|------|---------|
| reach a peak | peak | top out |
|--------------|------|---------|

## AT THE BOTTOM – verbs

|                   |            |         |
|-------------------|------------|---------|
| reach a low point | bottom out | recover |
|-------------------|------------|---------|

## DEGREES OF CHANGE

Adjectives: dramatic, considerable, sharp, significant, substantial, moderate, slight  
 Adverbs: dramatically, considerably, sharply, significantly, substantially, moderately, slightly

## SPEED OF CHANGE

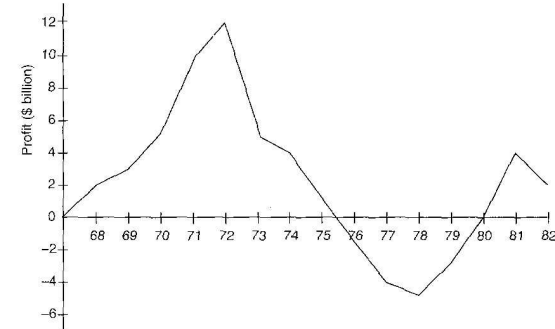
|        |        |       |       |        |         |      |
|--------|--------|-------|-------|--------|---------|------|
| abrupt | sudden | rapid | quick | steady | gradual | slow |
|--------|--------|-------|-------|--------|---------|------|

## PREPOSITIONS

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| a rise from £1m to £2m | to increase by 50%                         |
| to fall by 30%         | an increase of 7.5 per cent over last year |

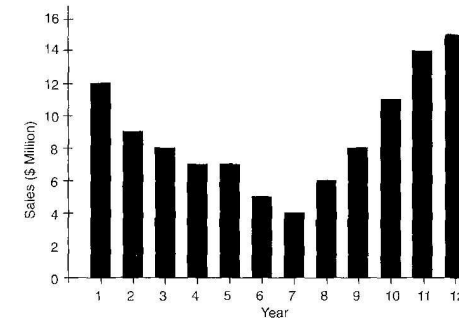
Study the following graphs. Complete the descriptions with information from them and language from the previous page. Several answers are possible. Check your answers with those in the answer key or discuss them with your teacher.

GRAPH 1 Profits 1967–1982



The company came out of the red in 1968 after which there was a (1) ..... in profits every year for four years. Profits reached (2) ..... in 1972, but in 1973, the year of the oil crisis, there was a (3) ..... The (4) ..... trend in 1974 was smaller, but after that profits continued to (5) ..... for four years. The company made a \$5 billion loss in 1978, after which the figures (6) ..... for three years before (7) ..... again in 1982.

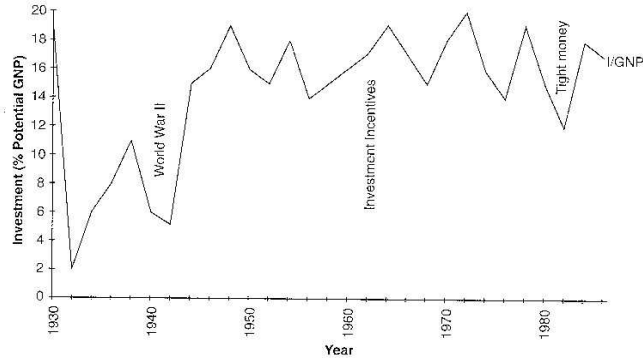
GRAPH 2 Sales Years 1–12



The year after we took over the company sales were good, at \$12m, but the second year they (1) ..... In fact, they dropped (2) ..... 25%. Sales (3) ..... for another two years, (4) ..... for one year, and then (5) ..... again twice. Since then, there has been a (6) ..... growth for five years. In fact in just four years, sales rose (7) ..... \$4m (8) ..... \$14m, an increase (9) ..... 250%.

# The Business Cycle

Look at the graph below which illustrates fluctuations in domestic investment in the USA as a percentage of potential Gross National Product, from 1929-1988. The level of investment is clearly linked to the business cycle. Insert the words in the boxes in the texts below.



## EXERCISE 1

|           |            |            |
|-----------|------------|------------|
| boom      | contracted | depression |
| downturns | expanded   | peak       |
| recession | recovery   | upturns    |

A period of stock market speculation ended dramatically in October 1929 with the infamous Wall Street Crash. There followed a dramatic (1) ..... The economy (2) ..... again after World War II. There was a series of (3) ..... and (4) ..... in the 1950s. There was a long (5) ..... in the 1960s. Investment reached a (6) ..... in 1972, just before the first oil crisis. There was a (7) ..... in 1975 and the economy (8) ..... again in 1982, but each time there was a rapid (9) .....

## EXERCISE 2

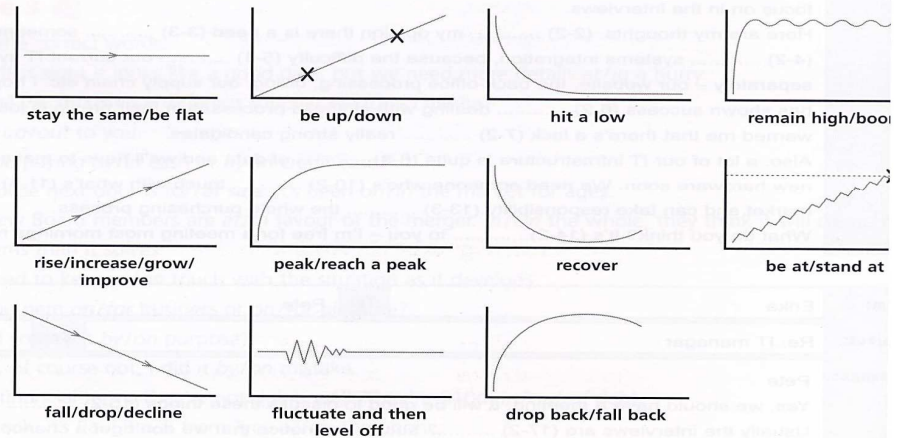
Now complete the following sentences, using expressions from page 90, and these conjunctions:

|                     |                |         |          |
|---------------------|----------------|---------|----------|
| as a consequence of | as a result of | because | owing to |
|---------------------|----------------|---------|----------|

- Investment ..... in 1930 ..... the Crash of 1929.
- Private investment ..... during World War II ..... money was needed for the war effort.
- There was a ..... in investment in the 1960s ..... the government's incentive policies.
- Investment ..... at the end of the 1970s ..... the Federal Reserve's tight monetary policy.

## Trends

Study these verbs that describe different *trends* (= tendencies).



## Exercise 6 A B C D E

Complete the conversation between a financial consultant, Andrew Cutting (AC:), and a sales director, Chris Wood (CW:), by underlining the correct words.

AC: Right. Before we decide on the conditions for the loan, we need to have a careful look at your business. I've got the sales (1) graph / graphic for last year right here. Um, can you just go through the figures for me?

CW: Of course. As you can see, sales at the start of the year were quite (2) flat / level, (3) so / although that's not surprising (4) because / due to we always have a quiet period after Christmas.

AC: OK, but there wasn't much of a (5) recover / recovery over the spring period, was there? From your graph I see that at the (6) peak / high in June you were only (7) increased / up (8) by / with two (9) million / millions (10) pounds / of pounds (11) since / on the January figure. What happened?

CW: Well, it ... it was a difficult trading period for us – our main competitor (12) cut / fell their prices (13) significant / significantly. (14) However / In spite of in the second (15) half / halve of the year things started to improve.

AC: Um. How did that happen?

CW: Well, we launched a series of new products onto the market, and you'll see that sales (16) rised / rose (17) sharp / sharply over the autumn.

AC: Ah. Oh, yes.

CW: In fact the figure went (18) to / until a little (19) under / over fifteen million by the end of the year. Now, we were very happy with those results. And we expect the increase (20) of / in sales to continue this year. Our sales forecasts are looking very good.

AC: Um, well, that does look promising. I think we can ...

