

Presentation Data Analysis

Sales Figures: Describing Seasonal Patterns, Targets and Growth

Name: _____ Date: _____

Lesson aims

- Describe a seasonal pattern with accurate verbs, adverbs and prepositions (peak at, reach a low of, rise sharply)
- Compare sales with a target and with the same period last year
- Explain possible causes carefully, without claiming more than the data shows
- Answer audience questions about sales figures, including ones you cannot fully answer

Warm-up: talk about it

- Which products or services sell better at certain times of the year? Why?
- Why do companies set sales targets, and what happens when they are missed?
- Why is it useful to compare one quarter with the same quarter last year?

1. Key vocabulary

Talking about sales data

Word / phrase	Meaning	Example
seasonal	happening at a particular time of year	Our sales follow a seasonal pattern.
quarter	a period of three months	Sales were highest in the fourth quarter.
target	a number you aim to reach	Our quarterly target is 450 thousand euros.
exceed	go above a number or a target	In Q4 we exceeded the target by 150 thousand.
fall short of	fail to reach a target	In Q3 we fell short of the target.
figures	numbers, especially official ones	The latest figures show strong growth.
trend	a general pattern of change over time	There is an upward trend in sales.
breakdown	a division of a total into smaller parts	Here is a breakdown by region.
proportion	a part of a whole	A large proportion of sales comes from sofas.
year-on-year	comparing one year with the year before	Year-on-year, sales have grown by 13.6%.

Describing change

Word / phrase	Meaning	Example
rise / increase / climb	go up	Turnover climbed from 14% to 22%.
fall / drop / decline	go down	The rate declined after 2023.
remain stable / level off	stay at the same level	Turnover levelled off at 16%.
fluctuate	go up and down without a clear pattern	Absence fluctuated throughout the year.
peak at	reach the highest point	Resignations peaked at 31 in March.
reach a low of	reach the lowest point	Quarterly turnover reached a low of 3.3%.

How big is the change?

Word / phrase	Meaning	Example
sharply / dramatically	a very big change, happening quickly	Resignations rose sharply in Q1.
significantly	a large and important change	Turnover fell significantly after the pay review.
steadily	at a regular, continuous rate	Retention has improved steadily.
gradually	slowly, in small steps	The gap is gradually closing.
slightly	by a small amount	We are slightly above the benchmark.

Prepositions with data

Pattern	Use
rise BY 8 points	the size of the change
rise FROM 14% TO 22%	the starting point and the end point
an increase OF 8 points	the size of the change (noun)
an increase IN turnover	the thing that changes
stand AT 16% / peak AT 31	the level or the highest point

2. Presentation phrases

Function	Useful phrases
Opening	Today I'd like to take you through our turnover figures. The aim of this presentation is to explain why people are leaving. I'll start with the overall trend, then look at the reasons, and finally suggest some next steps.
Signposting	Let's move on to the exit interview results. That brings me to my next point. Turning to the reasons for leaving, ...
Referring to a visual	As you can see from this chart, ... If you look at the line on the right, ... This graph shows / illustrates the trend since 2021.
Highlighting a key point	What's interesting here is that ... I'd like to draw your attention to ... The key point is that ...
Interpreting the data	This suggests that ... One possible explanation is ... This may be due to ...
Recommending	Based on these findings, I recommend that we ... Our next step should be to ...
Concluding	To sum up, ... The main takeaway is that ...
Inviting questions	I'd be happy to take any questions. Does anyone have any questions?

3. Model presentation

Look at the charts, then read the presentation by an analyst at Harcourt Furniture. Underline the phrases from Section 2.

Chart 1: Quarterly sales (€ thousand), Harcourt Furniture

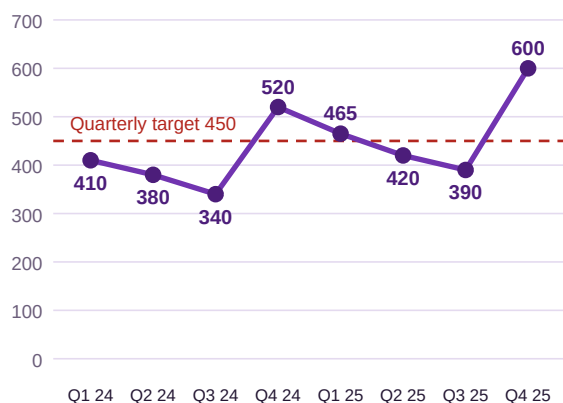


Chart 2: Sales by product category, 2025 (% of total)

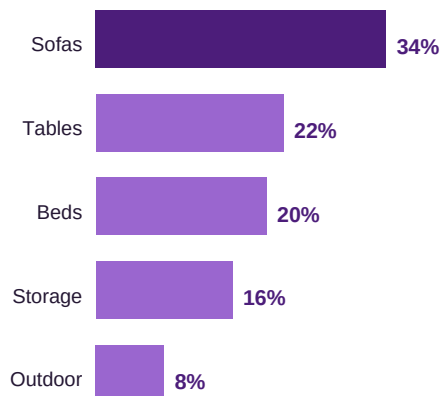


Table 1: Sales by region, 2025 (€ thousand)

North	South	East	West
560	480	450	385

Table 2: Year-on-year growth by quarter, 2025 (%)

Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
13.4%	10.5%	14.7%	15.4%

OPENING

Good afternoon, everyone. Today I'd like to take you through our sales figures for the last two years. I'll start with the overall pattern, then look at the breakdown by product and region, and finally I'll suggest what we should do next.

THE PATTERN

Let's start with this line chart. As you can see, our sales follow a seasonal pattern. In 2024, sales fell from 410 thousand euros in Q1 to a low of 340 thousand in Q3, and then rose sharply to 520 thousand in Q4. The same pattern appears in 2025, when sales peaked at 600 thousand in the fourth quarter. That is 150 thousand above our quarterly target of 450. The second table shows that sales grew year-on-year in every quarter, by between 10 and 16 percent.

THE BREAKDOWN

Turning to the breakdown, this bar chart shows sales by product category. What's interesting here is that sofas account for 34% of sales, but tables come second, at 22%. The first table gives a breakdown by region: the North has the highest sales, at 560 thousand euros, while the West has the lowest, at 385 thousand. This may be due to the larger number of stores in the North.

RECOMMENDATION AND CLOSE

Based on these findings, I recommend that we increase stock before the fourth quarter and run a promotion in the summer. To sum up, sales are growing, but the third quarter remains weak, and we fell short of the target in two quarters of 2025. I'd be happy to take any questions.

Exercise 1: Vocabulary in context

Type the missing word or phrase. The first letter is given to help you.

1. Sales p_____ at 600 thousand euros in Q4 2025, the highest figure in two years. (reached the highest point)
2. Our sales follow a s_____ pattern: they are always highest in the last quarter of the year.
3. A y_____ comparison looks at this year's figure against the figure for last year.
4. Our quarterly sales t_____ is 450 thousand euros, so we can see whether each quarter was successful.
5. In Q3 2025, sales were 390 thousand, so we f_____ short of the target.
6. Here is a b_____ by region, so you can see which area sells the most.
7. In Q4 2025, we e_____ the target by 150 thousand euros.
8. Sales reached a l_____ of 340 thousand euros in Q3 2024, the lowest figure of that year.

Exercise 2: Prepositions with data

Choose the correct preposition for each sentence.

on at of by in to from

1. Sales in Q4 2025 were higher than in Q4 2024 _____ 80 thousand euros.
2. Sales reached a low _____ 340 thousand euros in Q3 2024.
3. Year-on-year, total sales have grown _____ 13.6%.
4. There was a sharp rise _____ sales in the last quarter of the year.
5. In Q3 2025, sales fell _____ 390 thousand euros.
6. Sales peaked _____ 600 thousand euros in Q4 2025.
7. That is an increase _____ 180 thousand euros.
8. Sales rose _____ 340 thousand euros in Q3 2024 to 520 thousand in Q4.

Exercise 3: Check the chart: find and fix the mistake

Look at the charts and tables in the model presentation. Each sentence has one mistake in the highlighted part. Type the correct word or figure.

1. Sales are always lowest in **Q4**. Correction: _____
2. In Q4 2025, sales were **520 thousand** euros. Correction: _____
3. The **South** had the highest sales by region in 2025. Correction: _____
4. Sales in Q2 2025 were **lower** than in Q2 2024. Correction: _____
5. **Storage** is the biggest product category. Correction: _____
6. Sales in Q3 2025 were **above** the target. Correction: _____

Exercise 4: Match the data to the description

Read the figures (one number for each period). Choose the best description.

1. Monthly sales (thousand euros): 80 - 81 - 80 - 81
 - a) Sales remained stable.
 - b) Sales fell dramatically.
 - c) Sales fluctuated widely.
 - d) Sales rose sharply.
2. Daily sales (thousand euros): 12 - 11
 - a) Sales dropped sharply.
 - b) Sales fell slightly.
 - c) Sales peaked.
 - d) Sales rose significantly.
3. Quarterly sales (thousand euros): 300 - 250 - 200 - 400
 - a) Sales fell and then levelled off.
 - b) Sales remained stable.
 - c) Sales rose steadily all year.
 - d) Sales fell for three quarters and then rose sharply.
4. Monthly sales (thousand euros): 70 - 95 - 60 - 90 - 65
 - a) Sales fluctuated.
 - b) Sales remained stable.
 - c) Sales fell steadily.
 - d) Sales rose sharply.
5. Monthly sales (thousand euros): 40 - 55 - 70 - 80 - 80 - 80
 - a) Sales rose and then fell sharply.
 - b) Sales fluctuated.
 - c) Sales rose steadily and then levelled off.
 - d) Sales fell and then levelled off.
6. Monthly sales (thousand euros): 300 - 220 - 120 - 60
 - a) Sales fell slightly.
 - b) Sales fell dramatically.
 - c) Sales rose steadily.
 - d) Sales levelled off.

Exercise 5: What is the speaker doing?

Choose the function of each phrase.

A Giving background	B Inviting questions	C Interpreting the data
D Recommending	E Concluding	F Signposting
G Highlighting a key point	H Opening	I Referring to a visual

1. "Our next step should be to increase stock before the fourth quarter." **Function:** ____
2. "The aim of today's talk is to explain how our sales have changed over the last two years." **Function:** ____
3. "I'd like to draw your attention to the figure for the fourth quarter." **Function:** ____

4. "As this chart shows, sofas account for the largest share of sales." **Function:** _____
5. "Does anyone have any questions?" **Function:** _____
6. "Moving on to the second section, let's look at sales by product." **Function:** _____
7. "This may be due to the busy holiday shopping season." **Function:** _____
8. "The main takeaway is that sales are growing, but the third quarter remains weak." **Function:** _____

Exercise 6: Build the sentence

Put the words in the correct order to make a sentence from a presentation.

1. **season. / that / are / the / suggests / affected / This / sales / strongly / by**

2. **the / you / If / at / look / see / North / that / you / table, / sales. / highest / the / will / has / the**

3. **quarter / last / the / euros / 80 / year-on-year. / thousand / by / rose / Sales / in**

4. **on / before / Based / fourth / I / recommend / we / quarter. / the / figures, / that / increase / these / stock**

5. **thousand / 600 / euros / at / 2025. / in / fourth / peaked / quarter / Sales / of / the**

6. **by / Let's / turn / product / category. / breakdown / to / the**

Exercise 7: Best phrase for the situation

Choose the most suitable phrase for a presentation to senior managers.

1. You want to explain a line on the chart.
 - a) Please just look at the colours.
 - b) The horizontal line shows our quarterly target of 450 thousand euros.
 - c) The line is the line for the target, I think.
 - d) That's the line.
2. You are ending your presentation.
 - a) So, yes, the end.
 - b) I'm finished, I think. Questions?
 - c) To sum up, sales are growing and Q4 is our strongest quarter, but summer remains weak. Thank you, and I'd be happy to take any questions.
 - d) OK, that's everything, thanks.
3. You are moving from the quarterly pattern to the regional figures.
 - a) Let's now look at how sales differ from region to region.
 - b) Next one.
 - c) Okay, regions now.
 - d) So the regions are the next thing after this thing.

4. Q4 2025 was far above the target and you want the board to notice.
 - a) Q4, yes.
 - b) Q4 was amazing, as you can see.
 - c) Look at this, it's huge!
 - d) I'd like to draw your attention to the fourth quarter, when sales were 150 thousand euros above the target.
5. You think the holidays may explain the Q4 peak, but you do not have proof.
 - a) This proves that our marketing team did a great job.
 - b) One possible explanation is that customers buy more furniture before the holidays.
 - c) Everyone buys things in winter, that's all.
 - d) It's obviously the holidays, nothing else.
6. You are starting a presentation to the board about last year's sales figures.
 - a) Good afternoon, everyone. I'd like to begin by giving you an overview of last year's sales figures.
 - b) Hello, hello. So, sales. Let's just start.
 - c) OK, can everyone hear me? Right, this is about money.
 - d) I made some slides about sales, so here they are.

Exercise 8: Handling audience questions

An audience member asks you a question. Choose the best response.

1. "Could you remind us what 'year-on-year' means?"
 - a) I explained it earlier.
 - b) Of course. It means comparing a figure with the same period in the previous year.
 - c) Please check the glossary.
 - d) Year-on-year. It's about years.
2. "Why is the target 450 thousand and not 500 thousand?"
 - a) Good question. The target was based on last year's results, but we could set a higher one for next year.
 - b) It's in the report.
 - c) Because it is better.
 - d) I don't know.
3. "I think the growth is because of our new advertising, not the season."
 - a) That's wrong.
 - b) Maybe. Next question.
 - c) No, it is the season.
 - d) That's an interesting point. The data doesn't show advertising spend, so it would be worth looking at in a follow-up.
4. "Do these figures include online sales?" (You are not sure.)
 - a) Yes, of course.
 - b) Why does that matter?
 - c) I'm afraid I'm not sure. I'll check the definition and email you the answer after the presentation.
 - d) No.

Exercise 9: Say it yourself

Write one sentence for each situation, as if you were speaking in a presentation. Use the language from this lesson.

1. Sales in the North are 560 thousand euros and in the West 385 thousand. Highlight the difference to the audience.

2. Monthly sales were: January - 80 thousand euros, February - 95 thousand, March - 110 thousand. Describe the trend in one sentence.

3. You have finished the quarterly pattern. Now you want to move on to the regional figures. What do you say?

4. Sales are always lowest in the third quarter. Suggest a possible reason (you do not have proof).

Your turn: plan a mini presentation

Use the new data below. Write one or two sentences for each step, then present for about two minutes. Record yourself if you can.

New customers per month (average), company target: 200

2022	2023	2024	2025
140	165	165	210

1. Opening - Say what you will talk about and how you will organise it.

2. Describe the trend - Use a verb, an adverb and the correct prepositions (from ... to ..., by ..., at ...).

3. Compare with the target - Say how far above or below the target of 200 the company is.

4. Highlight a key point - Use 'What's interesting here is that...' or similar.

5. Interpret - Suggest one possible reason, using cautious language.

6. Recommend and close - Give a recommendation, sum up and invite questions.

Self-check

- ☐ I used at least three trend verbs or nouns.
- ☐ I used the correct prepositions with the data.
- ☐ I signposted each part of my presentation.
- ☐ I used cautious language when I interpreted the data.
- ☐ I finished with a summary and invited questions.

TEACHER ANSWER KEY - DO NOT DISTRIBUTE**Presentation Data Analysis: Sales Figures: Describing Seasonal Patterns, Targets and Growth (Level B1+)**

The worksheet order is fixed; answers below follow the printed numbering. The interactive HTML version shuffles item order and answer positions each time it is opened.

Exercise 1: Vocabulary in context

1. peaked
2. seasonal
3. year-on-year (also accept: year on year)
4. target
5. fell (also accept: were, came, fall)
6. breakdown
7. exceeded (also accept: beat, passed, surpassed, outperformed, topped)
8. low

Exercise 2: Prepositions with data

1. by; 2. of; 3. by; 4. in; 5. to; 6. at; 7. of; 8. from

Exercise 3: Check the chart: find and fix the mistake

1. Sales are always lowest in **Q3**. (accept: Q3)
2. In Q4 2025, sales were **600 thousand** euros. (accept: 600 thousand)
3. The **North** had the highest sales by region in 2025. (accept: North)
4. Sales in Q2 2025 were **higher** than in Q2 2024. (accept: higher)
5. **Sofas** is the biggest product category. (accept: Sofas)
6. Sales in Q3 2025 were **below** the target. (accept: below / under)

Exercise 4: Match the data to the description

1. a; 2. b; 3. d; 4. a; 5. c; 6. b
1. The numbers hardly change, so the best description is 'remained stable'.
 2. A fall of 1 thousand is very small: 'slightly'.
 3. Sales fall each quarter, then double in the last one: a sharp rise.
 4. Sales go up and down with no clear direction: 'fluctuated'.
 5. Sales go up regularly, then stay at 80.
 6. The figure is five times smaller at the end, so 'dramatically' fits.

Exercise 5: What is the speaker doing?

1. D (Recommending); 2. H (Opening); 3. G (Highlighting a key point); 4. I (Referring to a visual); 5. B (Inviting questions); 6. F (Signposting); 7. C (Interpreting the data); 8. E (Concluding)

Not used (distractor): A (Giving background).

Exercise 6: Build the sentence

1. This suggests that sales are strongly affected by the season.
2. If you look at the table, you will see that the North has the highest sales.
3. Sales in the last quarter rose by 80 thousand euros year-on-year.
4. Based on these figures, I recommend that we increase stock before the fourth quarter.
5. Sales peaked at 600 thousand euros in the fourth quarter of 2025.
6. Let's turn to the breakdown by product category.

Exercise 7: Best phrase for the situation

1. b; 2. c; 3. a; 4. d; 5. b; 6. a

1. Say which line and what it shows.
2. A summary, a main message and an invitation for questions.
3. A clear signpost tells the audience what is coming next.
4. A highlighting phrase plus a specific comparison.
5. Use cautious language (possible, may, might) when you have no proof.
6. Formal, clear, and it tells the audience what the talk is about.

Exercise 8: Handling audience questions

1. b; 2. a; 3. d; 4. c

1. Polite, clear and helpful.
2. Give a reason and show you are open to the suggestion.
3. Acknowledge the idea, say what the data does not cover, and suggest a next step.
4. Be honest when you do not know, and offer a follow-up.

Exercise 9: Say it yourself

1. Model: What's striking here is that sales in the North are 175 thousand euros higher than in the West. (Use a highlighting phrase, then make the comparison.)
2. Model: Sales rose from 80 thousand euros in January to 110 thousand in March. (Use a trend verb with from and to, and include the end figure.)
3. Model: Let's move on to the breakdown by region. (Use a signposting phrase and name the next topic.)
4. Model: This may be because customers spend less during the summer holidays. (Use cautious language (may, might, could) because you have no proof.)

Accept any accurate, natural sentence that uses suitable language from the lesson.

Teacher notes

- Suggested timing (60 minutes): warm-up 5 min; revise the vocabulary and phrases from lessons 1 to 3 10 min; model presentation (listen, then read) 10 min; exercises 1 to 5 in class 20 min; exercises 6 to 9 for homework or the next lesson; 'Your turn' task 15 min (speaking, with feedback).
- Data shape: this lesson has a repeating seasonal pattern (a fall to a low in Q3, then a sharp rise to a peak in Q4). Check that the student uses 'peaked at' for the high point, 'reached a low of' for the low point, and 'a seasonal pattern' to describe the repetition.
- Target language: 'exceed / beat / surpass the target' and 'fall short of / miss the target'. Contrast 'above / below the target' with 'higher / lower than last year'. Note that sales are plural in meaning but 'sales' takes a plural verb here ('sales were', 'sales have grown').
- Percent vs thousand: practise saying numbers aloud ('four hundred and ten thousand euros', 'thirteen point four percent'). Remind the student to give the unit the first time and then use the shorter form.
- Common B1 errors: 'the sales' (use 'sales' for the general idea); 'a rise of' vs 'a rise in'; 'rose to' vs 'rose by'; 'fall short the target' (fall short of); 'exceeded to the target'; 'peaked in 600' (peaked at).
- Extension: ask the student to choose one chart from her own work (anonymised) and present it using the phrases from lessons 1 to 4.