# Glossary of terms

**Flow** - a data story presentation that has been constructed using the Flow Editor.

**Data Value (or "Dot")** - Data values within Flows are represented by "Dots" that appear at the appropriate locations within the 3-D space.  The size of the Dot may provide a visual indication of the magnitude of the data value represented by the Dot.  The color of the Dot may also provide useful information about the data value.

**CSV File** - A comma-delimited data file that is used to populate data into a Swarm. The rules regarding the content of Flow CSV files are described [here](here).

**Swarm** - A Swarm is our made-up name for our visualizations, and think of it as a way to arrange data points into 3D space.  A swarm can be used in any number of Steps.  Each Dot in the Swarm represents one value of the data field of interest.

**Chart** - There are various ways to arrange the data in space, and the big-picture algorithm to be used is selected in the Chart pulldown. The Scatterplot is the most common and provides a basis for many of the visuals that may not look anything like a scatterplot once it is complete.

**Step** - A Flow presentation is comprised of one or more Steps.  A Step is equivalent to a slide within a PowerPoint presentation.  A Flow can contain any number of Steps.

**Timeline** - The Timeline is across the bottom of the Flow Editor screen that shows objects (Swarms, Connections, Area Charts, Labels, Texts, Images, Buttons) that are visible on each Step within a Flow. Double-click items to show or hide them on a particular step.

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*The example above shows the Timeline for a Flow consisting of 11 Steps, 1 Swarm, 2 Connections, 3 sets of Labels, 1 Area Chart, 1 Map and 1 Text object.  Colored cells indicate on which Steps the various objects are visible.*

**Connections** - Connections are used to specify how data values are interconnected by straight lines.  Connections are typically used to join matching categories of data or draw down to an axis.  A Connection is always a component of a Swarm.

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*The above examples show simple and complex swarms in which data values are connected by Connections.*

**Labels** - Labels are text that appears next to Swarm dots and is always a Component of a Swarm.  Labels can show any of the attributes associated with a dot, and may be shown conditionally, such as to display the values at the end of a line or the maximum value of a category.

Area chart - Area charts in Flow create a filled-in plane between a data series and an axis. An area chart is always a Component of a Swarm.

Legend - A Legend is a Swarm Component showing categories visible in the swarm, usually colorized, and often interactive.

**Filters** - A Filter consists of logic for selecting a subset of rows from a Swarm.  Filter elements can be grouped to form a composite filter that consists of multiple "and" or "or" conditions for selecting rows from the Swarm.

**Perspectives** - A group of settings for a Swarm that is unique for a single step. Naming and managing of Perspectives is performed automatically. To manage the Perspectives manually, select the Advanced checkbox on, and a drop-down will appear in the Swarm settings panel.

**Other Items** - Information regarding Axis Settings, Story Creator, Methods of Presenting Flows, Interactions, Text and Images, etc. is (or will be) available in other articles in our Help Center.