Usability Testing Data Visualizations
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Data visualization pedagogy often focuses on data literacy, data visualization best practices, and data storytelling, along with how to use various data visualization tools. Missing from this instruction is how we can evaluate whether a data visualization meets its intended users’ needs. Usability testing, a technique commonly used in website development, can fill this gap. This simple observation activity helps us determine: 1) Is a data visualization intuitive, and easy to use or learn? 2) Does it help users reach their goals? and 3) Do users actually want to use it? Applying the technique helps us evaluate the effectiveness of our data visualizations and build better data visualizations for our users. This lightning talk outlines how to conduct a usability test on data visualizations.