

Working with TimelineJS

THE MCGRAW CENTER FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

TimelineJS is an online timeline visualization that is generated based on information entered into a shared Google Sheets spreadsheet. An example of what the spreadsheet might look like with the default information is below.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N
1	Year	Month	Day	Time	End Year	End Month	End Day	End Time	Display Date	Headline	Text	Media	Media Credit	Media C
2										Google Spreadsheet Example	This is a test of using google spreadsheets as a source for the timeline tool. This is a 'title' slide, so it doesn't need a date. It automatically occurs first, and doesn't appear in the timeline below.	http://www.flickr.com/photos/zachwise/	Zach Wise/verite.co	Chicago zach wise
3	2011	11	1		2011	12	15			Another Flickr Example	It's Easy to Make Your Own Timeline	http://www.flickr.com/photos/zachwise/	Zach Wise/verite.co	Chicago to NY!
4	2011	11	16	05:58:44	2011	11	16	07:30:00		Vimeo Example	Illustrate your Timeline with photos, videos, tweets and more.	https://vimeo.com/14	Knight Lab	A video about t
5														
6														
7														

The first line of the spreadsheet creates an introductory slide and does not require time or dates. Each subsequent line in the spreadsheet corresponds to an 'event' to be added to the timeline. In TimelineJS, an event consists of a start and end date, a title, optional text and an optional image. There are other options available that will be described below.

Dates and Times

The first four spreadsheet columns (A-D) are the date of your timeline entry. You can just enter the year, or you can get down to details such as month, day and even time of an event. You must enter at least the year (To enter BCE dates, use a negative year, such as -500)

The second four spreadsheet columns (E-H) record the end time and date of an event and are optional. As in the first four columns, you can just enter the year, or you can get as detailed as you like. End dates will cause TimelineJS to display spans of time (a.k.a. eras) in the bottom portion of the timeline. If your event doesn't have an "end date", leave these blank—you don't need to repeat the start date.

If you would prefer that dates be displayed differently than they are by default, you can use **column I** to specify a "display date," which will override any decisions TimelineJS makes about how to show the date.

The slide content

Enter the headline (title) and the body text of the events in columns **J** and **K**. These will appear in TimelineJS as a slide in the presentation.

Media

You have the option to add media to your slides in **columns L-O**. Under the Media **column (L)** enter the link (URL) to the media you wish to display. TimelineJS supports multiple media types, including Flickr, Google Maps, Wikipedia, SoundCloud, and major video sites such as YouTube and Vimeo. In **column M**, you can credit the media's original source, and in column N you can include a short caption.

Grouping events into thematic bands

The final section contains a column labeled **Group**. This column allows you to apply categories to your events so that they appear within thematic bands within the timeline. Events that belong to the same era, for example, might be grouped together in that era. Enter the name of that era or group for each row that should appear within that grouping.