Part 1

The visualization I chose is the StarWar website: **These ARE the droids you are looking for**. As a viewer without sufficient knowledge about the movie series, I will evaluate the website from an outsider's perspective.

Regarding the appropriateness of the visual encodings: the timeline format is a good fit for showing the chronology of film appearances. Other choices of visual encodings, such as character avatars, the color-coding for different allegiances (Jedi, Sith, Republic, etc.), and labels for specific events (near the black 'X' that marks the point of the character's demise, there is a label in white text that reads the characters' cause of death), seem appropriate to me because they effectively convey abundant information at a glance. However, the amount of information being simultaneously presented on the page also reveals its lack of focus regarding the goal. According to the title of the website and the concise description beneath the headline, it aims to reveal a potentially surprising fact that only two characters (of all 22 characters) have appeared in each and every Star Wars trilogy film. However, there aren't any distinct features highlighting the two droids that satisfy the statement. Additionally, the last column on the right is confounding in terms of providing irrelevant information (characters' relationship with Luke Skywalker) regarding the trajectory of individual characters. There are a couple of other situations in which the visualization might be misread, misinterpreted, or misused:

Additional strengths of the design include its usage of familiar Star Wars iconography, color scheme, and a star-studded background that aligns with the theme. However, with appropriate annotation, these well-designed details will be learnable to general users with low familiarity with the Star Wars universe because they cannot interpret the visual cues and filtering options provided.

Last but not least, the visualization does not seem to cite any sources of information that it presented. Considering that Star Wars has a vast and detailed canon, along with an expanded universe of stories, citing sources would allow fans to verify the accuracy of the information presented and trust the visualization as a credible resource, which leads to further reading and exploration, adding educational value to the visualization.

Part 2

There is also a limited amount of interactions available for the website. The lack of interactive components beyond the three buttons of "BY APPEARANCE", "BY SPECIES", and "BY ALLEGIANCE" on top of the page will limit the user's engagement as well as the degree of exploration with the visualization. Here I am proposing some ideas for enhancements for interactivity and I will implement them in the re-design part. The main goal of my improvement is to make the visualization more accessible and remains to be intriguing and relevant.

For example, to increase the learnability and accessibility of the visualization to audiences with limited background with StarWar, tooltip information on the characters will be very helpful. As a result, I want to implement tooltips that appear when the user clicks on a character's avatar. These could provide a brief synopsis, famous character quotes, or significant contributions to the plot. In this case, the visualization can be more memorable and informative since it seems like the characters are living within the web page. Additional features, such as cursor change or a glow effect around the avatars, also need to be implemented to inform the users that characters' avatars are clickable and will trigger tooltips. Additional notations can also be added to labels such as "Becomes a Force ghost" and "Returns to light" that are not universally understood. Some fans might find the lack of context for certain events or character developments a missed opportunity. For instance, significant battles or turning points that affect the characters could be annotated.

Creating a more immersive experience with video clips of key scenes, voice clips of memorable quotes and theme music can be engaging additions to both Star Wars fans and the general audience. However, we need to be aware of the abundance of information presented to prevent the visualization from being overwhelming.

To effectively communicate the significance of the two characters who have appeared in all three trilogies and align the design more closely with the perceived goal, several design strategies are planned to be implemented: for example, when the users hover over the description of the webpage "Only two characters have appeared in each and every Star Wars trilogy film", the visualization would animate and focus on those two characters, dimming or blurring out the rest. The same visual effect can be achieved by having more nuanced filter options such as by 'fate' (e.g., survived, deceased), or 'movie-specific appearances' so that users can tailor their exploration to specific interests or questions they have about the Star Wars universe.

Re-design Sketches

THESE ARE THE
DROIDS
YOU ARE
LOOKING FOR

Only two characters have appeared in each and every Star Wars trilogy film.

🔸 BY APPEARANCE   🔸 BY SPECIES   🔸 BY ALLEGIANCE   🔸 BY FATE

NAME	I Phantom Menace 1999	II Attack of the Clones 2002	III Revenge of the Sith 2005	IV A New Hope 1977	V Empire Strikes Back 1980	VI Return of the Jedi 1983	VII The Force Awakens 2015	VIII The Last Jedi 2017	RELATION TO LUKE SKYWALKER
Obi-Wan Kenobi — Human	JEDI ORDER			✗	Becomes a Force ghost				Mentor
Qui Gon Jinn — Human	✗ Killed by Darth Maul — JEDI ORDER								
Queen Padme Amidala — Human	REPUBLIC		✗ Dies in childbirth						Mother
Anakin Skywalker / Darth Vader — Human	JEDI ORDER + SITH LORD					✗ Returns to light			Father
R2-D2 — Droid	REBEL ALLIANCE / RESISTANCE								Ally

Handwritten annotations:
- e.g. Other filter options: BY movie
- additional filters for tailored exploration
- BY FATE — survived / deceased ✓
- these 2 characters will dim if selected "survived"

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DROIDS
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Anakin Skywalker / Darth Vader — Human	JEDI ORDER + SITH LORD					✗ Returns to light			Father
R2-D2 — Droid	REBEL ALLIANCE / RESISTANCE								Ally

Handwritten annotations:
- turn to the dark side
- Redemption (love to his son)
- Narrative Highlight: additional annotations on key moments of the char. in each movie