Class Activities

# Chapter 1: Statistics or Sadistics? It’s Up to You

1. Ask students to work in small groups to brainstorm a list of the different ways in which statistics can be used. In addition, have them think of as many different fields of study as possible where statistics plays an important role.
2. Have students collect data on two or more variables (e.g., the number of times they have gone to the vending machine in the last week or how many times they have watched a Disney movie). Have the students then input this information into an Excel file. Throughout the semester, have the students use this information to conduct various analyses (e.g., measures of central tendency).
3. Provide students with current popular-press magazine and newspaper articles that cite some sort of data. Have students explain how the data support the message of the article. Would the article seem less authoritative without the data? Were the analyses descriptive or inferential?
4. Have each student listen to their favorite radio station in the morning for one hour. Have each of them list the different studies that were mentioned during the broadcast. In class, use this as a discussion of how research is seen in everyday life.
5. Have each student research why statistics is important in their particular field. If you have a multidisciplinary class, have the students group in common fields, and then have them present to the rest of the class.