Title of Lesson

Media Statistics

Anticipatory set

Record any 5 commercials from any television station and any time of day (we've found that primetime (6-8pm) on one of the three major channels (NBC, ABC, CBS) works wonderfully). Watch these commercials for any acts of violence (a hit, slap, bite, kick, threat, or force) and how men and women are portrayed (are the men aggressive/ inconsiderate/intolerant or are they considerate/ good role models/kind? Are the women docile/submissive/unintelligent or are they hypersexual/aggressive/mockingly intelligent?) Determine the intended audience for each commercial. (NOTE: be sure the commercials chosen are not for a network show, but rather for a product to be sold.)

Mental set

Objectives

• By the end of the lesson, students will be able to compute, identify, and interpret measures of central tendency (mean, median, mode) when provided a graph or data set.
• By the end of the lesson, students will be able to describe the shape and determine spread (variance, standard deviation) and outliers of a data set.
• By the end of the lesson, students will be able to explain the differences between randomized experiment and observational studies.

Purpose

To have students analyze the frequency of violence in the media.

Content Standards

MA 12.4.1 Display and Analysis: Students will formulate a question and design a survey or an experiment in which data is collected and displayed in a variety of formats, then select and use appropriate statistical methods to analyze the data.

Materials

• Pre-recorded commercials

Grade Level

7-12 grade (modify materials to adapt for 3-12)

Time Period

      Two 45 minute class periods

Skill Level

      All

How adapted to Diverse Populations

- Hearing Impaired
  - »» For HI students, all materials and directions can be printed and written.
- Visually Impaired
  - »» VI students can be active participants in class discussion. All materials can be read to the student if no Braille or other visual aid is available. Also, this lesson can be modified to be songs on the radio instead of television shows.
- Emotionally/Behaviorally Impaired
  - »» EI/BI students can become discussion leaders to counter balance their disruptive tendencies. They can be chosen to collect the student's analysis. They can be put in charge of maintaining the bulletin board of examples if the class chooses to use one.
- Developmentally Impaired
  - »» DI students can be given developmentally appropriate examples of articles and instructions can be modified for easier understanding.
- Physically Impaired
  - »» No modification should be necessary.

Input

Through discussion, have the class define "acts of violence". Does violence have to be physical? Can verbal violence be damaging? How about emotional? How do you feel about the use of violence in media? Does it affect you? How? If you said no, are you sure? Discuss.

Modeling

Show the pre-recorded commercials. Have students work independently to list each act of violence they see. Have them tally how many physical and how many verbal/emotional acts they saw.

Check for Understanding

Ask students how many acts they tallied. Answers will vary. Make a tally as a class to see if most agree. Discuss any discrepancies (also talk about intentional vs. unintentional violence – for example, someone kicked a ball and it hit someone in the head. Was that the kicker's intention? The result is that someone got hit in the head and therefore could be counted as violence.) As a

class, determine guidelines for watching for violence. Re-watch the commercials to make sure you got all acts recorded. Once you have your list, you have your data set. You could look at how many acts of violence, on average, each commercial has. You could say that for every ___ seconds of advertising, ___ acts of violence will be shown. (Conclusion: ___ acts of violence per second on television). Do what is developmentally appropriate for your class.

Guided Practice

Put students into groups. Tell them they will be doing the same kind of observational study and data analysis by watching an hour of television (wait for cheers to die down) Tell them to choose as a group the different times and networks to watch. Each group member should have a different network and watch at the same time. Have them keep track of when and what they watched. All acts of violence should be recorded, from both the regular programs and the commercials. The students with TiVo or a similar system will obviously be more accurate data keepers. Once they've collected their data, they will need to make the same statistical analysis that the class did together. They will bring these back to the group and make a presentation on their findings and conclusions.

Closure

Ask the class about the differences found in their observational study. Did the choice of network make a difference? (SPIKE or MTV may have more acts of violence than say Discovery or TLC and they may not.) Did the time of day make a difference? Was it just the program? Why do networks use so many acts of violence? Does it mimic what we see in real life? What can be done about the violence shown in society? As a follow up activity, you could watch the MEAN WORLD SYNDROME DVD from the Media Education Foundation. Go to their website at www.mediaed.org

Independent Practice

Students will watch one hour of television at the same time as the rest of their group members. They may need a few days to complete this assignment as some group members may be home on Monday at 7pm but others will not be at home to watch television at 7pm until Wednesday because of jobs or extra-curricular activities. Ideally, students will start on the half hour to get at least two shows and therefore two perspectives. Have them tally all forms of physical and emotional/verbal violence including commercials. The students will then do the statistical analysis that the class did together. They will bring their analysis to the group to make conclusions and present them to the class.