

Discussion Questions

Chapter 2: Computing and Understanding Averages: Means to an End

1. What do you think is the best way to describe a set of scores in a distribution?
2. There are several different ways of computing the “average” for a set of scores. These are often defined as measures of central tendency. What are the three types of averages that can be used to describe a set of scores?
3. What is the formula for computing the mean?
4. What is the difference between the mean and the median?
5. When would median be a better measure of central tendency?
6. How do you calculate the median? Can there be two medians? What if two medians are noted, and they are the same number?
7. Why is the median always at the 50th percentile?
8. How do you calculate the mode of a distribution? What if there happens to be two modes?
9. When might someone prefer mode over mean or median to describe a data set’s central tendency?
10. When would it be more appropriate to use a weighted mean rather than an arithmetic mean?
11. What is a percentile point?
12. How are the terms average and mean related?
13. What symbols are used to represent the various measures of central tendency?
14. How are measures of central tendency often used in the real world?