

 Activity 15.7 THE MEAN FOOT

Pose the following question: “What is the mean length of our feet in inches?” This context needs to be clear to ELLs because *foot* is not being used as a measurement unit, but as an object to measure.

Also, consider measuring in centimeters rather than inches. Have each student cut a strip of cash register tape that matches the length of his or her foot. Students record their names and the length of their feet in inches on the strips. Suggest that before finding a mean for the class, you first get means for smaller groups. Put students into groups of four, six, or eight. (Some students will realize that they can fold the combined strip to find equal lengths. Placing them into groups of even numbers makes it easier to find the equal lengths by folding.) In each group, have the students tape their foot strips end to end. The task for each group is to come up with a method of finding the mean without using any of the lengths written on the strips. They can use only the combined strip. Each group will share its method with the class. From this work, the groups will devise a method for determining the mean for the whole class. For students with disabilities, help them fold the cash register strip to see how to divide it into equal lengths.

From Van de Walle et. al. (2014). *Teaching Student-Centered Mathematics Grades: Developmentally Appropriate Instruction for Grades 6 – 8* (2nd Ed.). Toronto: Pearson Education, Inc. (p. 344).