

 Activity 15.9 WHERE'S THE CENTER?

Prepare topics of possible data sets, like the ones listed here.

- Sizes of shoes sold in a shoe store
- Salaries in a large company
- Salaries in a small company
- Prices of houses in your local area
- Test scores for a student
- Sizes of cereal boxes in a grocery store
- Costs of hotel rooms at a particular hotel
- A person's monthly telephone bills for a year

The students' task is to decide which measure of center makes the most sense, and to be able to justify their decision. There are several interactive ways to design this lesson. One is to have each topic written on a card and give one card to each of the small groups. The students in each group do the following: (1) select which measure of center they think makes the most sense for their topic, (2) prepare a data set that illustrates their point, and (3) prepare a justification of why they picked their measure. Results can be shared through a jigsaw of students, an interactive exchange in which students from one group find a student from another group and share, or through whole-class reports. Students with special needs may benefit from being given several sets of data for their topic as a way to consider which measure might be best.

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. 347).