

## SUGGESTED COURSE EXTENSIONS

### A. Reviewing

1. Complete the following for an article in the popular press or a journal in your field.
  - a. Circle all analogies or metaphors used to illustrate quantitative patterns or relationships.
    - i. Does the author explicitly or implicitly convey the purpose in each example, or is it left unclear?
    - ii. Is it easy to understand the analogy and the pattern or relationship it is intended to illustrate?
  - b. Choose one analogy or metaphor that is unclear in that paper. Revise it using the principles in chapter 8 of *Writing about Numbers*, 2nd Edition.
  - c. Are there other places in the article where an analogy or metaphor would be helpful? Identify the purpose of the analogy or metaphor for each such situation.
  - d. Design an analogy or metaphor to suit one instance where you have suggested adding one (from part c), using the principles in chapter 8.
  - e. Identify the intended audience for the article. Choose a different audience (e.g., more quantitatively sophisticated; younger) and rewrite one analogy to suit them.
2. In the same article, circle all numeric examples where a single number is reported (e.g., not a comparison of two or more numbers). For each, indicate whether the author conveys the purpose of the example (e.g., whether it is a typical or unusual value).
3. In the same article, circle all numeric contrasts.
  - a. Indicate whether in each instance the author provides enough information for you to assess whether it is a realistic difference or change for the research question.
  - b. Evaluate whether different or additional size contrasts would be useful for the intended audience, considering
    - i. plausibility;
    - ii. real-world application;
    - iii. measurement issues.
  - c. Identify an audience that would be interested in different applications than the audience for whom the article is currently written. Describe how you would select numeric contrasts to meet their interests.

# 8

## CHOOSING EFFECTIVE EXAMPLES AND ANALOGIES

## B. Applying Statistics

1. Choose an audience to whom you want to explain results of a statistical analysis.
  - a. Devise an analogy to describe one of the main numeric patterns or relationships in your results, keeping in mind the principles described in chapter 8 of *Writing about Numbers*, 2nd Edition.
  - b. Select numeric contrasts that fit your topic, data, and context using the principles in chapter 8. Write a short description of how you chose those contrasts, including references to pertinent citations.
  - c. Review the literature in your field to determine whether standards or cutoffs are commonly used. If so, calculate and describe a contrast between your data and that standard.

## C. Writing and Revising

1. Critique a paper you have written previously, using the criteria in questions A.1 through A.3 and B.1 and the checklist at the end of chapter 8. Revise your paper to correct any shortcomings you identify.
2. Exchange your answers to question B.1 with someone studying writing about a different topic, data, or audience. Peer-edit each other's work using the criteria in chapter 8 for effective analogies and examples. Revise your drafts according to the feedback you receive.