

## SOLUTIONS

1. List what information you would report in a data section for a scientific paper.
  - a. What were the demographic characteristics (when, where, who) of those in the study? How were they recruited? What was the baseline response rate among recruits? What percentage of the initial sample was lost to follow-up and how? How did the sample compare demographically to all clients at that rehab center? How were “cure” and “relapse” defined and measured? By whom were these assessments made?
  - b. Again, the Ws. How were the study subjects recruited, what was the response rate, and how did the sample compare to all pregnant women? Were they asked specifically about calcium intake or to list foods? Open- or closed-ended questions about food?
3. Loss-to-follow-up (in addition to baseline response rate), how income data were collected (total or by components; in what ranges? continuous or categorical?), and item-non-response to income questions at each round of the survey.
5. “A scale was constructed to summarize respondents’ attitudes about abortion by tallying the number of circumstances in which the respondent thought it should be legal for a woman to obtain an abortion. Wording of the six component items is shown in table 10A. Possible responses to each item included “yes” (e.g., respondent thought abortion should be legal under the stated circumstance), “no,” and “don’t know.” When constructing the scale, “don’t know” and missing responses to individual items were treated as not agreeing with the item. The resulting scale ranged from 0 (respondent did not agree with any item) to 6 (respondent agreed with all items). Thus, higher values on the scale reflected a larger number of circumstances under which the respondent thought it should be legal for a woman to obtain an abortion.”
7. Write a short discussion of strengths and limitations for the concluding section of a general interest newspaper article.
  - a. “The findings from this study are probably of little use for the average Abercrombie and Fitch store. Because the data were collected during a weekday at an exclusive golf club, the opinions likely represent those of relatively affluent, nonworking adult women—a fairly small share of the Abercrombie and Fitch market. Future studies should sample younger persons of both genders from a range of income and employment groups, as well as students—the groups that comprise the more usual target audience.”

# 10

## WRITING ABOUT DATA AND METHODS

- b. “Strengths of this study include its longitudinal nature, with testing both before and after adoption of the new curriculum in schools with each type of curriculum. However, it isn’t clear whether random assignment was used to decide which class followed which curriculum, or whether schools made their own choices of curriculum. In addition, possible differences in socioeconomic, demographic, and educational characteristics that might explain observed differences across schools or changes across time were not included.”
- c. “This study demonstrates that the association between hair color and mortality is spurious, being completely explained by their mutual association with age. Strengths of the study include the large sample size and the wide range of ages and hair colors represented, allowing their association to be observed.”