

Tips for using your class data

Here are a few ideas to get you started.

First, protect the data file

Once you download your class spreadsheet, give it “Read-only” protection with a password so that only you can modify it. That way, students will be able to open and use the file for their graphs and calculations but will not be able to modify and save it under its original name. In Excel, choose *File/Save As* and click on *Tools* then *General Options* and enter a Password to modify.

Predict answers

Before examining the data to find or calculate information, always ask the students to predict the answer. (What’s the average height in our class? What percentage of students has a cat?) This will generate interest and give the students a chance to test their initial guesses.

Investigate a theme

Choose a theme for students to investigate, such as pets, breakfast foods or getting to school. Do factors such as age, sex or household size make a difference? Ask students to write a short report, produce a display or create a web page about their theme. These could be reproduced in the school newspaper or website.

Verify a hypothesis

Make up a hypothesis and have students use the data to verify if it’s true for your class. For example:

- Boys are more active, girls are more sedentary
- Kids in small households are more likely to own their own cell phone
- Boys look up to sportspeople, girls look up to musicians

Adapted with permission from CensusAtSchool-U.K.