

# Statistics Summer Assignment: "Statistics in the Wild"

Welcome to Statistics! This course will change the way you look at the world. You will soon realize that data is everywhere—in the news, on your social media feeds, in the grocery store, and in sports. Your goal this summer is to begin developing your "statistical eyes." By observing how data is presented to us, you will start to understand how statistics are used to inform, persuade, and sometimes mislead the public.

## The Assignment

**Objective:** Capture 3 unique real-world examples of statistics in action and analyze them using your initial critical thinking skills.

### **Step 1: The Hunt**

Locate and photograph 3 examples of statistics, graphs, or charts. These must be original photos taken by you. Do not search the internet for images. You can find these in:

- The News: Infographics in newspapers, magazines, or on television.
- Retail/Grocery: Nutrition labels, price comparisons, or promotional signage.
- Sports: Scoreboards, player stat graphics, or standings.
- Social Media/Advertising: Infographics on Instagram/TikTok, political advertisements, or sponsored posts.

### **Step 2: The Analysis**

For each photo, create a short report (a paragraph or a structured list) that answers the following questions:

1. Context: Where did you find this graphic? (e.g., "On the back of a cereal box," "In a sports article on ESPN," "On a political campaign flyer").
2. The Message: What is the main point the creator of this graphic is trying to communicate to the viewer?
3. Visual Literacy: What type of graph or chart is being used (e.g., bar graph, pie chart, scatterplot, pictogram)? Is it an effective way to show the data?
4. Critical Thinking: Does the graphic seem objective (neutral)? Why or why not? Are there any design choices (colors, scale, missing labels) that might be trying to influence how you feel about the data?

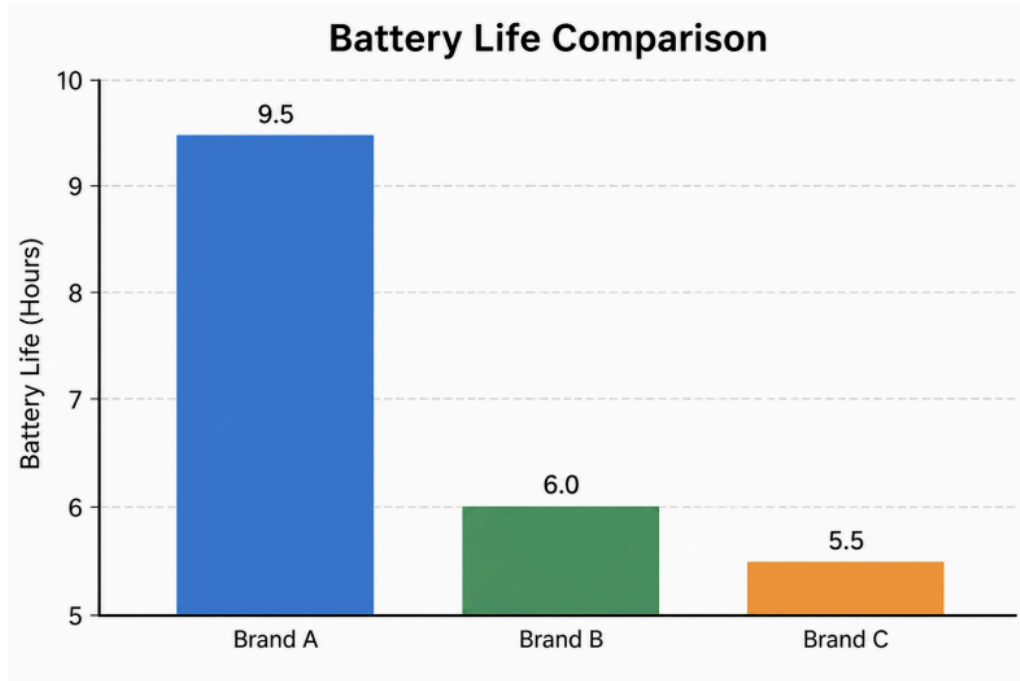
### **Step 3: Submission**

Compile your photos and their corresponding analyses into a single document (Google Docs, PDF, or PowerPoint/Slides).

- **Format:** Each entry should have the photo clearly visible, followed by your analysis.
- **Deadline:** Please have this submitted to Google Classroom by Aug 7th.

## Example Entry for Reference

Photo:



**Context:** Found in a local electronics store advertisement.

The Message: The company is trying to prove that their phone (Phone X) has a significantly longer battery life than their competitors. Visual Literacy: It is a bar graph. The bars are clear and labeled. It is effective because it allows for a quick visual comparison. Critical Thinking: The graph is likely intended to persuade. I noticed the Y-axis (the vertical axis) starts at 5 hours instead of 0. This makes the difference between the phones look much larger than it actually is. This is a common tactic to make a product look superior to others. I look forward to seeing the diverse examples you find! Enjoy your summer and keep your eyes open for data in the wild.