

Spot the Bias Answers

Scenario	Where is the bias?
An amusement park designer would like to know how much people weigh to establish safety protocols for a new ride. They decide to ask people standing in line for the Ferris wheel, "How much do you weigh?"	Privacy: people may not want to openly talk about their weight Location: Ferris-wheel riders might not be representative of all those who go to the fair
The Maple Park High School Sports Association is considering a rule change for Varsity Volleyball. They hand out surveys to teenagers at a mall.	Location: teenagers at a mall may not be familiar with the rules of volleyball or play volleyball Time: teenagers at a mall may not want to spend their time doing a survey
The Student Council is going to host a Thanksgiving Dinner as a fundraiser for a local charity. To determine what food they should serve, they ask all the science teachers to hand out a survey that asks, "What is your favourite Thanksgiving food?"	Cultural Sensitivity: not everyone celebrates Thanksgiving Timing/Location: some students may not be enrolled in science class Wording: assumes students have a favourite food
A local butcher asks each customer, "Do you prefer hamburgers or hot dogs?" as they are leaving the store.	Wording: there is no option to say you don't like hamburgers or hot dogs
Your phone rings at 8 a.m. on a Saturday. It is a company hired to conduct random surveys to assess how happy people are with service received at their favourite bookstore. They promise it won't take more than 20 minutes.	Timing: no one wants to receive a phone call about a survey early on a Saturday morning Time: 20 minutes is a long time for a phone survey Wording: assumes that people are happy with the service; and that the respondent has a favourite bookstore
A classmate approaches you with a question for their class project: "At what age did you finally stop sucking your thumb?"	Privacy: people may not want to admit they sucked their thumb Wording: assumes that everyone did suck their thumb at some point
To receive 10% off your bill at <i>Wing Ding Restaurant</i> , you are asked to answer this survey question: "Don't you agree that our wings are the best?"	Wording: the question is leading, directing people to answer in a specific way Ethics: people are being compensated financially for participating

Data Management
Unit 1 Line Master 6d

Spot the Bias Answers (cont'd)

For example:

1. Find a way to collect these data anonymously.
Survey a greater variety of people.
Include a question on the survey that assesses whether someone is likely to ride the new ride or not.
2. Survey volleyball players, parents, and coaches only.
3. Ensure there is a representative sample, no matter which teachers are asked to hand out the survey.
Change the theme of the fundraiser to be culturally inclusive (e.g., a fall dinner, rather than a Thanksgiving dinner).
Allow people to suggest foods that fit the theme.
4. Ask the question in a way that allows for a 'neither' response.
5. Shorten the length of the survey.
Call at a better time of day.
6. Reword the question to allow people to say that they never sucked their thumb.
Find a way to collect these data anonymously.
7. Reword the survey so it does not ask a leading question; for instance, ask respondents to rate the wings on a star basis.
Consider removing the financial incentive, or have the incentive be that your name will be entered into a draw to receive a small reward. Perhaps if the reward is not guaranteed, there is less of a concern about ethics.