Teacher Notes for 5-Lab B Don Gorske

He's Ronald's Hero and Mine, Too $^1/_2$ day and then later 1-2 days

• The story of Don Gorske and his Big Macs is true and has been documented on Oprah, Inside Edition and the Today Show among others. Don truly **loves** Big Macs and has eaten them virtually **every** day since 1972. He usually eats two per day, although in the early 80's he was averaging 4 per day. He eats them for dinner on Christmas and Easter, since he feels they are the greatest food ever created. Every Big Mac is recorded in a pocket notebook he carries with him at all times and his records show he has eaten a Big Mac in every one of the contiguous states. Our students always have a lot of fun with this lab and ask lots of questions about him. They thought he would be huge after eating all those Big Macs, but he looks just like John Lennon (actually like John Lennon when he was alive, not now). The main reason he stays thin is that he doesn't eat breakfast or lunch, only Big Macs, Fries and a Coke for dinner.

• When Don ate his 10,000th Big Mac, McDonald's gave him a share of stock. In 2000 he was named the Guinness World Record holder after he ate his 17,500th Big Mac and on November 6, 2001 he ate his 18,000th. He has been collecting special license plates for his car and you can see them on our website, www.ammeinc.com. He is only missing "pickles" and "ona". I like this one: "SCME C B1" which he reads as *sesame seed bun*.

• For each milestone, such as 25 years of eating Big Macs or being named to the Guinness World Record holder, he is interviewed by state and local media. Once that happens, he is usually besieged by national and international reporters from radio, print and TV. Maybe the most amazing interviews were by British and New Zealand radio stations and he even was on Oprah, taste testing a chef's version of a Big Mac. (Of course, he immediately knew the counterfeit.) Don's eating habits are peculiar, but he is a pretty normal guy other than that and we appreciate what he does for our students. He finds time to make sure he visits with our classes and is often asked for his autograph on a Big Mac box.

• The lab requires group work (2-4 in a group). The students need about one half of a period to get in their groups and assign the tasks. **Make sure everyone signs up for a job.** Then you may wish to give them several days to gather the information before you spend the next two class days finishing up the lab. We had each student hand in their lab and graded each one separately. You **may give them points for how many "jobs" they do** to help their group and then give points for each question. Remind the person who needs to contact McDonalds for their "recipe' to make sure to call or stop by during non-peak hours.

• We grade the students on their write-up, their use of the label method to solve it and how much data they gathered on their own. Since there is no exact answer for any of these "food groups," students need **guidance in how to give an a range of possible values** for their answer. You will want to discuss this issue with your students. For example, contrast the range in sesame seeds versus the possible range in the number of cattle he has eaten. We use this lab in our unit on mental math, so we don't allow calculators. If you wish to allow them, just drop those notes in the lab.

• One way to help students write well is to help them with one of the topics. On the day before the lab, you may wish to give them some "fake" data and have them explain how they would find the answer. This would be due the day of the lab, and you could then go over their results.
You may say something like,"Elrod went to Piggly Wiggly and weighed 23 onions. He found they weighed a total of 11 lbs 4 oz. Eino called McDonald's and found they put 2 ounces of onions on each Big Mac (Note: it's actually less than that.). How many onions did he eat?

• If you wish to give students this data instead, here is McDonald's recipe for making a Big Mac: two all-beef patties, special sauce, lettuce, cheese, pickles, onions on a sesame seed bun, but *you knew that, right?*
2 patties of beef - they make 10 patties per pound
1/ 3 fluid oz. of special sauce **per patty**
1 oz. of lettuce per Big Mac
1 slice of cheese per Big Mac, they use 32 slices per pound
2 slices of pickles - three if small
1/ 4 oz. of onions

• The students had to experiment to find the average weights of several items. Here are the average weights our classes have found through **many** experiments:
Beef -17 butchers gave us a range from 100 to 600 pounds per animal -250 pounds median
Lettuce - 50 heads averaged 1.5 pounds (less 2 ounces for the core)
Pickles - 30 pickle experiments, 24 slices per pickle
Onions - 18 onions experiments (more than 18 onions), the average onion was 5.5 ounces
Sesame seeds- 50 experiments, a low of 215 to a high of 476, a mean average of 348

5-Lab B Don Gorske -He's Ronald's Hero and Mine Too Name _____

Fond du Lac, Wisconsin is lucky to have a native son as famous as Don Gorske. Back in April of 1972, the Fondy McDonald's offered Big Macs for the first time. Don ate one and liked it. He liked it a lot, so he bought another, and another, and another.....

He would throw the empty cardboard containers in the back of his car when he was done with them. After one month, even his buddy wouldn't ride with him because of the awful aroma. As Don was emptying the old containers from the car, he realized **he had eaten 267 in only one month**!

Mentally estimate how many he averaged per day. Remember, we are dividing by 30 days,

so round the 267 to a compatible number. = _____

That's an unbelievable number to me too. How could anyone eat nine a day without getting sick of them? Since that time he has continued to eat Big Macs virtually every day for over thirty years, although now he eats "only" two per day. Don has kept a record of every one he has eaten since that first month. For example, since **1980** he has eaten a Big Mac every day except for 8 days that he couldn't get away to get one. As of July 19, 2004 his **total was 20,000** and he still believes that they are God's greatest gift of food!

Your job in this lab is to find how many:
cattle, **heads of lettuce**, **pounds of cheese**,
gallons of special sauce, **pickles**, **onions,** and **sesame seeds** Don has eaten.

Here are the jobs that need to be done and you will decide how to divide them up. **Put your name by the job(s) you will do**. Each person in your group must help out:

_____ Contact a butcher to find how many **pounds of hamburger** they get out of an average "head" of beef.
Whom did you call? _____

What was the average number of pounds?_____

_____ Experiment to find how many slices can be made from one "average" pickle.

How many pickles did you use? _____ Average # of slices? _____

_____ Go to a grocery store and find the weight of several heads of lettuce and onions. **The more you weigh**, the more accurate you will be.

____ heads of lettuce =____ total weight ; ____ # onions = _____ total weight

_____ Take a field trip to McDonald's and **count** sesame seeds on Big Mac buns to get the average number of seeds per bun.

_____ Visit, or call, McDonald's and ask the manager for the following information: Be thoughtful and do it during times when it is **not** their busiest time.

What do each of the patties of beef weigh? How many are used? _____

How much does the lettuce weigh? _____

How much does the cheese weigh and how many slices are used? _____

How many ounces of special sauce are used on Big Macs? _____

How much do the onions weigh? _____

How many pickles are on a Big Mac? _____

This lab will focus on a) using your estimation skills **- no calculators allowed.**
b) choosing a **reasonable range** for your answers
and c) your communication skills. (That means spelling words correctly, using proper punctuation, and checking the content of your sentences.)

Write sentences which **clearly explain how and where your information was gathered**. Here is **an example** of the start of a possible response:

Mike R. called Eden Meat Market and talked to their butcher. The butcher said it was hard to exactly come up with an average weight for a head of beef, but he did tell him that it could vary between 200 and 300 pounds. We decided to use 225 pounds because.....

1 a) First explain where you got **both pieces of data** to find how many cattle he has eaten. **Follow the above example**.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

b) Write the "exact" numbers in the label method work. **First round when you gather** them. Use your estimation skills. No crutches, ... er ah calculators, allowed on this lab.

c) Of course, cattle vary in size, so there is no way to tell **exactly** how many heads of beef he's eaten. Which of your two pieces of data do you feel is the weakest? _____ Tell me why.

d) Good data gives accurate answers and your data is not precise. Determine a final range for your answer, one which indicates the number of cattle that you are confident he's eaten. I think Don has eaten anywhere from _____ to _____ cattle.

2) Now it's time to find the number of h**eads of lettuce** he has eaten. Again first explain where you got your data from and then show the math work below.
(Don't forget to subtract some weight for the discarded outer leaves and the cores. Tell me what your estimate of this part was and why you chose it.)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Write the "exact" numbers as you start the label method. **When you gather,** you can round them to estimate the answer.

I believe Don has eaten anywhere from _____ to _____ heads of lettuce.

Remember, use your estimation skills, no calculators.

3) Again, use your best communication skills to explain where you found your **two pieces** of data about how many **onions** he has eaten.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Write the "exact" numbers as you start the label method. **When you gather,** you can round them to estimate the answer.

I'm confident that Don has eaten anywhere from _____ to _____ onions.

4) How many **pickles** did he munch down with his Big Macs?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Write the "exact" numbers as you start the label method. **When you gather,** you can round them to estimate the answer.

I'm sure Mr. Gorske has eaten anywhere from _____ to _____ pickles.

5) How many **pounds of cheese** did he eat?
Again, write well, as you explain about the two pieces of "cheese" data.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Remember, "exact" numbers first and round when you gather.

I believe Don has eaten anywhere from _____ to _____ pounds of cheese.
(Since each slice of cheese is probably very close in size, this answer probably will not vary much.)

6) Explain where you found your data about how many **gallons** of **special sauce** he has "slurped" with his Big Macs.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Remember, "exact" numbers first and round when you gather.

I'm sure Don has "slurped" from _____ to _____gallons of special sauce. Someone get a stomach pump.

7) How did you figure out how many **sesame seeds** Mr. Gorske has eaten?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Remember, "exact" numbers first and round when you gather.

I think "his highness" has eaten anywhere from _____ to _____ sesame seeds, and that is a most unbelievable number.

8 a) Of all your answers, which one do you feel is the closest to what Don has actually eaten?

Beef lettuce onions pickles cheese sauce sesame seeds

b) Clearly explain why you feel that way.

9 a) Of all your answers, which one do you feel is the worst?

Beef lettuce onions pickles cheese sauce sesame seeds

b) Why?