

Statistical Significance (or State of the Stats)

Characters:

Data, the robot woman
The State Youth Services Librarian

At rise: Data, who holds a clipboard with lots of papers, stands at center stage.

Data: *(flipping through pages)* Let us evaluate ... the statistically significant reality of the summation of various numerals equals more or less the same as zero.

Librarian: *(enters and does a 'take' when she hears Data)* Come again?

Data: Evaluation: the statistically significant reality of the summation of various numerals equals more or less the same as zero.

Librarian: Would that be more?

Data: To be more or not to be more – that is not the question.

Librarian: Then I don't get it. What is your question? I'm a librarian, perhaps I can help.

Data: The question is about statistics for the state library.

Librarian: Ohhh, I see. Are you from one of the libraries that did NOT send statistics?

Data: I just ran a highly successful summer reading program for 80,000 kids and teens who read three and a quarter billion books! When did you expect me to calculate statistics?

Librarian: You just did.

Data: Did not!

Librarian: Yes, you did.

Data: Did not! Two different statistics are required to justify funding future programs such as these.

Librarian: It isn't that hard. There is a survey online at the end of the summer. Just count the number of kids who sign up for the summer reading program, and count what they read.

Data: What they read does not compute.
They read books – not minutes not hours not days.

Librarian: That's fine. But if you were counting hours or anything else, there is a formula right in the survey to help you answer that question.

Data: But-but-but-but ...

Librarian: Did you have another question?

Data: My father was not Y2K compliant. What if my numbers will not compute the entire total?

Librarian: Then give your best guess.

Data: A guesstimate? That's so easy. I just want to know why I thought statistics were so hard.

Librarian: And so does the State Library. Some libraries neglected to send that information to the state despite repeated requests.

Data: Error. Error. Error. We should all do that.

Librarian: That's right: Every library should send their statistics so that the state library can justify spending money on the summer reading program.

State Librarian shares more information about the importance of this and how it will impact the ability to offer more such programs complete with refreshments for free.

Data: *(to audience)* Enjoy your food at this meeting today – it will be your last.