

Name _____

Surveys

Asking the Questions

1. One of the most important concepts of getting the answer to the question you are asking is the way you word your question. You want to make sure you get the exact data you need to answer your question. "How many people are in your family?" Good question? Why or why not?
 2. "Would you like the newest edition of the MacIntosh computer, or would you rather have the older, less robust version?" Good question? Why or why not.
 3. "You don't eat carbohydrates, do you?" Good question? Why or why not?
 4. Choose which of these questions is better: "Do you think that free speech in school should be forbidden?" or "Do you think free speech in school should not be allowed?" Why?
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STUDENT HANDOUT

5. Could these situations cause you difficulties when conducting a survey?
- a. Your school wants to know if alcohol use is common at your school. They ask the DARE officer to ask each student individually if he or she uses alcohol.
 - b. The school district wants to put a levy on the ballot, so they want to know the mean income of the people in the district. They send someone door to door and ask for the income of each household.
 - c. You're running against Bob for president of your class. You ask your friends to do a survey. They go to students and say, "Bob is really a creep. You're voting for Mary, aren't you?"
 - d. You want to get a DJ to work your school dance. He wants to know what kind of music you want, so you send out representatives to ask other students if they want rock, hard rock, country or rap to be played at the dance.
 - e. You want students to tell you which of two magazines they like. You tell them to peruse the issues and elucidate their responses.

Write some general rules about writing survey questions.
