

I am trying to find the best way for me to teach AP Stats.

My predecessor had the students read and take notes on a section, then the next night had them do a problem set on the previous night's reading and read and take notes on the next section. The students hated this way. I was wanting to find a different approach to it, but I find that after going over the problem set there is not enough time to lecture on the next section. Also today I found that when they hadn't read the section prior to the notes, they had trouble with understanding the lecture.

John

John,

I think it depends greatly upon the "style" of teaching that YOU are most comfortable with doing. I'm more of an activity combined with discussion-debriefing session type of teacher. My classroom time is probably 50-50 between students working in small groups on Fathom, activities, or explorations and the remaining time having discussions/debriefing sessions. For example, today students spent the whole class period working in small groups on an exploration for new material while I walked around the room and helped them when they got stuck. Tomorrow, we'll discuss the exploration from yesterday for the first 15 minutes or so, then they will be back in groups working on another exploration. I could not do what your predecessor did; that's not my teaching style. I think the bottom line is still to think about your teaching style. If you are a veteran teacher, but new to AP Stats, think about how you teach your other classes. While AP Stats is different compared to other math classes, I've been able to incorporate my style into it pretty easily.

Concerning time, I don't go over homework in class. I do post answers to all homework on Moodle for students to check. I expect students to come in for help outside of class if they have questions on the homework (and for the most part they do). Depending upon your school culture and structure of your day, this might not work for you.

(I'm also a big fan of giving students multiple nights to do the homework. We agree upon a number of nights early in the year. Typically in past years, it has been three nights. Many teenagers at my school are quite busy with athletics, band, work, etc. Students can still gamble if they want to as I do not collect homework until the day of the test. The three days is how many days before the material can appear on a quiz.)

Best of luck and don't hesitate to use this list.

Wayne Nirode

Some suggestions....

Give short assignments. 4 questions done thoroughly, including all the writing that's expected, is better than 10 done superficially.

Assign questions with brief answers in the back of the book so the kids will know they are on the right path. Then go over only things they have questions about or that you feel a need to emphasize.

You can often spin the homework discussion off into the new lesson by extending what you are going over to include the next issue. By the time you have finished the hw you may have much of the day's lesson in the bag, too.

Sometimes the reading is more helpful after, tether than before, the day's lesson.

Experiment with that a bit. And emphasize the understanding over the note-taking.

-- Dave Bock

Well, the exam requires good reading and writing skills, so I think it important to include SOME practice of those skills. Perhaps it could be done in a more palatable fashion, but I think it is needed for the exam, and for life. Perhaps the students did not have these skills and hated being asked to use skills they did not have, in which case you might be able to help them gradually acquire those skills.

Bob

John.

I think you are seeing a dichotomy in the answers: have them read first or lecture to them first. However, what was slipped in/hinted at in one comment was to have students explore first/early and construct their own knowledge with the help of good questions and an active teacher facilitating the creation of an initial concept map. A connection with authentic data was and is one the hopes/goals of this course. That does not only mean a project or two or four during the year, but collection of data, use of applets, the use of book, web supplied data sets, etc. on a consistent basis. Personally, I would argue that all new topics should start with a student/group/class investigation connected to data or a simulation. Of course, that is a little too strong. There are topics which don't lend themselves to that effectively, but those are in the great minority.

That having been said, I second what many others said. Since you care and are motivated, whatever you do will, in the long run work out.

Al

I suggest that, as often as you can, engage students in interesting discussions of the ideas involved. Sometimes that means having them read a current article about a topic related to your lesson. Sometimes use textbook questions as prompts for discussions. Have students discuss the question in small groups first, then discuss as a class.

Use strategies to get all your students involved in the discussion, and I'd recommend that grading them on it is not an effective method for doing that! Interesting discussions about interesting topics is good for engaging students.

I don't spend class time going over problem sets unless students have questions. I give them access to the solutions, so if that's not enough they can ask.

Corey

John,

There are many quality hands-on activities that students can do in AP Stats. In fact, collecting and analyzing real data, in my mind, are important aspects of the course. Having kids collect real data and teaching the concepts of the course through that data would be a great start to doing things differently. APStat can actually be lots of fun!

I'm sure I'll be one of several replies you get, and I'm sure they'll offer helpful websites and materials. I'll start off with a website that has become a repository of sorts for many great teaching ideas: StatsMonkey.

<http://web.mac.com/statsmonkey/StatsMonkey/Statsmonkey.html>

Regards,

Doug