A Graph a Day -
The Elementary Way

Marlana Hodo
Wilsonville Elementary
Shelby County TechFest ’08

Why?

• On average, students tend to score lower on questions dealing with graphs on standardized test.
• Creating classroom graphs provides students with the opportunity to use a mathematical skill in a real-life/world situation, and the teacher can learn some valuable/not-so-valuable information.
• Finally, since creating the graphs requires one to use a computer and Microsoft Excel, it’s kind of like one is killing two birds with one stone.
• Oh yeah, once the students grasp this new concept, your job is done!

Student Samples

Do you have a computer at home?
Yes
No
Let's Get Started

1. Determine a time that is good for students to provide answers to the question, create the graph, and discuss the findings.
2. When you're ready to turn this project over to your students, you will choose different groups of students to complete the task daily.
3. Decide on a question to ask the class.
4. Provide scrap paper for the students to display their answer.
5. Have the students place their answer in a basket or box.
**How Many Children Do You Have?**

- Tally responses - I allow the group in charge to create a tally chart on the board.
- Open Microsoft Excel
- Begin entering options/choices in box A1. Enter **ONE** option/choice in each box below until all of the options/choices are displayed.
  - For example, we determined our options by seeing the answers placed on the cards.

**Creating a Graph in Excel**

- Once all of the option/choices have been entered, enter the number of responses to each option/choice beginning in box B1.
- Highlight your data by dragging the cursor over all of the information you entered.
- Click the “Chart Wizard” on the toolbar.
- Choose the type of chart that you wish to create (bar, line, pie, etc.). Click “Next.”
- Click the “Series” tab and label your legend (it is not necessary to always include a legend).
- Type the name of your graph into the box titled “Chart Name.” Click “Next.”
- Label the X-axis and Y-axis depending on the data collected. Click “Next.”
- Place chart as a new sheet.
- Click “Finish.”
- The graph will appear as a whole sheet.

**This is the Cool Part.**

- The students love to change the colors on every part of the graph.
- If we turned the students loose, this could take all day! You may find that they know more about personalizing graphs than you do.
Savvy Survey Questions/Topics  
from Teachers.net

Do you like to play inside or outside on a rainy day? Inside or outside
What is Your Favorite Dessert? Ice cream, Cake, or Pie
What is your favorite sport? Football, baseball, basketball
How many people in your family?
Which fast-food restaurant do you like best? Wendy's, Burger King, McDonald's
How Do You Feel Today? Happy, Mad, Sad
Is your shirt striped, print, plaid, or solid?
What time did you go to sleep last night? 8 O'CLOCK, 9 O'CLOCK, LATER THAN 9:30
How many televisions are in your house? 1, 2, 3 or more
Which holiday do you like best? Halloween, Thanksgiving, April's Fool Day
Are you left or right handed? Left or right

Questions/Topics Continued

Favorite season
Type of home (apartment, house, etc.)
Number of teeth lost
Pets at home
Favorite pizza
Their age
Favorite piece of playground equipment
Favorite summer or winter activity
Color of hair, eyes
Number of boys and girls
Number of letters in names
Type of shoe

There are a TON of questions out there!