Chapter Problem

Comparing Marks

The *Maclean's Guide* to Canadian Universities and Colleges 2001

The University Crunch

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Two years ago, the wave began to roll. Canadian universities witnessed their largest one-year jump in enrolment since 1991; last year, enrolment rose again. How high will the demand run over the next decade? A conservative estimate would be a 20% increase across Canada. In British Columbia and Ontario, it will run as high as 40%. "We're on the verge of the greatest growth in more than 30 years," says Ken Snowdon, vice-president of policy and analysis at the Council of Ontario Universities.

Justin is a Grade 12 student planning to go to university next year. He has studied hard and is proud of his overall average of 82%. However, Justin is uncertain of where he stands in relation to other classmates applying to university. By using his understanding of statistics, Justin hopes to determine his chances of being accepted into the university of his choice.

Here is a list of the average marks of all the Grade 12 students in Justin's school who are applying to university.

75	72	76	63	64	66	70	82	76	72
53	48	81	77	64	79	71	75	78	72
78	67	63	90	87	77	75	70	59	75
76	78	55	74	71	73	69	85	63	54

You may already know of some statistical methods you can use to begin analyzing Justin's situation. What initial observations can you make, given this table of 40 values?

Project Connection

Your course project requires you to work with large sets of data. In order for you to answer your project-specific questions, you will have to summarize the data in a variety of ways.

If your project features normally distributed data, you will learn how to compare one piece of data to the population.