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TEACHER NOTES for DON GORSKE LAB:

5- Lab B Don Gorske - He's Ronald's Hero and Mine Too $\frac{1}{2}$ day and later $1\frac{1}{2}$ days

- The story of Don Gorske and his Big Macs is true and has been documented on Oprah, Inside Edition, Jimmy Kimmel, and the Today Show among others. Don truly **loves Big Macs** and has eaten them virtually **every day** since 1972. When he first received his driver's license in 1972 and wanted to drive somewhere, so off to McDonald's it was. He bought some Big Macs and just tossed the empty containers in the back. He did this day after day for the first month and after that time, his buddy refused to get in the car with him because of the smell. As Don started to clean out the boxes, he **realized that he had eaten 267 Big Macs in that first month!** From that time on he started recording every Big Mac he has eaten. All the information about number, cumulative total and location when consumed is contained in a series of pocket notebooks, calendars, etc.
- In 2000 he was named the Guinness World Record holder after he ate his 17,500th Big Mac and on May 17, 2011 after 39 years of eating Big Macs, Don finally celebrated by eating his 25,000th Big Mac! **In those 39 years he has only missed eating a Big Mac on 8 days!** If you **search for Don Gorske on www.youtube.com**, you will find many videos from TV interviews. (Here is a nice one: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GfPzIWmO7dE> .) Let your students know Don will autograph a photo for them in exchange for a small fee. See the handout titled "Don Gorske Fan Club." Since Don was interviewed in the movie *Supersize Me* by Morgan Spurlock, and this movie is often shown in Health classes, your students may have already seen him.
- He usually eats two per day, although in the early 1970's he was averaging 4 per day. He eats them for dinner on Christmas and Easter, since he feels they are the greatest food ever created. Every Big Mac is recorded in a pocket notebook he carries with him at all times and his years of records show he has eaten a Big Mac in every one of the contiguous states. Our students always have a lot of fun with this lab and ask lots of questions about him. They thought he would be huge after eating all those Big Macs, but he looks just like John Lennon. The main reason he stays thin is that he doesn't eat breakfast or lunch, only Big Macs and a Coke for dinner!

- State and local media usually interview for each milestone, such as 25 years of eating Big Macs or being named the Guinness World Record holder, Don. Once that happens, national and international reporters from radio, print, and TV usually besiege him. It is not unusual to be interviewed by British, New Zealand, or Spanish radio stations and he even was on Oprah's show, taste-testing a chef's version of a Big Mac. (Of course, he immediately knew the counterfeit.) Don's eating habits are peculiar, but he is a pretty normal guy other than that and we appreciate what he does for our students. He has found time to visit with our students and is often asked for his autograph on a Big Mac box, and he gladly obliges.

- The lab requires group work (2-4 in a group). The students need about one half of a period to get in their groups and assign the tasks. **Make sure everyone signs up for a job.** Then you may give them several days to gather the information before you spend the next two class days finishing up the lab. We had each student hand in their lab and graded each one separately. You **should give them points for how many "jobs" they do** to help their group and then give points for each question. Remind the person who needs to contact McDonalds for their "recipe" to make sure to call or stop by during non-peak hours.

- We grade students on their write-up, use of the label method to solve it and how much data they gathered on their own. Since there is no exact answer for any of these "food groups," students need **guidance in how to give a range of possible values** for their answer. You will want to discuss this issue with your students. For example, contrast the range in sesame seeds versus the possible range in the number of cattle he has eaten. We use this lab in our unit on mental math, so we do not allow calculators. If you wish to allow them, just drop those notes in the lab.

- One way to help students write well is to help them with one of the topics. On the day before the lab, give them some "fake" data and have them explain how they would find the answer. This would be due the day of the lab, and you could then go over their results. Say something like, "Elrod went to Piggly Wiggly and weighed 23 onions. He found they weighed a total of 11 lbs 4 oz. Elrod called McDonald's and found they put 2 ounces of onions on each Big Mac (Note: it's actually less than that). If Elrod ate 5,000 Big Macs, many onions did he eat?"

- If you want to give students this data instead, here is McDonald's recipe for making a Big Mac: two all-beef patties, special sauce, lettuce, cheese, pickles, onions on a sesame seed bun, but *you knew that, right?*

- 2 patties of beef (They make 10 patties per pound.)
- $\frac{1}{3}$ fluid oz. of special sauce (**per patty**)
- 1 oz. of lettuce per Big Mac
- 1 slice of cheese per Big Mac (They use 32 slices per pound.)
- 2 slices of pickles - three if small
- $\frac{1}{4}$ oz. of onions

- The students had to experiment to find the average weights of several items. Here are the average weights our classes have found through **many** experiments:

- Beef -17 butchers gave us a range from 100 to 600 pounds per animal -250 pounds median
- Lettuce - 50 heads averaged 1.5 pounds (less 2 ounces for the core)
- Pickles - 30 pickle experiments, 24 slices per pickle
- Onions - 18 onions experiments (more than 18 onions), the average onion was 5.5 ounces
- Sesame seeds- 50 experiments, a low of 215 to a high of 476, a mean average of 348

- Judith Higginbotham, a long time AMME customer from Missouri, has been kind enough to send us editing suggestions for AMME materials. She shared the scoring guide she uses for this lab, and we have included it for your use. Thanks Judith.

Grade
Form
__ vblw
__ wkpo
__ uggp

5-Lab B Don Gorske Scoring Guide

Name _____

Each person in your group signed up for a job researching a portion of the information your group will need to complete this lab. Each one has a week to complete his/her portion of the research. On the day of the lab, you will pool your information and use your estimating skills to discover just how much of each ingredient Don Gorske has eaten in the past 30 years or so. Since you are estimating, part of your job will be to give me a range for each of your answers and another part will be to write an explanation of your reasoning. Good communication skills are needed!

Individual score

- Did everything you signed up for on time _____ of 5 points
- Fill in below: who you contacted, what they said [butcher & McD's.]
or where you researched, what you found [pickles, lettuce & onions] _____ of 5 points

Group Score

- Filled in lab sheet completely _____ of 8 points
- Presented neat finished product [lab] _____ of 2 points

Total = _____ of 20 points