

The mode – the most common value

WHAT THIS LESSON TEACHES

The mode is the value or category that appears most often in a set of data. It is the category itself (e.g. vanilla), not the number of times it was chosen.

- If most of the class chose vanilla ice cream, then vanilla is the mode.
- If football and hurling are each chosen by 7 pupils, both are the mode.

MODEL THIS ON THE BOARD

FINDING THE MODE ON A PET CHART

- 1 Read the class votes: cat, cat, cat, dog, dog, dog, dog, dog, fish, fish, rabbit.
- 2 Count each pet: cat **3**, dog **5**, fish **2**, rabbit **1**.
- 3 Dog has the highest count so the mode is dog.

DISCUSSION STARTER

REFLECT How do you spot the mode quickly on a bar chart or a tally?

ANSWER KEY

c) rabbit

Q1: rabbit

Q2: red

Q3: 3

Q4: tag and football

a) Always — That is exactly what mode means.

b) Sometimes — This is true only when two or more values tie for most frequent.

c) Never — The mode is the value or category itself, never its count.

d) Sometimes — True when one bar is tallest; two equal tallest bars give two modes.

EXTENSION SHEET · STRETCH ANSWERS

S1: 143

S2: 20

S3: 34