

USING DATA TO ANALYZE AN ARTIST'S SUCCESS

Est. Time: 60 minutes

Subjects: Math

Age Range: Elementary (5th-6th Grade)


[View the classroom lesson](#)

★ *TEACHROCK* ★



How can data be analyzed and interpreted to better understand a band's success?

In this lesson you will:

- Make a data-informed analysis based on statistical information, and write those hypotheses using math operations
 - Read and analyze data presented in a graph
 - Use a frequency table and calculate mean
 - Consider the business model of the band, Grateful Dead
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Consider or ask a friend:

- Do you have a favorite musical artist or band? Who are they?
- Would you consider this artist or group “popular”? Do a lot of people know them?
- What kind of work might these musicians have done to achieve their popularity? What kind of work would they have to do to become more popular?

After considering the questions, create a list of ways an artist might be able to make a living creating and performing music.

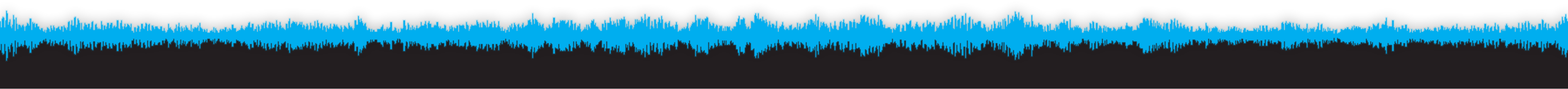


In this lesson, you will be using data to analyze how the band Grateful Dead were able to make a living for themselves as musicians.



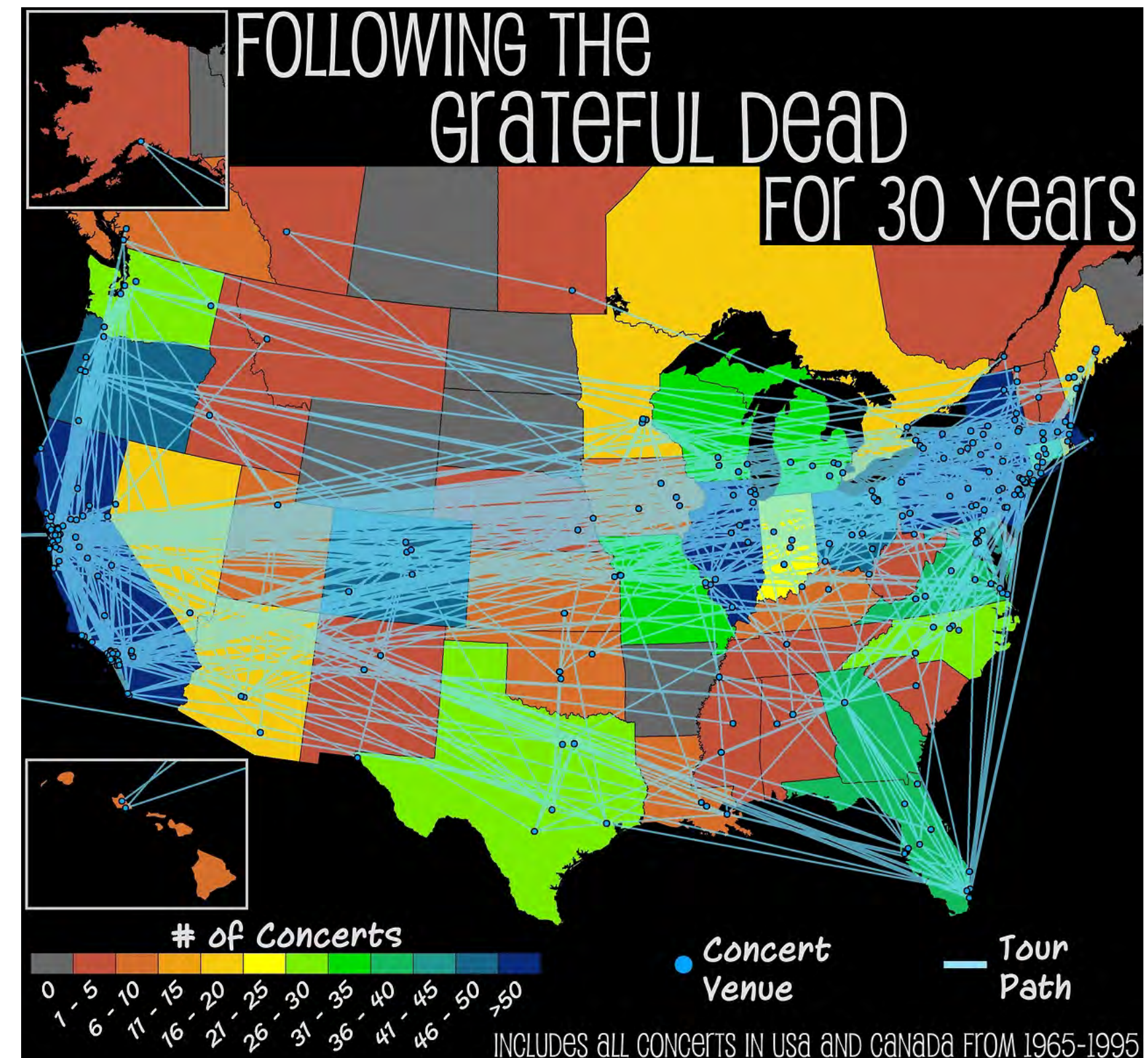



Examine **this chart**. Then consider or ask a friend:

- What is this chart showing?
 - Do you recognize the band logos shown in the illustration? What bands are being represented?
 - In the chart, what do the different color records denote?
 - By analyzing the data in the chart, how would you compare the Grateful Dead to the other bands listed?
 - What might you conclude from the data in this chart about the Grateful Dead?
 - What are some other ways the Grateful Dead might have achieved success, outside of selling records and albums?
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Examine **this map** related to the Grateful Dead. Then consider or ask a friend:


- What kind of data is being shown in this image?
- Approximately how many concerts did the Grateful Dead perform in the state you live in?
- Do you have relatives or friends in another state? How many concerts did the Grateful Dead perform in that state?
- What might be the result of all this touring? How might doing so many concerts have contributed to the Grateful Dead's success?





Individually or with a friend, go through each question in **Handout – Grateful Dead 1966 Tour Worksheet**.





The Grateful Dead's audience continued to grow after their 1966 tour. Next, you will be considering what the band did to grow their audience.



Watch **this video** about Grateful Dead fans. Then consider or ask a friend:

- Who are “The Deadheads”?
- Why might these Grateful Dead fans go to concerts?
- What strategies might have the Grateful Dead used to grow their “Deadhead” fanbase?



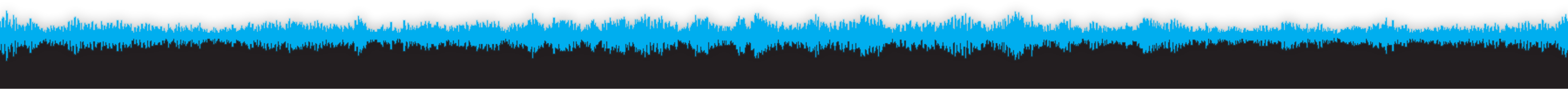
Next, watch [this video](#) about Grateful Dead concerts. Then consider or ask a friend:

- What were some of the different groups of fans the clip mentions?
- What does the presence of these various groups say about a Grateful Dead concert? Do you think the band welcomed different types of people?
- Deadheads are known for following the band on tour, to see many Grateful Dead concerts in the same year. How might the Grateful Dead keep their concerts interesting for fans who want to see them multiple times?







Follow the instructions on **Handout – Grateful Dead Setlists**. Then consider or ask a friend:

- Based on your calculations, can you make any conclusions about how the Grateful Dead approached their live concerts?
 - How did they keep their concerts interesting for their most devoted fans?
 - How does the data from the setlists support your analysis?
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Watch [this video](#) about Grateful Dead tapers. Then consider or ask a friend:

- What might motivate Deadheads to record the concerts they attend?
 - The clip mentions that the band's record company did not approve of fans recording the live shows. Why might they have disapproved of Grateful Dead concert recording?
 - How did the band feel about the tapers? What was their initial motivation for allowing recordings to be made?
 - Why did the band's decision to allow recordings turn out to be “visionary”? What might you do at a concert today that would be similar to what these fans were doing?
 - How might the creation of live recordings grow the Grateful Dead's audience?
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Individually or with a friend, go through each question in **Handout – Grateful Dead 1995 Tour Worksheet**. Then consider or ask a friend:

- How could you calculate the percentage of growth in ticket sales between the 1966 and 1995 tours?
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SUMMARY

- By examining data related to album sales and ticket prices, it becomes clear that the Grateful Dead became successful through touring
- By catering to a diversity of fans and allowing taping, the Grateful Dead increased their audience base substantially
- Quantitative data such as record sales and ticket sales often reveals the strategies musicians and bands utilize to become more successful



BE CREATIVE

Use this **Ticket Design activity** to design a unique concert ticket for a musician or band of your choice. Try to make the design fit the image or persona of the artist(s) you chose.



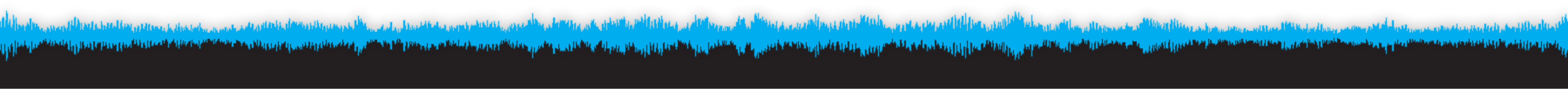
BE CURIOUS

Read this brief article about a conference just for Grateful Dead Fans: Imagine that you are a person at this conference. Write an imaginary journal entry describing your experience at the conference.



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