Statistical Literacy

At least as much about critical thinking (verbal)
as about mathematical thinking (numerical).

At least as much about words (syntax and semantics)
as about numeric variables (algebra) and values (arithmetic).

At least as much about rates and percentages
as about variances and standard errors

At least as much about reading tables and graphs
as about reading regression diagnostics

At least as much about selecting the relevant rate or percentage
as about selecting the right statistical test

At least as much about distinguishing experiments from non-experiments
as about whether two populations have equal variances.

At least as much about reading and interpreting summary statistics
as about reading and interpreting detail data plots or tables.

At least as much about thinking creatively on alternate explanations
as about thinking mechanically on how to calculate a p-value.

At least as much about thinking conditionally about observed associations
as about thinking un-conditionally on their numerical strength.

At least as much about conditional and contextual thinking
as about unconditional and non-contextual thinking.

Milo Schield, August 12, 2001

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