Data Analysis Activity

Directions: Jacob Riis’s book, *How the Other Half Lives*, describes the living conditions of immigrants in New York at the turn of the last century. The book’s appendix contains tables of data. Examine the tables and answer the following questions. Be prepared to discuss your answers and questions you have regarding these statistics.

Table: Major Cities, 1880-1889

Put the cities in order of “persons per dwelling” in 1880. Next, put the cities in order of “death rate” in 1880. How do the lists compare? What might explain this?

Table: New York City, 1880-1890

Calculate the percentage increase in “density per acre” from 1880 to 1890 for

- New York City
- Manhattan
- 10th Ward
- 11th Ward
- 13th Ward

What differences do you find? What might explain these differences?

Table: Police Statistics, 1889

Note the categories on which data were kept. Why do you think literacy, lost children, and number of saloons were of interest to the police?

Tables: Immigrants Landed at Garden Castle, 1889; Other Immigration, 1883-1889

Check a map to find the parts of Europe in which each group of countries is located.

Total the immigrants from England, Scotland, and Ireland in 1889. Total the immigrants from Italy, Russia/Poland, Hungary, and Bohemia in 1889. Which total is larger?

Why might those in second group of immigrants be treated differently from those in the first?