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An experiment on the teaching of statistics and probability.

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Few fields within mathematics generate more anxiety of more misconceptions than probability and statistics. In the 1970s, Guy Brousseau experimented with some ideas for an introduction to these fields that could, by its timing and nature, forestall both of these problems. He was at that point in the early stages of developing Didactique, otherwise known as The Theory of Situations. This article gives a description of the experiment, which consisted of a series of lesson sessions carried out by his wife in her fourth grade classroom. The description provides a window on the development of such situations. Accompanying the description is a discussion explaining, from Brousseau's current standpoint, the choices made, their consequences and the implications of the experiment in terms of children's ability to internalize the idea of randomness, of some elements of constructivist theories and of the level of mathematical background required in order for students to be able to approach the ideas of probability and statistics. (orig.)

Classification: K12

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