

DO YOU THINK YOU CAN JUMP HIGHER THAN A MAASAI WARRIOR?

Investigate, Measure, Compare, Graph

The Maasai Tribe of East Africa is well known for their high jumping capabilities. The "adumu" is a competitive jumping dance that takes strength and fitness. It's an adolescent rite of passage with the highest jumper earning the respect of the tribe. The heels of their feet never touch the ground and there is no swinging of arms to gain extra height. It is a vertical jump from the standing position. It's harder than it looks.

Estimate: Guess how high you think you can jump from a vertical standing position. **Record** your guesses.

Investigate: Place a measuring tape up against a wall and tape it. A partner will **measure** your jumps in inches.

Record: Write down your measurement after each of your three jumps labeled 1st, 2nd, 3rd. Let your partner have a turn.

Compare: Who jumped the highest? Which try was your best score? What did you do differently for each turn?

Calculate: Find the average (the mean) by adding up your scores then dividing by 3 (# of tries).

Graph: Graph your results, including the averages.

Last point on graph: Look up the average jumping height of a Maasai warrior. Add it to the graph. Were you even close?

Make a bar graph:

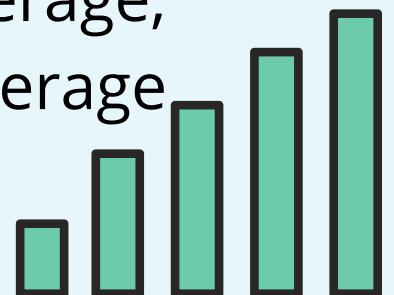
Vertical y-axis points: increments of 5 (0, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35). Inches

Horizontal x-axis: 9 bars

Person#1, 1st jump, 2nd, 3rd, average,

Person#2, 1st jump, 2nd, 3rd, average

Maasai Warrior's: average





More information on the Maasai's jumping competition

The Maasai Tribe of Kenya and Tanzania is one of many ethnic groups in East Africa. They still maintain their traditional ways of dress, wearing a brightly colored blanket called a shuka. They're herders of cattle. They no longer hunt lions to prove their worthiness and earn status within the tribe. Instead, they hold 'adumu,' which is a jumping dance and an adolescent rite of passage. It takes great strength and skill to jump so high from a standing position. No one gets a running head start, swings their arms, or bends their knees for a better push off. They keep their bodies as straight as possible and their heels don't touch the ground. Check out YouTube. There are many videos which show the Maasai's athleticism during this competition.

The average height a Maasai can jump is 80 cm! (That's 2.7 feet or 31.4 inches).