

LEWIS & CLARK IN COLUMBIA RIVER COUNTRY



WHAT IS A STEM AND LEAF PLOT ANYWAYS?

A stem-and-leaf plot is actually a type of graph. This graph helps organize data to show the shape and distributions. In this plot, each data value is split into two parts- a “**stem**” and a “**leaf**”.

The leaf is usually the last digit of the number. For the number 12, the leaf would be 2. For the number 123, the leaf would be 3.

The stem is made up of all the digits to the left of the leaf. For the number 12, the stem would be 1. For the number 123, the stem would be 12.

CREATING THE PLOT

1. Imagine that fifteen different students are asked to walk across a hall and count the number of footsteps it takes them to cross it. For each of these students, you count and record. This is what you have:

31 16 30 22 23 38 28 12 18 34 42 37 25 40 36

2. Now you want to compare these numbers. After the numbers are recorded, they need to be put into order, from smallest to largest, until you have a set that looks something like this:

12 16 18 22 23 25 28 30 31 34 36 37 38 40 42

3. Separate each number into the stem and the leaf. Since these are two-digit numbers, the tens digit is the **stem** and the units digit is the **leaf**.

The number 42 would be represented as:

Stem	Leaf
4	2

4. Group the numbers with the same stems.

List the stems in numerical order.

Stem	Leaf
1	2 3 8
2	2 3 5 8
3	0 1 4 6 7 8
4	0 2

5. Prepare a legend for the graph.

Legend:

1|2 means 12