Human Dot Plots

In this activity, students form the dots of a dot plot. First stretch a 100 foot tape measure along the wall of a hallway or other large space. Students are asked a question that expects a numeric response. They answer by standing beside the number (in feet) on the tape measure that corresponds to their answer. If more than one student has the same response, they should stack themselves up perpendicular to the number line formed by the measuring tape. Once students have found their place along the number line, call on students to help describe the shape, center and spread of the distribution. Students may give an approximate answer for where the center is likely to be. If the distribution is skewed, ask students where the mean will be in relation to the median. Range will probably be the easiest measure of variability for students to provide. Ask students to identify any unusual features in the graph such as outliers or bimodal. The list below provides some example questions.

Questions:

1. How many pets do you have?
2. How many states have you visited? (Include Illinois in the count.)
3. How many languages do you speak?
4. How many computers does your family have?
5. What is your favorite number (from 0 to 100)? Or what is your lucky number?
6. What day of the month is your birthday?
7. What grade are you in?
8. How old are you?
9. How old do you think your math teacher is?
10. How old is President Obama?