

### **Example One: improving secondary school mathematics performance**

A secondary school is anxious to determine and evaluate a range of factors which affect the level of achievement of mathematics in its sixteen-year-old students. Students in two of the school's mathematics classes take a commercially produced test of mathematical ability, then the classes follow the mathematics curriculum for six months. After this time the students take a similar test (or equivalent form) of mathematical ability. Students in class A score more than students in class B. The evaluator reports that teacher quality is a significant factor in improving mathematics performance and that the teacher of class A is better than the teacher of class B.

### **Example Two: improving children's use of history texts**

Concern has been expressed about children's poor ability to select relevant material from history text books. It is decided to try to remedy this problem, so a small project is planned which will be designed to improve this ability. An evaluation is undertaken to see if this project is a success. Some of the eleven-year-old children take a diagnostic test on selecting relevant information from a history book. The group is then given an intensive morning's work on how to extract relevant material from a history text book. In the afternoon the group is given a post-test on selecting relevant information from a history book; 10% of the children score more highly on this second test. The evaluator reports that the morning's intensive work has increased the children's ability to select information from history books and that the project is a success.

### **Example Three: science in secondary schools**

A pilot project has been undertaken in science teaching. All the science teachers in ten secondary schools have been invited to participate in the project which is being funded by local industries. However, only three schools decide to participate in the project. The project runs for three years and is then evaluated. The local evaluator is asked to analyse the results in national examinations of all the students in the ten schools to see if there is a difference between the results of those in the three project schools and the results of those in the other seven. He finds that the students in the three schools who *had* participated in the project have achieved generally better than those in the other seven in the three year period of the project. Because the evaluator has been asked to suggest whether the project should continue, he recommends that it should continue and that all ten schools should participate in the funded science project.

### **Example Four: using learning support teachers in school**

The governing body of a school is anxious to use its financial budget to best effect. It wishes to evaluate the effectiveness of its part-time learning support teachers to see if money is being spent wisely on this aspect of the school. Learning support teachers are placed with a group of seven year-olds whose performance in mathematics is poor. After two terms the class teacher administers a mathematics test to all the children who have been working with the learning support teachers. She discovers that these children perform better on the test than other children in the class. The class teacher is then able to recommend to the governors that the learning support teachers improved children's mathematical ability and that funding here should improve.