Lesson 11: Normal Distributions

Student Outcomes

- Students use tables and technology to estimate the area under a normal curve.
- Students interpret probabilities in context.
- When appropriate, students select an appropriate normal distribution to serve as a model for a given data distribution.

Lesson Notes

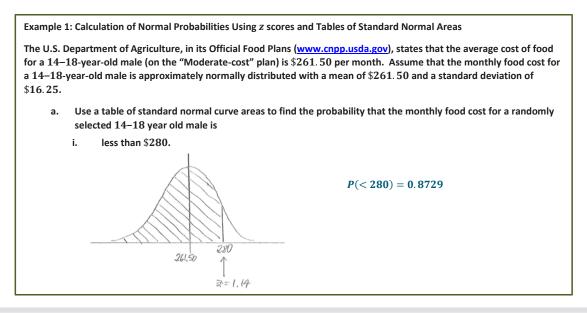
In Lesson 10, students first learn how to calculate z scores and are then shown how to use z scores and a graphing calculator to find normal probabilities. Students are then introduced to the process of calculating normal probabilities using tables of standard normal curve areas. In this lesson, students calculate normal probabilities using tables and spreadsheets. They also learn how to use a graphing calculator to find normal probabilities directly (without using zscores) and are introduced to the idea of fitting a normal curve to a data distribution that seems to be approximately normal.

Classwork

Example 1 (7 minutes): Calculation of Normal Probabilities Using z scores and Tables of Standard Normal

Areas

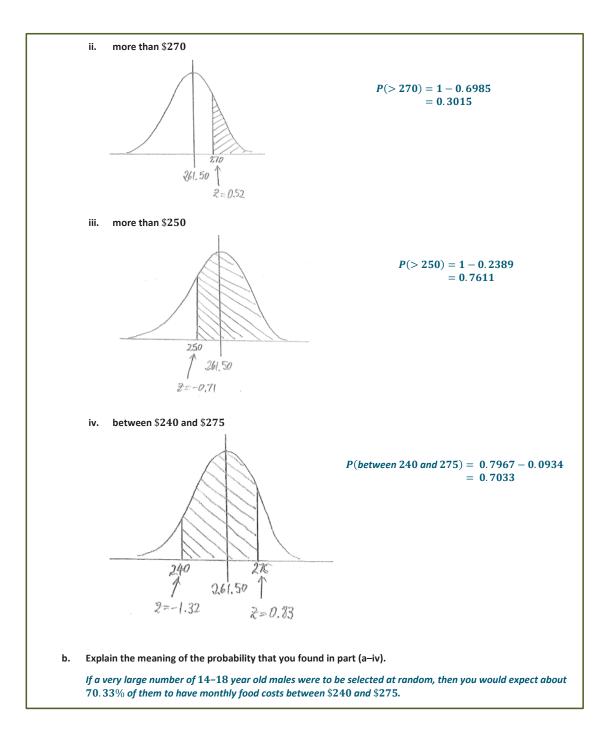
In this example, two of the techniques learned in Lesson 10—evaluation of z scores and use of tables of standard normal areas—are combined to find normal probabilities. Consider asking students to work independently or with a partner, and use this as an opportunity to informally assess student progress.







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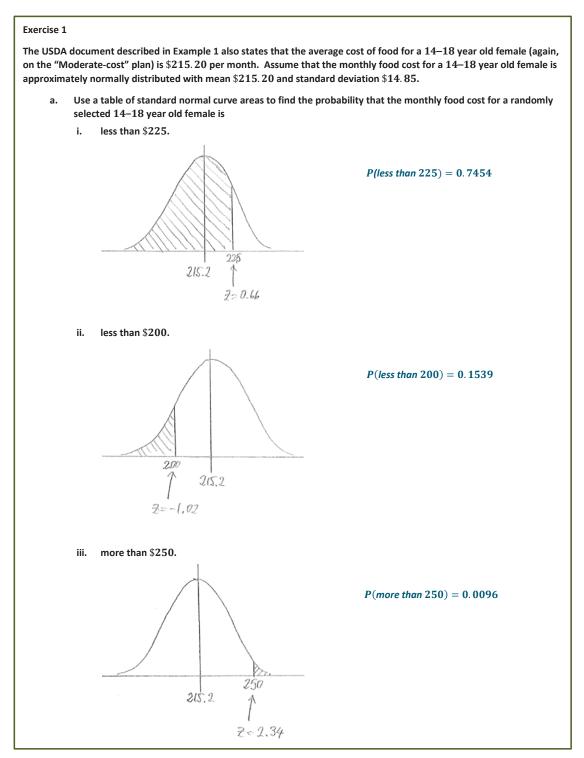


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Exercise 1 (5 minutes)

MP.4

This exercise provides practice with the approach demonstrated in Example 1. Continue to encourage students to include a normal distribution curve with work shown for each part of the exercise.



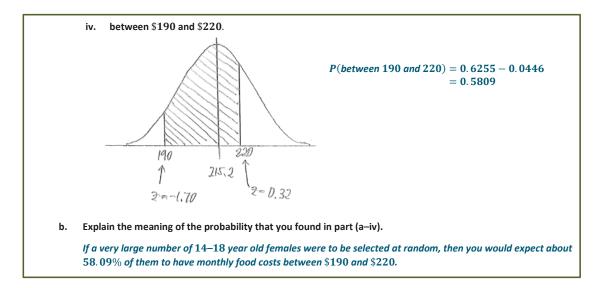


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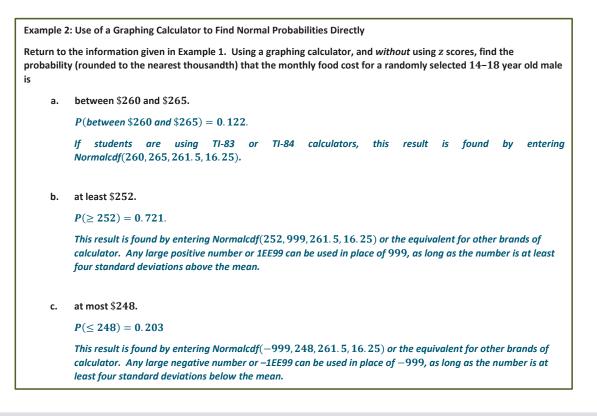




Example 2 (5 minutes): Use of a Graphing Calculator to Find Normal Probabilities Directly

In this example, students learn how to calculate normal probabilities using a graphing calculator without using z scores. Use this example to show the class how to do this using a graphing calculator*.

*Calculator note: The general form of this is Normalcdf([left bound],[right bound],[mean],[standard deviation]). The Normalcdf function is accessed using 2nd, DISTR.







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Exercise 2 (5 minutes)

MP.5 Here students have an opportunity to practice using a graphing calculator to find normal probabilities directly and reflect on the use of technology compared to the use of tables of normal curve areas.

Exercise 2 Return to the information given in Exercise 1. In Exercise 1, you calculated the probability that the monthly food cost for a randomly selected 14–18 year a. old female is between \$190 and \$220. Would the probability that that the monthly food cost for a randomly selected 14-18 year old female is between \$195 and \$230 be greater than or smaller than the probability for between \$190 and \$220? Explain your thinking. The probability would be greater between \$195 and \$230. If you look at a sketch of a normal curve with mean \$215.20 and standard deviation \$14.85, there is more area under the curve for the wider interval of \$195 to \$230. Do you think that the probability that the monthly food cost for a randomly selected 14-18 year old female is b. between \$195 and \$230 is closer to 0.50, 0.75, or 0.90? Explain your thinking. Closer to 0.75. Based on my answer to part (a), I expect the probability to be greater than the probability for between \$190 and \$220, which was 0.5809, but I do not think it would be as great as 0.90. Using a graphing calculator, and without using z scores, find the probability (rounded to the nearest thousandth) that the monthly food cost for a randomly selected 14-18 year old female is between \$195and \$230. Is this probability consistent with your answer to part (b)? P(between 195 and 230) = 0.754This probability is close to 0.75, which was my answer in part (b). d. How does the probability you calculated in part (c) compare to the probability that would have been obtained using the table of normal curve areas? The z score for \$195 is $z = \frac{195 - 215.20}{14.85} = -1.36$, and the z score for \$230 is $z = \frac{230 - 215.20}{14.85} = 1.00$. Using the table of normal curve areas, P(between 195 and 230) = 0.8413 - 0.0853 = 0.756. This is very close to the answer I got using the graphing calculator. What is one advantage to using a graphing calculator to calculate this probability? e. It is a lot faster to use the graphing calculator because I didn't have to calculate z scores in order to get the probability. In Exercise 1, you calculated the probability that the monthly food cost for a randomly selected 14-18 year f. old female is at most 200. Would the probability that the monthly food cost for a randomly selected 14-18year old female is at most \$210 be greater than or less than the probability for at most \$200? Explain your thinking. The probability would be greater for at most \$210. There is more area under the normal curve to the left of \$210 than to the left of \$200. Do you think that the probability that the monthly food cost for a randomly selected 14-18 year old female is g. at most \$210 is closer to 0. 10, 0. 30, or 0. 50? Explain your thinking. Closer to 0.30. Based on my answer to part (f), I expect the probability to be greater than the probability for at most \$200, which was 0.1539, but I don't think it would be as great as 0.50 because \$210 is less than the mean of \$215.20, and the area to the left of \$215.20 is 0.50.





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Using a graphing calculator, and without using z scores, find the probability (rounded to the nearest thousandth) that the monthly food cost for a randomly selected 14-18 year old female is at most \$210.

 $P(\leq 210) = 0.363$

Using a graphing calculator, and without using z scores, find the probability (rounded to the nearest i. thousandth) that the monthly food cost for a randomly selected 14-18 year old female is at least \$235.

 $P(\geq 235) = 0.091$

Example 3 (5 minutes): Using a Spreadsheet to Find Normal Probabilities

In this example, students learn how to calculate normal probabilities using a spreadsheet. This example and the exercise that follows revisits Example 1 and Exercise 1 but has students use a spreadsheet rather than a table of normal curve areas. Use this example to show the class how to do this using a spreadsheet*.

*Spreadsheet note: Many spreadsheet programs, such as Excel, have a built in function to calculate normal probabilities. In Excel, this can be done by finding the area to the left of any particular cutoff value by typing the following into a cell of the spreadsheet and then hitting the return key:

= NORMDIST(cutoff,mean,stddev,true).

You need to include the true at the end in order to get the area to the left of the cutoff. For example,

= NORMDIST(50,40,10,true) will give 0.84124, which is the area to the left of 50 under the normal curve with mean 40 and standard deviation 10.



Return to the information given in Example 1. The U.S. Department of Agriculture, in its Official Food Plans (www.cnpp.usda.gov), states that the average cost of food for a 14-18-year-old male (on the "moderate-cost" plan) is \$261.50 per month. Assume that the monthly food cost for a 14–18-year-old male is approximately normally distributed with a mean of \$261.50 and a standard deviation of \$16.25. Round your answers to four decimal places.

Use a spreadsheet to find the probability that the monthly food cost for a randomly selected 14-18 year old male is 1. less than \$280. а.

> If students are using Excel, this would be found by using =NORMDIST(280, 261.50, 16.25, true). The difference between this answer and the answer using the table of normal curve areas is due to rounding in calculating the z score needed in order to use the table.

$$P(< 280) = 0.8725$$

$$P(>270) = 1 - 0.6995 \\ = 0.3005$$

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261.50

280

241.50

more than \$270.

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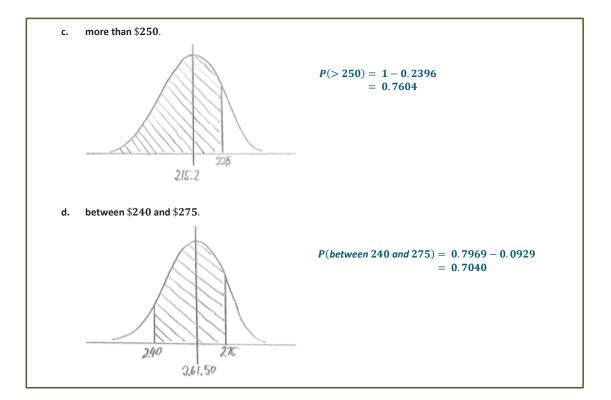


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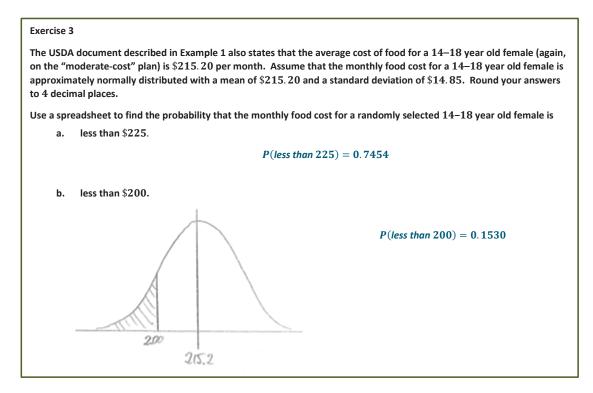
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Exercise 3 (5 minutes)





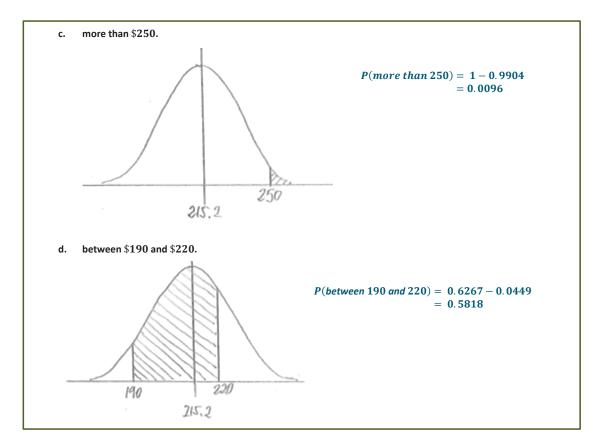
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Exercise 4 (6 minutes)

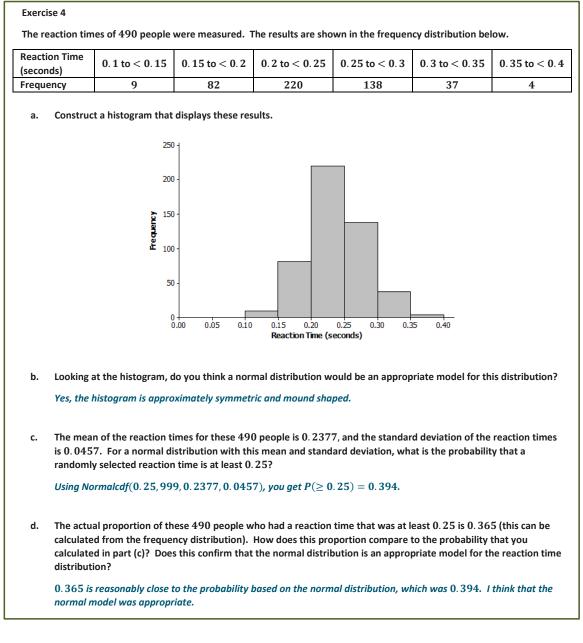
Here students are led through the process of choosing a normal distribution to model a given data set. Students might need some assistance prior to tackling this exercise. Teachers may wish to provide a quick review of how to draw a histogram. Students may need to be reminded how to calculate the mean and the standard deviation for data given in the form of a frequency distribution. In fact, this example provides the additional complication that the data are given in the form of a *grouped* frequency distribution, so the midpoints of the intervals have to be used as the data values.

If time is short you can simply provide students with reminders of these techniques mentioned above, and the exercise can then be finished as part of the homework assignment.



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Closing (2 minutes)

Refer to Exercise 3.

- How would you interpret the probability that you found using a calculator in part (c)?
 - Approximately 39.4% of the people had a reaction time of 0.25 seconds or higher.

Ask students to summarize the main ideas of the lesson in writing or with a neighbor. Use this as an opportunity to informally assess comprehension of the lesson. The Lesson Summary below offers some important ideas that should be included.







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Lesson 11:



Lesson Summary

Probabilities associated with normal distributions can be found using *z* scores and tables of standard normal curve areas.

Probabilities associated with normal distributions can be found directly (without using *z* scores) using a graphing calculator.

When a data distribution has a shape that is approximately normal, a normal distribution can be used as a model for the data distribution. The normal distribution with the same mean and the standard deviation as the data distribution is used.

Exit Ticket (5 minutes)







Name

Date _____

Lesson 11: Normal Distributions

Exit Ticket

- 1. SAT scores were originally scaled so that the scores for each section were approximately normally distributed with a mean of 500 and a standard deviation of 100. Assuming that this scaling still applies, use a table of standard normal curve areas to find the probability that a randomly selected SAT student scores
 - more than 700. a.

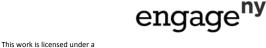
between 440 and 560. b.

- 2. In 2012 the mean SAT math score was 514, and the standard deviation was 117. For the purposes of this question, assume that the scores were normally distributed. Using a graphing calculator, and without using z scores, find the probability (rounded to the nearest thousandth), and explain how the answer was determined that a randomly selected SAT math student in 2012 scored
 - between 400 and 480. a.

b. less than 350.



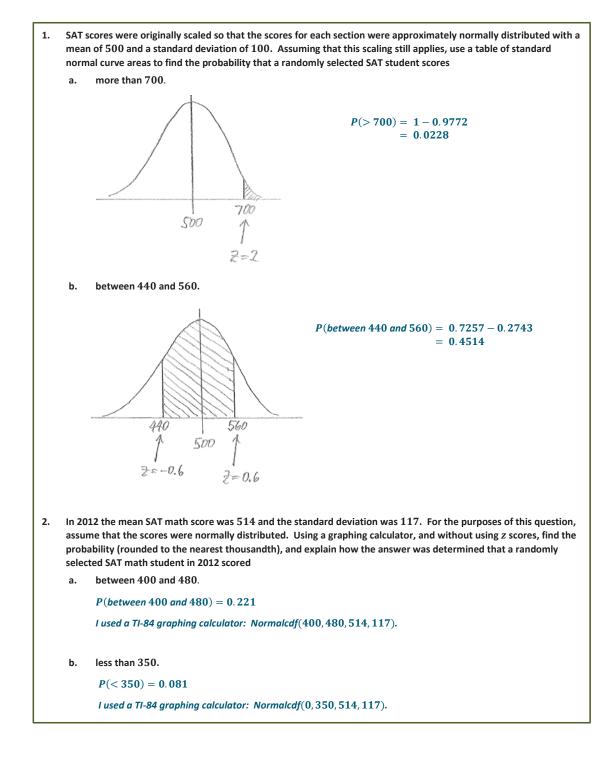




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Exit Ticket Sample Solutions

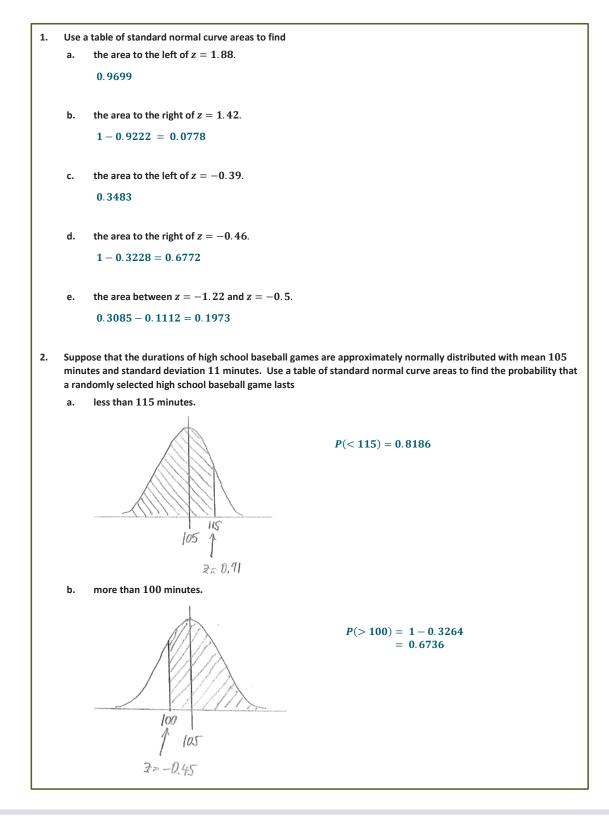








Problem Set Sample Solutions





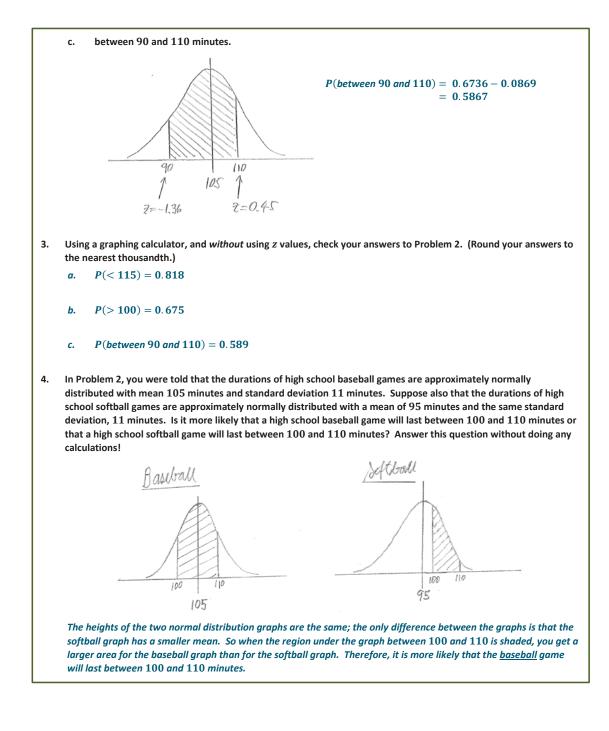
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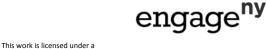
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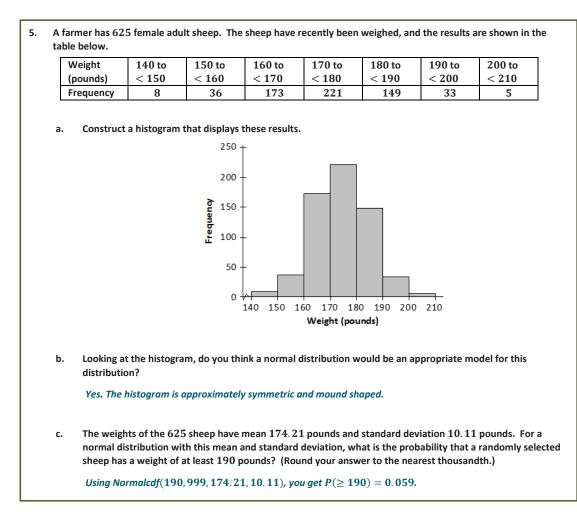








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Cumulative area

z* 0

Standard Normal Curve Areas

	Normal Curve Areas						z* 0			
Z	0.00	0.01	0.02	0.03	0.04	0.05	0.06	0.07	0.08	0.09
-3.8	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001
-3.7	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001
-3.6	0.0002	0.0002	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001
-3.5	0.0002	0.0002	0.0002	0.0002	0.0002	0.0002	0.0002	0.0002	0.0002	0.0002
-3.4	0.0003	0.0003	0.0003	0.0003	0.0003	0.0003	0.0003	0.0003	0.0003	0.0002
-3.3	0.0005	0.0005	0.0005	0.0004	0.0004	0.0004	0.0004	0.0004	0.0004	0.0003
-3.2	0.0007	0.0007	0.0006	0.0006	0.0006	0.0006	0.0006	0.0005	0.0005	0.0005
-3.1	0.0010	0.0009	0.0009	0.0009	0.0008	0.0008	0.0008	0.0008	0.0007	0.0007
-3.0	0.0013	0.0013	0.0013	0.0012	0.0012	0.0011	0.0011	0.0011	0.0010	0.0010
-2.9	0.0019	0.0018	0.0018	0.0017	0.0016	0.0016	0.0015	0.0015	0.0014	0.0014
-2.8	0.0026	0.0025	0.0024	0.0023	0.0023	0.0022	0.0021	0.0021	0.0020	0.0019
-2.7	0.0035	0.0034	0.0033	0.0032	0.0031	0.0030	0.0029	0.0028	0.0027	0.0026
-2.6	0.0047	0.0045	0.0044	0.0043	0.0041	0.0040	0.0039	0.0038	0.0037	0.0036
-2.5	0.0062	0.0060	0.0059	0.0057	0.0055	0.0054	0.0052	0.0051	0.0049	0.0048
-2.4	0.0082	0.0080	0.0078	0.0075	0.0073	0.0071	0.0069	0.0068	0.0066	0.0064
-2.3	0.0107	0.0104	0.0102	0.0099	0.0096	0.0094	0.0091	0.0089	0.0087	0.0084
-2.2	0.0139	0.0136	0.0132	0.0129	0.0125	0.0122	0.0119	0.0116	0.0113	0.0110
-2.1	0.0179	0.0174	0.0160	0.0166	0.0162	0.0158	0.0154	0.0150	0.0146	0.0143
-2.0	0.0228	0.0222	0.0217	0.0212	0.0207	0.0202	0.0197	0.0192	0.0188	0.0183
-1.9	0.0287	0.0281	0.0274	0.0268	0.0262	0.0256	0.0250	0.0244	0.0239	0.0233
-1.8	0.0359	0.0351	0.0344	0.0336	0.0329	0.0322	0.0314	0.0307	0.0301	0.0294
-1.7	0.0446	0.0436	0.0427	0.0418	0.0409	0.0401	0.0392	0.0384	0.0375	0.0367
-1.6	0.0548	0.0537	0.0526	0.0516	0.0505	0.0495	0.0485	0.0475	0.0465	0.0455
-1.5	0.0668	0.0655	0.0643	0.0630	0.0618	0.0606	0.0594	0.0582	0.0571	0.0599
-1.4	0.0808	0.0793	0.0778	0.0764	0.0749	0.0735	0.0721	0.0708	0.0694	0.0681
-1.3	0.0968	0.0951	0.0934	0.0918	0.0901	0.0885	0.0869	0.0853	0.0838	0.0823
-1.2	0.1151	0.1131	0.1112	0.1093	0.1075	0.1056	0.1038	0.1020	0.1003	0.0985
-1.1	0.1357	0.1335	0.1314	0.1292	0.1271	0.1251	0.1230	0.1210	0.1190	0.1170
-1.0	0.1587	0.1562	0.1539	0.1515	0.1492	0.1469	0.1446	0.1423	0.1401	0.1379
-0.9	0.1841	0.1814	0.1788	0.1762	0.1736	0.1711	0.1685	0.1660	0.1635	0.1611
-0.8	0.2119	0.2090	0.2061	0.2033	0.2005	0.1977	0.1949	0.1922	0.1894	0.1867
-0.7	0.2420	0.2389	0.2358	0.2327	0.2296	0.2266	0.2236	0.2206	0.2177	0.2148
-0.6	0.2743	0.2709	0.2676	0.2643	0.2611	0.2578	0.2546	0.2514	0.2483	0.2451
-0.5	0.3085	0.3050	0.3015	0.2981	0.2946	0.2912	0.2877	0.2843	0.2810	0.2776
-0.4	0.3446	0.3409	0.3372	0.3336	0.3300	0.3264	0.3228	0.3192	0.3156	0.3121
-0.3	0.3821	0.3783	0.3745	0.3707	0.3669	0.3632	0.3594	0.3557	0.3520	0.3483
-0.2	0.4207	0.4168	0.4129	0.4090	0.4052	0.4013	0.3974	0.3936	0.3897	0.3859
-0.1	0.4602	0.4562	0.4522	0.4483	0.4443	0.4404	0.4364	0.4325	0.4286	0.4247
-0.0	0.5000	0.4960	0.4920	0.4880	0.4840	0.4801	0.4761	0.4721	0.4681	0.4641







Z	0.00	0.01	0.02	0.03	0.04	0.05	0.06	0.07	0.08	0.09
0.0	0.5000	0.5040	0.5080	0.5120	0.5160	0.5199	0.5239	0.5279	0.5319	0.5359
0.1	0.5398	0.5438	0.5478	0.5517	0.5557	0.5596	0.5636	0.5675	0.5714	0.5753
0.2	0.5793	0.5832	0.5871	0.5910	0.5948	0.5987	0.6026	0.6064	0.6103	0.6141
0.3	0.6179	0.6217	0.6255	0.6293	0.6331	0.6368	0.6406	0.6443	0.6480	0.6517
0.4	0.6554	0.6591	0.6628	0.6664	0.6700	0.6736	0.6772	0.6808	0.6844	0.6879
0.5	0.6915	0.6950	0.6985	0.7019	0.7054	0.7088	0.7123	0.7157	0.7190	0.7224
0.6	0.7257	0.7291	0.7324	0.7357	0.7389	0.7422	0.7454	0.7486	0.7517	0.7549
0.7	0.7580	0.7611	0.7642	0.7673	0.7704	0.7734	0.7764	0.7794	0.7823	0.7852
0.8	0.7881	0.7910	0.7939	0.7967	0.7995	0.8023	0.8051	0.8078	0.8106	0.8133
0.9	0.8159	0.8186	0.8212	0.8238	0.8264	0.8289	0.8315	0.8340	0.8365	0.8389
1.0	0.8413	0.8438	0.8461	0.8485	0.8508	0.8531	0.8554	0.8577	0.8599	0.8621
1.1	0.8643	0.8665	0.8686	0.8708	0.8729	0.8749	0.8770	0.8790	0.8810	0.8830
1.2	0.8849	0.8869	0.8888	0.8907	0.8925	0.8944	0.8962	0.8980	0.8997	0.9015
1.3	0.9032	0.9049	0.9066	0.9082	0.9099	0.9115	0.9131	0.9147	0.9162	0.9177
1.4	0.9192	0.9207	0.9222	0.9236	0.9251	0.9265	0.9279	0.9292	0.9306	0.9319
1.5	0.9332	0.9345	0.9357	0.9370	0.9382	0.9394	0.9406	0.9418	0.9429	0.9441
1.6	0.9452	0.9463	0.9474	0.9484	0.9495	0.9505	0.9515	0.9525	0.9535	0.9545
1.7	0.9554	0.9564	0.9573	0.9582	0.9591	0.9599	0.9608	0.9616	0.9625	0.9633
1.8	0.9641	0.9649	0.9656	0.9664	0.9671	0.9678	0.9686	0.9693	0.9699	0.9706
1.9	0.9713	0.9719	0.9726	0.9732	0.9738	0.9744	0.9750	0.9756	0.9761	0.9767
2.0	0.9772	0.9778	0.9783	0.9788	0.9793	0.9798	0.9803	0.9808	0.9812	0.9817
2.1	0.9821	0.9826	0.9830	0.9834	0.9838	0.9842	0.9846	0.9850	0.9854	0.9857
2.2	0.9861	0.9864	0.9868	0.9871	0.9875	0.9878	0.9881	0.9884	0.9887	0.9890
2.3	0.9893	0.9896	0.9898	0.9901	0.9904	0.9906	0.9909	0.9911	0.9913	0.9916
2.4	0.9918	0.9920	0.9922	0.9925	0.9927	0.9929	0.9931	0.9932	0.9934	0.9936
2.5	0.9938	0.9940	0.9941	0.9943	0.9945	0.9946	0.9948	0.9949	0.9951	0.9952
2.6	0.9953	0.9955	0.9956	0.9957	0.9959	0.9960	0.9961	0.9962	0.9963	0.9964
2.7	0.9965	0.9966	0.9967	0.9968	0.9969	0.9970	0.9971	0.9972	0.9973	0.9974
2.8	0.9974	0.9975	0.9976	0.9977	0.9977	0.9978	0.9979	0.9979	0.9980	0.9981
2.9	0.9981	0.9982	0.9982	0.9983	0.9984	0.9984	0.9985	0.9985	0.9986	0.9986
3.0	0.9987	0.9987	0.9987	0.9988	0.9988	0.9989	0.9989	0.9989	0.9990	0.9990
3.1	0.9990	0.9991	0.9991	0.9991	0.9992	0.9992	0.9992	0.9992	0.9993	0.9993
3.2	0.9993	0.9993	0.9994	0.9994	0.9994	0.9994	0.9994	0.9995	0.9995	0.9995
3.3	0.9995	0.9995	0.9995	0.9996	0.9996	0.9996	0.9996	0.9996	0.9996	0.9997
3.4	0.9997	0.9997	0.9997	0.9997	0.9997	0.9997	0.9997	0.9997	0.9997	0.9998
3.5	0.9998	0.9998	0.9998	0.9998	0.9998	0.9998	0.9998	0.9998	0.9998	0.9998
3.6	0.9998	0.9998	0.9999	0.9999	0.9999	0.9999	0.9999	0.9999	0.9999	0.9999
3.7	0.9999	0.9999	0.9999	0.9999	0.9999	0.9999	0.9999	0.9999	0.9999	0.9999
3.8	0.9999	0.9999	0.9999	0.9999	0.9999	0.9999	0.9999	0.9999	0.9999	0.9999



