## What The Customer Needed

Illuminate Publishing is a UK-based independent educational publisher. They publish textbooks for the secondary school market in a wide range of subjects, often creating textbooks to fill underserved content niches. Many of their programs are designed for British students preparing to take advanced-level exams.

Illuminate had contracted with an author team to create an AQA GCSE statistics textbook. This book used extensive visuals, including tech art, charts, and graphs, as well as rich four-color imagery. Illuminate needed an experienced design, art, and production team to transform this manuscript into a four-color textbook.

What We Did

Westchester started by reviewing the manuscript and creating several design approaches. Each option included the chapter opener as well as several body pages so that our design treatments incorporated as many recurring features as possible. For each main design treatment, we also provided several variants, sending the team upwards of nine total designs based on three underlying formats.
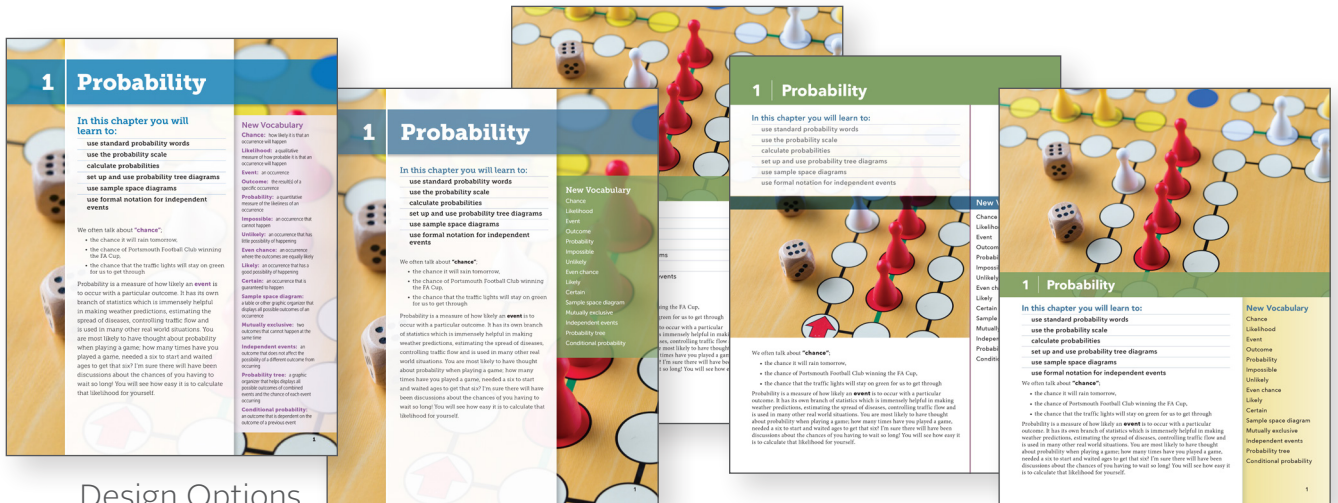
Design Options

Our team reviewed the designs with the Illuminate stakeholders, winnowing the options and discussing which treatments they felt worked best for the content. Following that meeting, our team presented a master design that balanced the client feedback with a cohesive approach. After Illuminate approved the design, our lead designer and our production lead worked together to create a master template. Because of the intensive photo manipulation and chart and graph creation requirements, the plan was for the work to be set in the US. One of our senior production artists began applying the template to the manuscript pages for a first chapter, which we used to calibrate client expectations.
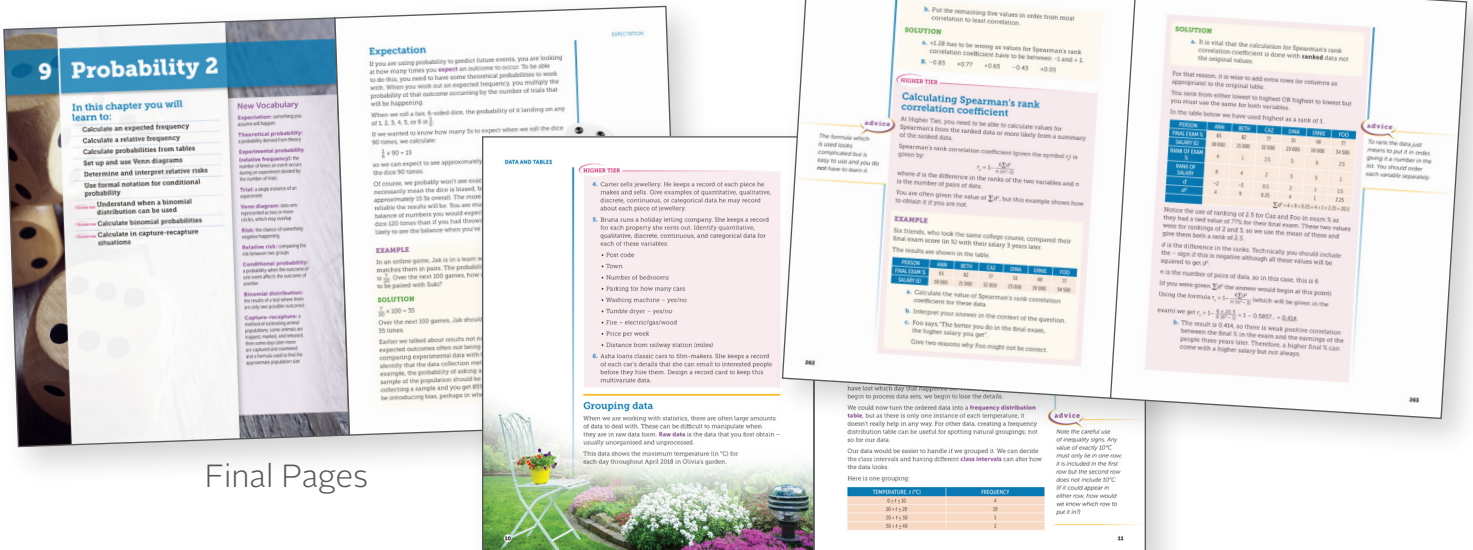
Illuminate Publishing - Case Study

In setting that first chapter, there was an unanticipated challenge. The book was written as a running manuscript, without an established bookmap. The client expected the book to run about 150 pages in total. However, after setting setting the first chapter, it was clear that the book was likely to run three times the expected length. Our project management team raised the issue with the client, and, when it became clear that the additional pages were outside the scope of the client's budget, our internal teams met to provide a solution.

The authoring team was going to need to make cuts, but they were not able to see how much they could cut, or the impact of those cuts, until the content was flowed because of the heavy use of imagery throughout the book. Westchester suggested setting the pages as galley proofs, with FPO placeholders for the charts and graphs. Illuminate agreed to this approach, and our team in Noida quickly set galley proofs of each chapter, with a rough cut of the layout and all of the text in place. Our stateside design team also evaluated the design to see what changes they could make to make fuller use of the page without the content looking overly dense.

These solutions allowed the author team to make wholesale cuts throughout the book. Though the final product was still longer than originally anticipated, the solutions our team provided brought the program back within budget parameters.

One additional complicating factor was the need to send the pages to the GCSE exam board for review midway through the production cycle. This review is outside of the traditional three round review process and resulted in many mandated changes. To facilitate this process, our team created high-quality, accurate proofs for the exam board and worked closely with the authoring team to implement the extensive changes that resulted from the review process.

Despite the challenges and delays, the program is now widely available in the UK and the client is very happy with the work. The pages are clean, with the math content readily accessible to students and presented in an engaging format. We are now working with Illuminate on a second project as a result of the success of the first.

Final Pages

Westchester Education Services