**Problem 1**

A Cat, a Parrot, and a Bag of Seed: A man finds himself on a riverbank with a cat, a parrot and a bag of seed. He needs to transport all three to he other side of the river in his boat. However, the boat has room for only the man himself and one other item (either the cat, parrot or seed). In his absence, the cat could eat the parrot, and the parrot would eat the bag of seed. Show how he can get all the passengers to the other side, without leaving the wrong ones alone

**The problem** is that the Cat, Parrot and seed need to be transported across the river without one eating the other.

**The breakdown:** The Cat can never be alone with the Parrot

The Parrot can never be alone with the seed

Only one item in boat at a time

**Potential Solutions:** Bigger boat

Enlist help

Bring item in peril back on second trip

**Evaluation:** A bigger boat would prevent situation in future, but not an immediate solution

Help might solve the problem, but cannot be guaranteed in the future.

Bringing the parrot back after dropping off the seed is a solution that will work and can be maintained.

**Solution:** First cross with the Parrot, as it is the only item that cannot be left with any other. Leave the Parrot on the other side and return for one of the other two, it doesn’t matter which. Once he has crossed with either the seed or the Cat he must return with the Parrot, as it cannot be left with either the seed or the Cat. Trade the Parrot for the last item leaving the Parrot alone on the first bank. Now that the Cat and seed are safely across he is free to return for the Parrot.

**Tests:** Starting with anything other than the Parrot ends in either a dead Parrot or no seed. Leaving either the cat or the seed with the Parrot on the other side is just as disastrous. No choice, bring Parrot back.