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Problem Solving

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A Cat, a Parrot, and a Bag of Seed:

1. Define the problem- A man has a cat, a parrot and a bag of seed and he needs to get them across a river. He only has enough room for himself and one other item and the cat will eat the parrot if you leave them together as well as the parrot eating the seed. The problem is how does the man get all three items across the river without losing any of them.
2. Break the problem apart- The man can’t leave the Cat alone with the Parrot and he cannot leave the parrot alone with the seed but he only has room for one of them at a time on his ship. The sub-goals would be to make sure none of the items is lost due to the wrong decision.
3. Identify potential solutions- There is really only one solution to this problem as you can not leave the cat alone with the Parrot and the Parrot alone with the seed, so this means that you have to take the parrot across the river first as it is the only variable that is involved in both scenarios.
4. Evaluate each potential solution- The solution absolutely meets the goal when you take the parrot across the river first he can no longer be eaten by the cat and he is also not able to eat the seed if you take the cat across first. Any other solution only makes it so you can get two of the items across.
5. Implement plan – The man takes across the parrot first and the cat sits and looks at the bag of seed in disgust. The man then comes back to the other side and grabs the cat to bring over to the other side and then the seed.