

Problem-Solving Strategies — Multiple Approaches to One Problem

Base Sheet

The child learns that math problems can be solved in more than one way: drawing a picture, using materials, making a list, working backwards, or finding a pattern. They practice applying multiple strategies to the same problem.

What You Need:

- Word problem cards
- Drawing paper
- Counters or manipulatives
- Paper and pencil
- Colored pencils

Steps:

1. 'Mathematicians are problem SOLVERS. The best problem solvers know MANY strategies!'
2. Present a problem: 'Sara has 24 flowers. She wants to put the same number in each vase. She has 4 vases. How many flowers in each?'
3. Strategy 1 — Draw a picture: draw 4 vases, distribute dots (flowers) equally.
4. Strategy 2 — Use materials: take 24 counters, deal into 4 groups.
5. Strategy 3 — Use a number sentence: $24 \div 4 = 6$.
6. 'All three strategies give the same answer! But different strategies work better for different problems!'
7. Present 3 more problems. For each, the child chooses and applies a strategy.
8. 'Which strategy is YOUR favorite?'

Work Space:



