Have you tried...

Adapted from ACME's "Have you tried" list, `http://web.mit.edu/puzzle/www/resources/haveyoutried.pdf`

For starters

Have you tried...

...reading the title and the blurb?
...typing it into a search engine?
...pursuing even a train of thought that doesn't seem to give a cogent answer at first?

Letters and words

Have you tried...

...alphabetizing?
...using the leftover letters to spell something?
...rearranging the letters (aka "anagramming" or "transposing")?
...looking for unusual letter frequencies?
...determining if it is a Rot 13/Caesar shift in general?
...shifting from letters to numbers?
...treating letters as protein sequences?
...treating letters as call letters?
...turning it into a cryptic crossword clue?
...seeing if these words relate to song lyrics?
...seeing if there are any acronyms of phrases?
...diagonalizing (taking the first letter of the first answer, the second letter of the second...)?
...looking at a computer keyboard?
...a pun?

Numbers

Have you tried...

...graphing it functionally?
...graphing it parametrically?
...checking to see if your numbers are in the right base (including hex)?
...shifting from numbers to letters?
...using it as a phone number?
...using it as an IP address?

...treating numbers as dates?
...treating numbers as atomic weights, numbers, etc.?
...treating numbers as latitude/longitude or GPS coordinates?
...treating numbers as radio stations?
...treating numbers as ASCII numbers?
...treating numbers as PLU numbers?
...treating numbers as ISBN numbers?
...seeing if there are any strange sequences?
...seeing if prime numbers are involved?
...seeing if fundamental constants are involved?
...asking what other numbers are close to the one you have?

What is it?

Have you tried...

...looking at a song/poem/book/movie/TV show?
...Braille?
...Morse code?
...using the Library of Congress or Dewey decimal system?
...Google reverse image search?

Zen

Have you tried...

...trusting your instincts?
...trusting someone else's instincts?
...asking "what's weird about this?"
...taking a step back?
...checking your work?
...asking someone else to check your work?
...explaining your work to someone else?
...doing what you've already done again to the output?
...asking people if it looks like anything they recognize?
...thinking about what's missing?
...asking yourself whether you've used all the information?
...keeping even a strange-looking result?
...brute force?
...not thinking about it?
...splitting up tasks to solve in a group?
...asking "what's the pattern"?
...rereading the instructions?