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

1. Define the problem:   
   a. The problem is figuring out how to transport the cat, parrot and seed across the water one at a time without the parrot being eaten by the cat or the seed being eaten by the parrot while two of the objects are left alone.  
     
   b. The word problem does not state it, but the parrot is able to fly so transporting the parrot via boat would not be necessary. The problem also does not state that it is required that the man be transported to the other side of the river. The man could also take one object back across with him to his starting point.  
     
   c. The overall goal is to get the cat, the parrot and the bag of seed to the other side of the river.
2. Break the problem apart:  
   a. The constraints are not being able to leave the cat with the parrot, the parrot with the seed, and that there’s only room for the man and one of the objects in the boat at a time.  
     
   b. The sub goals include prohibiting the cat from eating the parrot, and prohibiting the parrot from eating the seed.