

SETTING A FOUNDATION FOR PROBLEM SOLVING

GRADES 3-12

The beginning of the school year is a crucial time to begin the problem solving process--a process that is a central component of all new Math texts adopted today. The following are a number of stages, approaches and steps for problem. They should be discussed with the students, and if possible, put onto charts for display throughout the year. Examples should be chosen in accordance with the age and level of your students.

6 STAGES OF THE PROBLEM SOLVING PROCESS

1. Define the problem
2. Brainstorm possible solutions
3. Evaluate and prioritize the possible solutions
4. Choose the best solution
5. Determine *how* to implement the solution
6. Assess how well solution solved the problem

7 APPROACHES TO PROBLEM SOLVING

1. Guess and check
2. Find a pattern
3. Use a systematic list (charts & tables)
4. Use a drawing or a model
5. Eliminate possibilities
6. Work backwards
7. Use a similar, simpler problem

5 STEPS TO PROBLEM SOLVING

1. Read and understand the problem
2. Organize the information
3. Determine the operations needed, establish equation
4. Solve and check answer
5. State and *label* your answer

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