

HELPING YOUR CHILD WORK WITH MATH WORD PROBLEMS



Your children's homework will likely consist of math word problems from time to time. If your children have difficulty solving word problems, have them try the following strategies:

1. Read the entire problem.
2. Look at the problem and determine the information and numbers that are stated in the problem.
3. Ask yourself, what does the problem require for an answer? What is the question that the problem asks?
4. Write down all the numbers and amounts listed in the problem. Are any of the numbers that are given not needed to solve the problem? Are there any numbers that need to be determined before the problem can be solved?
5. Decide how you will use the numbers. If the answer will be less than the largest number you will need to subtract or divide. If the answer will be greater than the largest number you will need to add or multiply.
6. Look for the key words:
 - Addition – add, sum, total, more, increased by, etc.
 - Subtraction – minus, less, difference, fewer, decrease, etc.
 - Multiplication – times, of, multiplied by, product, etc.
 - Division – per, quotient, how many for each, etc.
7. Write a math sentence that uses the numbers and amounts you have listed in # 4.
8. Solve the math sentence.
9. Look at your answer. Does it make sense?
10. Don't forget to write down the unit of measurement in your answer, for example: 10 *apples*, 9 *inches*, 25 *pounds*, etc.

Some Strategies to Use to Find the Answer:

- ◆ Make a pattern
- ◆ Make a table
- ◆ Work backwards
- ◆ Guess and check
- ◆ Draw a picture
- ◆ Make a diagram
- ◆ Make a list
- ◆ Write a number sentence
- ◆ Use logical reasoning