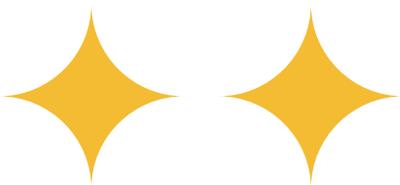
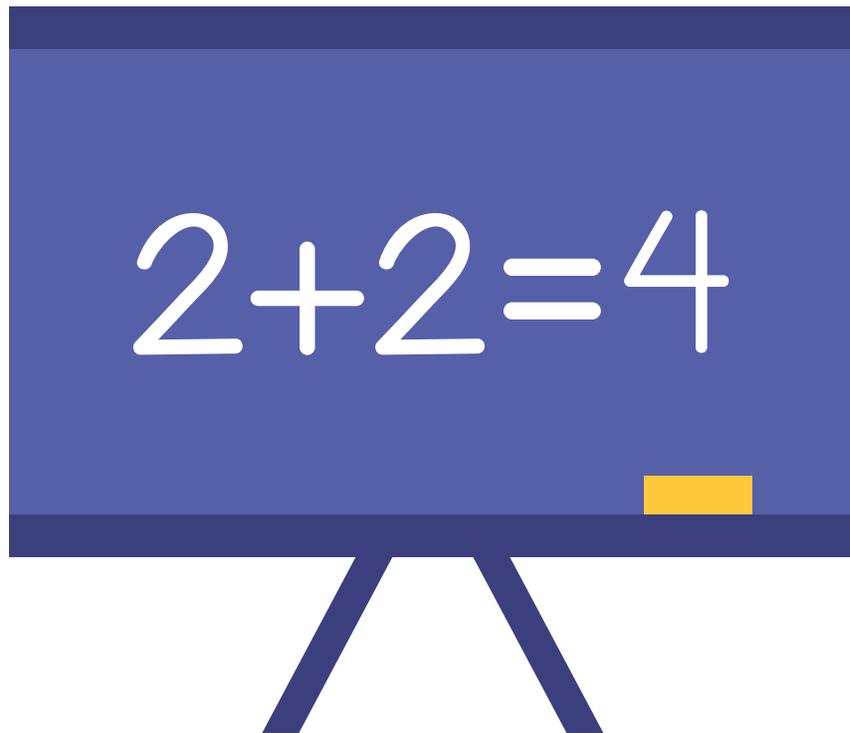




Revision Guides

Word Problems

Solving math problems



Hello

Math problems aren't always written as numbers. They can be written out as word problems.

This means we have to be able to pick out important information to solve the problem. These questions can be confusing sometimes, but all you need to do is follow some simple strategies.

You can use this guide to help you.

This guide goes along with our video on cells. You can find it in our Online Classroom at www.litcenter.org.

Word Problems	3
Strategies	4
Examples	5
Tips	7

Word Problems

Word problems are quite simply math problems written as text instead of numbers. For example:

$$1 + 1 = 2$$

$$2 - 1 = 1$$

Easy enough, right? These are standard addition sums. But if they were word problems, they might look like this:

Jack has 1 apple. Jill also has one apple. How many apples do they have?

If Alex has 2 dollars, then gives one to his brother, how much does Alex have now?

These are the exact same sums as at the top of the page, just written as text.

They can be confusing sometimes.

Strategies

What is the problem about?

Read the question at least twice. Try to visualize what you're being told in the question.

What is the problem asking me to do?

The question will probably be giving you lots of different information - some of which you won't need. You might even be given different types of numbers, like fractions and whole numbers. Figure out what the question is asking you.

How can I solve this?

Figure out what you need to do to solve the question.

What operation should I use?

Decide what operation you need to use - addition, subtraction, multiplication...

Let's look at this strategy in action.

Example 1



This is in the video!

Debbie has 7 comic books. John has 5 comic books. How many comic books do they have altogether?

What is the problem about?

This question is all about comics and how many there are.

What is the problem asking me to do?

I'm being asked to find out how many comics Debbie and John have collectively.

How can I solve this?

If I add how many comics Debbie and John have, I'll know how many comics they have altogether.

What operation should I use?

I'm adding, so it's addition!

$$7 + 5 = 12$$

Example 2

Jenna is building a house. She needs 300 bricks for a wall, and each brick weighs 1.2lbs and costs \$3.25. How much will it cost to buy all the bricks she needs?

What is the problem about?

This question is all about bricks and how much they will cost.

What is the problem asking me to do?

I'm being asked to figure out how much Jenna will pay for her bricks.

How can I solve this?

I don't need to know how much they weigh. That's only there to confuse me. Jenna is buying 300 bricks, with each brick costing \$3.25. If I multiply those, I'll know the answer.

What operation should I use?

Multiplication!

$$300 \times \$3.25 = \$975.00$$

Tips

Use commonsense. Look at your answer and decide if it sounds right. For example, let's imagine I accidentally divide instead of multiply in example 2.

$$300 / \$3.25 = \$92.31$$

Does that look right to you? If Jenna is buying 300 bricks, I don't think 92 bucks sounds right. I must be wrong!

This tip works with most math problems. If the answer looks silly, it might be wrong. Go over your work again.

When it comes to Math, we see most mistakes happen when people don't read the question. You must take your time and read questions twice.

Finally, come up with your own strategy! Some people like to draw out word problems to help them figure them out. If it works, it's worth doing.



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