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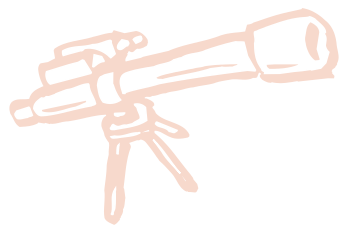
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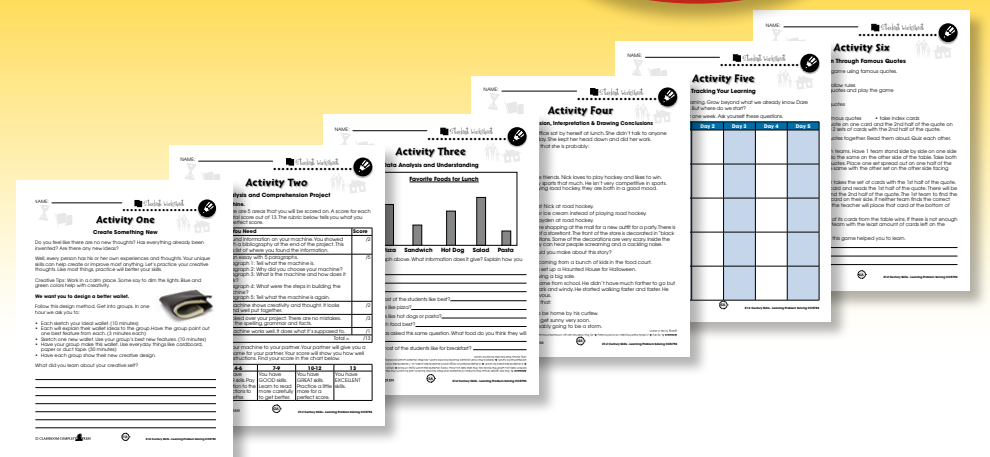
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Understanding The Problem-Solving Process

Problem Solving in the Workplace

Problem-solving skills means how you find issues. It also means how you find answers.

Most jobs need problem-solving skills. Some jobs are all about solving issues like engineering, customer service and tax attorney.

In a job, there are many types of problems to solve. You need to choose the issues that are important to the company.

You need to practice certain skills to be a good problem solver. Below are important skills to learn. Match the meaning with the skill.

1	Initiative	You use logic to solve problems.	A
2	Creativity	You get stuff done.	B
3	Resourceful	You figure out roadblocks.	C
4	Analytical	You look at things in different ways.	D
5	Determination	You do not give up easily.	E
6	Results	You take action without being asked.	F

Write how you would solve this workplace problem.
You work in a deli making sandwiches. You can't keep up with the lunch hour rush. Some customers start leaving. How can you stop the customers from leaving?

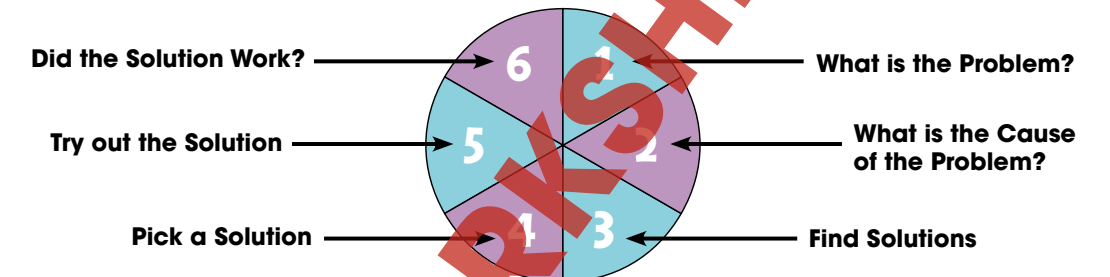


Understanding The Problem-Solving Process

Problem-Solving Cycle

Before you can understand something, you need to know what it is. A **problem** is something that needs to be taken care of. **Solving** means to find an answer to something. A **process** is a series of actions directed to some end. So, the **problem-solving process** is a series of actions that help find answers to something that needs taken care of.

But what is the problem-solving process? Well, it's a six-part step that goes from identifying the problem, to finding a solution. This can be shown as a cycle:



Problem:
You work at a sports equipment store. It takes the sales people 1 hour to close up the store and finish all the jobs at the end of the day. The boss wants to cut the time in half from 1 hour to 30 minutes to help the store save money.

Go through steps 1-4 of the problem-solving process. Fill in the chart below with your own solution to the store's problem.

1.	2.	3.	4.



Understanding The Problem-Solving Process

Role-Playing

Learn how to problem solve by role-playing. Below are a few topics you could choose from. Think of 2 of your own.

1. Pollution
2. Land dispute
3. _____
4. _____

Now, research the topic you chose on the Internet. Look for causes and solutions of the problem.

Pick a character to play. If you chose "pollution" you could be a towns person that is upset about the problem. If the problem was caused by a factory, you could play the owner and workers. You could have a town Mayor, counsel, etc. You will need to research your character's part in the problem solving of this topic. Have a town hall meeting. Give your arguments, ideas and solutions.

Your problem solving is complete. Now answer the following questions.

1. What was the problem? _____
2. What are some of the solutions? _____
3. What was the outcome? _____
4. What is the best solution? _____



Understanding The Problem-Solving Process

10 Common Problem-Solving Mistakes

Problem solving is to find an answer. Also, it is to take helpful action to meet goals.

Most people are afraid to make mistakes. Mistakes will happen when you work to solve a problem. Don't be afraid to make mistakes. Don't be afraid to admit when you have made a mistake.

Here are some common mistakes many people make:

1. The problem is not clear. The wrong problem gets solved.
2. Some people don't believe the problem exists.
3. Problem-solving goals are not clear.
4. Emotions and self-interest take over.
5. Some people jump to quick conclusions.
6. Some people jump to the wrong root cause.
7. Focus on blame, rather than solutions.
8. Not finding "Root Cause."
9. Not being able to create a win-win situation.
10. People not open-minded about solutions by others.

Now, how would you solve this problem?

The gas lawnmower quit working. This problem needs to be solved today, as the grass is too high. I checked everything: the oil was ok, the spark plug was ok, the filter was fine. It is an old mower, how do I fix it?



Understanding The Problem-Solving Process

Protect the Egg

Get into small groups. No more than 4 people.

The problem: Drop an egg from a ladder. Don't let it break.

What you'll need: an egg, a ladder, cardboard, tape, elastic bands, paper towel, plastic bottles, plastic bags, straws, scissors, etc.

Think of ideas how to drop an egg without it breaking. Do this as a group. Make a container that will protect the egg.

1. Think of ideas to fix this problem. Be creative. No idea is too big or too small.
2. As a group, pick an idea. Everyone should agree on it. Try to pick the best idea that you think will solve the problem.
3. Make your container. Make the container for your egg. Use different things to help you. Do some testing without the egg to see if your container will work.
4. Try it out. Put your egg inside your container. Have the teacher drop the container from the top of the ladder.
5. Did the egg break? If so, go back to your list of ideas and try a different one. Do this until you have a container that fixes the problem.

How did you do? Did your egg break the first time? How many containers did you make? Which container worked? What was the most creative idea? Did your group have good decision-making skills? What did you learn about it? Write a summary below. Make sure to answer all these questions.



Understanding The Problem-Solving Process

Speed Problem Solving

Get into partners. Read the following problem: *Your school has an after school sports program. More people show up in the summer than the winter. What can your school do to make attendance the same all year?*

Use the space below. Write down as many ideas as you can to solve the problem. You have 15 minutes to do so. Try to think of any and all solutions. You can use the Internet to do any research if needed. There is no wrong answer. You are simply making a list of ideas to choose from.

Now, go over the list with your partner. Cut out any options that might not work. You have 10 minutes. Cut the list down until you are left with the 3 best options (in your opinion). Write these 3 choices in the space below:

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

Now, go over these 3 items with your partner. Narrow the list down to 1 choice. Choose the solution you think will have the most success. You have 5 minutes to narrow it down to the best choice.

My partner and I believe the best solution to the problem is _____

Why do you think this is the best solution to the problem? _____



Bloom's Taxonomy

Bloom's Taxonomy for Reading Comprehension

The activities in this resource engage and build the full range of thinking skills that are essential for students comprehension. Based on the six levels of thinking in Bloom's Taxonomy, assignments are given that challenge students to move beyond the worksheet to understand the information through higher-order thinking. By using higher-order skills of remembering, understanding, applying, analysing, evaluating, and creating, students become active learners, drawing more meaning from the information, and applying and extending their learning in more sophisticated ways.

Our resource, therefore, is an effective tool for any Social Studies program. Whether it is used in whole or in part, or adapted to meet individual student needs, this resource provides teachers with the important questions to ask and interesting content, which promote creative and meaningful learning.

Vocabulary

- Analyze:** To break it down to gain a better sense of the job.
- Auditory Learner:** Learning with your ears. You need to be told or hear something to know it.
- Comprehend:** To understand the meaning.
- Conclusion:** The end or finish. A decision reached by reasoning.
- Creative Thinking:** To come up with new ways to approach a problem.
- Creativity:** To make meaningful new ideas, methods or ways.
- Critical Thinking:** Able to reflect, assess and judge something.
- Fact:** Can be proven and is true.
- Fixed Mindset:** Thinks you are born with your skills and talents.
- Growth Mindset:** Thinks skills can grow over time with hard work.
- Inferences:** A conclusion reached.
- Learning:** To get knowledge of or skill in, by study, instruction or experience.
- Mindset:** An attitude or mood.
- Opinion:** How you or someone feels about a topic.
- Physical Learner:** Learning with your hands. You need to try something to know it.
- Prediction:** A guess as to what will happen.
- Problem-Solving Process:** A series of actions that help find answers to something that needs taken care of.
- Problem-Solving Skills:** How you find issues and answers.
- Problem:** Something that needs to be taken care of.
- Process:** A series of actions directed to some end.
- Solving:** To find an answer to something.
- Verbal Learner:** Learning with a book. You need to read something and write it down to know it.
- Visual Learner:** Learning with your eyes. You need to see something or see it in your mind to know it.

The Problem-Solving Process



NAME: _____

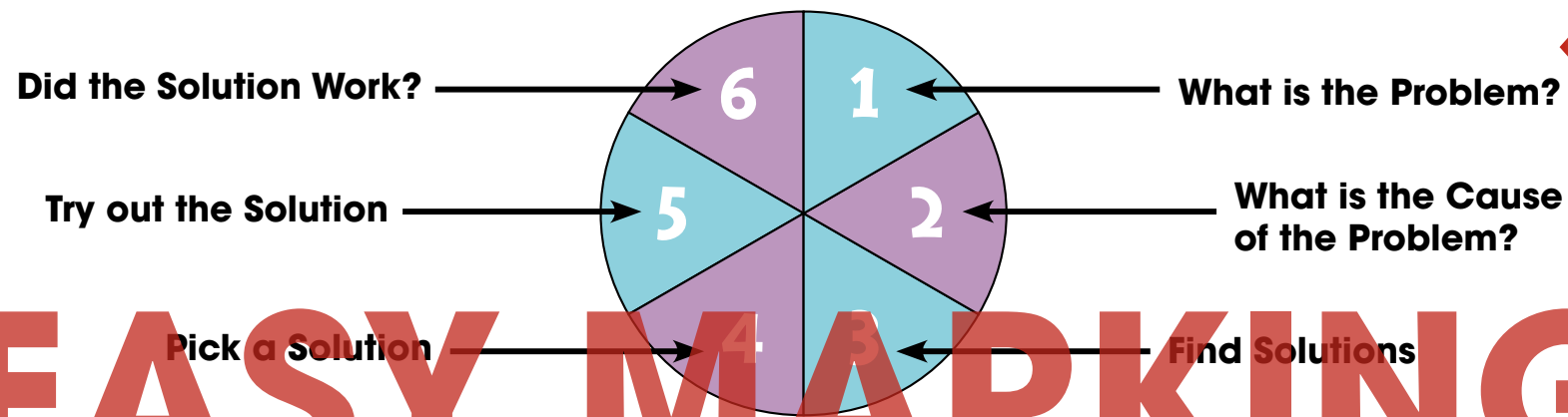


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EASY MARKING ANSWER KEY

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1.	2.	3.	4.



Answers will vary.

Answers will vary.

Answers will vary, but may include: Try to find a solution online. Since time is a factor, consider renting or borrowing a lawn mower for the day.

Answers will vary.

7

8

9

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