Effective Word-Problem Solving: Grades K-2

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Three Takeaways About Word Problems
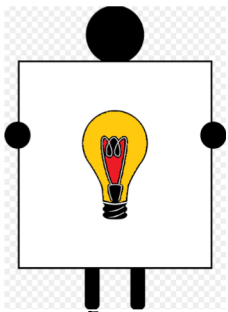
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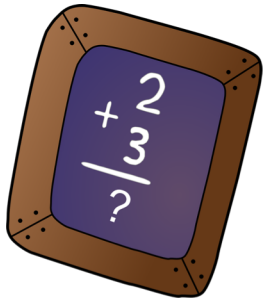|	
Understand	Read the problem. Ask yourself: • What information do I know? • What is the question asking me to find?
Plan	Choose a strategy, a tool or an approach.
Solve	Show the math used to solve the problem.
Check	Check your math. Ask yourself: • Did I answer the question asked? • Is my answer reasonable?

Additive Word Problems

Meanings of Addition

Meanings of Subtraction

Additive Word Problems

Problem type	Definition	Examples			Equation	Graphic organizer
Total		Total unknown	Part unknown			
Difference		Difference unknown	Greater unknown	Lesser unknown		
Change (increase)		End unknown	Start unknown	Change unknown		
Change (decrease)		End unknown	Start unknown	Change unknown		

Additive Word Problems

A.
Megan baked 8 sugar cookies and 4 chocolate chip cookies. Enter the total number of cookies Megan baked in all.

B.
In March and April, it rained a total of 11 inches. If it rained 3 inches in March, how many inches did it rain in April?

C.
Jana has 12 wooden beads and 3 glass beads. How many more wooden beads than glass beads does Jana have?

D.
Farmer Hank has 6 more cows than horses. He has 4 horses. He also has 9 chickens. How many cows does he have?

Additive Word Problems

E.
A bus had 2 passengers. At the next stop, more passengers got on the bus. Now, there are 9 passengers. How many passengers got on the bus?

F.
Martina had some money. Then, she spent $5 on candy. Now, she has $7. How much money did she have to start with?

G. Sam walks to school. On Monday, she counted 5 birds. On Tuesday, she saw 2 birds. On Wednesday, she saw 4 birds. How many birds did Sam see?

H. Hui saved $6 in January. In February, she spent $2 of the money she saved. She saved $8 more in March. How much has Hui saved by the end of March?

Additive Word Problems

TOTAL

DIFFERENCE

CHANGE (INCREASE)

CHANGE (DECREASE)