

#### 4.16 Problem Solving: Five Steps

Topic: Peace in a Community

Subtopic: Problem Solving –Five steps  
4C Problem Solving

Class: IV (Grade 4)

Objectives: **Knowledge:** Students will be able to use the five problem solving steps to solve a problem.

**Attitude:** Students will want to use the problem solving steps to resolve conflicts.

Materials Needed:

Blackboard and Chalk

Exercise book

*Optional* - small ball or beanbag

References: Review Exodus 18

*Peace Education* Lessons 25 & 26

Memory Verse: Deuteronomy 30:19

#### Teacher Activities

**Introduction:** Invite students to share decisions and problems students have to solve. Make a list on the board.

**Bible Story:** Review the story of Jethro and Moses and ask, “What are the first two problem solving steps?”

**Application:**

Introduce the last three problem solving steps while writing them on the board. Pick one of the problems students listed and work through the five steps as a class. Choose a second problem and have students work through the steps with a partner.

**Evaluation:** Do you see students using the steps when they need to make a decision? Are you starting to use the problem solving steps in your own decision making?

#### Student Activities

**Introduction:** List decisions students have to make and problems they have to solve.

**Bible Story:** Review the two problem solving steps learned in the last lesson

1. Ask, “What is the problem?”
2. Brainstorm ideas

**Application:** Copy the last three problem solving steps into their exercise books.

3. Choose what to do
4. Do the Plan
5. Examine the results

Use the steps to solve a problem.

**Evaluation:** Were students able to apply the five problem solving steps to a problem?

**Extension Activities:** *Brain Teasers.* To practice problem solving skills, have students complete brain teasers like those in *Peace Education Lessons 25 and 26.*

*More Practice.* Do another example together or have the students work with a partner or alone and follow the five steps.

*Remembering the steps.* (Use a beanbag, wadded up piece of paper or small ball for this activity.) Explain that you will throw the ball to a student and say either A, B, C, D, or E. They must tell you what that letter stands for and what it means. For example, if you say, “C,” the student says, “Choose; it means to choose what I will do.” Then the student throws it back to you and you throw it to another student. This will help the students memorize what each of the five steps is.

*Role-plays.* Have students role-play having a conflict and then talking through each of the steps. Here are some ideas for role-play situations. They can be adapted to fit your students’ needs:

- One student saw the other one looking at his paper during a test. He believes the second student copied from his paper and cheated on the test.
- Two siblings are watching TV. One wants to watch one program and the other wants to watch a different program.
- Two students were playing soccer together. One student believes the other one deliberately stuck her foot out and to trip her.
- Two sisters are fighting over which one gets to wear a special necklace.
- Two students are fighting over who has to take out the garbage tonight.

### Notes for Teacher

This problem solving process is very important so take your time and make sure the students understand each step. Practice until they are able to do it alone. The first two steps were introduced last week.

Key Points: The five ABC problem solving steps can be used whenever someone needs to solve a problem or make a decision.

Introduction: **Do you sometimes have problems where you have to decide what to do?** (Invite students to share examples. Make a list on the left side of the board as they give them to you.) Today we will learn five steps to help us solve problems.

Bible Story: Review the story of Jethro and Moses and the first two problem solving steps. Write the steps on the board.

- **Last week we studied the story of Moses and his father-in-law, Jethro, who remembers what problem Moses had?** He was spending all day listening to people and helping them solve their problems and conflicts.
- **How did Jethro help him?** Jethro suggested that he divide the work by appointing men under him (over 10s, 50s, and 1000s) to solve the easier problems and then just the hardest problems would come to Moses.
- **This was the start of government among the people of Israel. Before that they had been a big family but they had grown too large to be one family. Now they were a**

**village or community and they needed a formal way to work through problems. We need a way to work through problems, also.**

- **Last week we learned two steps in the problem solving process. What were they?**
  - Ask, “What is the problem?”
  - Brainstorm Ideas
- (Hold up your left hand and touch your thumb.) **The thumb represents the first step which is “Ask: What is the problem?”** (Have them touch their thumb and repeat: “Ask: What is the problem?”) **Sometimes it is easy to figure out what the problem is and sometimes we have to think about it for while. For example, suppose your friend is angry with you but you don’t know why. You have to think why they are angry before you can do anything else. You may even need to talk to your friend to find out. So you Ask: What is the problem? Finding out what the problem is often involves listening carefully to others to hear what they think the problem is. They may see the problem differently than you do.**
- **The second step in problem solving is Brainstorming.** (Touch your pointer finger and say, “Brainstorming”. Have them repeat, “Brainstorming.”) **When there is a storm outside, what happens? (It rains, there is lightning and thunder, and wind). Right, there is a lot happening all at once. When we “brainstorm” we think of ideas as fast as we can. We don’t stop to decide if they are good ideas or bad ideas, we just let all the ideas fall into our brain like rain falls on the ground. That is why we call it “brainstorming”.**
- **Today we will learn three steps. You can follow these steps to find answers to your own problems or to solve arguments or fights with others.**

Application: Introduce the last three steps as you write them on the board.

*“Choose what to do.* (Point to your middle finger and have them repeat, “Choose what to do.”) We need to think about what happens when you do something. If I hold this pencil up high and then drop it, what will happen? (demonstrate dropping the pencil) It will fall to the floor and it might roll away and I could lose the pencil. I think I will choose to not drop the pencil so I don’t lose it.

If someone comes up behind you and pushes you, what happens next? (Answers will vary – get angry, get hurt, start a fight and so on.) If we don’t want to start a fight or lose our pencil we need to think about what could happen and make good choices. When we were brainstorming did we think about what could happen? (No.) Now that we are done brainstorming we have to think about those ideas we came up with and make a good choice about what to do.

*Do the plan.* (Point to your fourth finger and have them repeat “Do the plan.”) Once you decide what to do, you have to go ahead and do it. You can make a good decision but if you don’t go ahead and do the plan you haven’t accomplished anything.

*Examine the results.* (Point to your little finger and have them repeat “Examine the result”.) What does it mean to examine something? You look at it closely, don’t you? After you Do the Plan you need to ask yourself, “Did it work?” If it didn’t, you need to try again.

Point out that the steps are in ABC order. Go through the steps again and this time have the students copy the steps in their exercise book:

The ABCs of Problem Solving:

*A- Ask, What is the problem?*

*B- Brainstorm ideas*

*C- Choose what to do*

*D- Do the Plan*

*E- Examine the results*

Choose one of the problems from the list the students made during the introduction and work through the five steps. An example is given below to guide you.

*Ask, What is the problem.* What was the first step? (Touch your thumb.) Right, *Ask what is the problem?* Sometimes we think one thing is the problem but when we think about it we realize there are other things involved in the problem. Maybe you have trouble getting to class on time. When you think about the problem you realize there are really several problems. You have trouble getting up on time and you can't always find all the things you need for school. When we "*Ask, What is the problem?*" we come up with a clear definition of the problem. [Use your example and come up with a problem definition. Write the definition on the board. Using the example above, your definition might be. *I need to organize my time and my things so I can get to school on time.* Write it on the board.]

*Brainstorm Ideas* –What is the second step? (Touch pointer finger.) Yes, Brainstorm ideas. Sometimes we just come up with one idea to solve our problem and do it. We will come up with better ideas if we brainstorm. What does it mean to brainstorm ideas? [Make sure they understand that brainstorming means listing lots of ideas without judging them or evaluating them. Use your example to show how to brainstorm. Write the list on the board as students come up with ideas. Keep brainstorming until you have 5 or more ideas on the board. Some possibilities are: Put everything together in your book bag in the evening; go to bed earlier; put all your clothes together so you can find them easily and so on.]

*Choose what to do-* What is the third step? (Touch your middle finger.) Yes it is Choose what to do. To make the best choice you have to think about what could happen if you did each one of your ideas. [Go through the list of ideas and talk about what could happen with each one. Discuss how hard it would be to do and whether or not it is a good idea.]

*Do the Plan* –Step four is Do the plan. (Touch your fourth finger.) You now come up with a plan that uses one or two of your best ideas. (Ask several different students which ideas would work best for them. Point out that not everyone has to solve their problem the same way.)

*Examine the result.* (Touch your little finger.) The last step is Examine the results. You do not do the last step immediately. You decide when you will examine the results of your plan. You may want to do it after one day, one week or one month. You need to stop and decide if your plan really worked for you. [Go back to your example and decide as a class when you should examine the results. If you used the example above you might want to try your plan for one week and then see if you are getting to school on time.]