

PROBLEM SOLVING AT HOME



AGENDA

- Starter
- Scenes from Home
- Storyboard
- Gallery Walk
- Conclusion
- Student Assessment

Objectives

Students will analyze a video clip of a problem at home.

Students will practice techniques of evaluation and feedback.

Students will apply the six steps of the problem solving process to problems at home.

Materials Needed

- A balloon (not inflated) with the words “family relationships” written on it (Starter)
- A pin (Starter)
- A video from a popular movie or TV show showing teens grappling with a problem at home (Part I)
- Card board in dark colors, one piece for each group of four or five students (Part II)
- Sheets of white drawing paper, approximately one per student (Part II)

- Glue and an assortment of colored markers, crayons, pencils, magazines, etc. (Part II)
- Several stacks of sticky notes, enough so that each student gets several notes (Part III)

Starter (3 minutes)

Take the balloon with the words “family relationships” written on it and slowly blow it up for the class. When the balloon is almost at full capacity, stop inflating it for a moment and ask the class what would happen if you kept blowing air into it. (Student responses should indicate that the balloon would pop.)

Continue blowing up the balloon until it is at full capacity. Ask students how many of them feel tension or fear that the balloon will pop as the pressure on it increases. Pop the balloon suddenly with the pin. Tell students that this is how stress affects family relationships; as stress increases, the tension grows, problems become worse, and the situation may explode out of control.

Brainstorm with students some examples of common problems at home; write student responses where everyone can see. (Students might respond: feeling as though parents don’t trust them, feeling as though parents are too strict or not strict enough, feeling as though they are treated differently than their siblings, not getting along with siblings, feeling as though they are given too much responsibility for younger brothers and sisters, wishing they had more privacy.) Save this list for use in Part II.

Tell students that they are going to practice applying the final two steps of the problem solving process to problems at home.

Part I Scenes from Home (15 minutes)

Purpose: Students analyze the problem solving strategies depicted in a video.

1. Students define the final two steps of the problem solving process.

Tell students that the final steps of the problem solving process are making and evaluating a decision. Ask students what it means to evaluate a decision. (Student responses should indicate that this means seeing how the solution turns out and deciding whether the actual consequences are primarily good or bad.)

Point out to students that the final step is often overlooked—people may thoroughly work through a solution to a problem but may not revisit it to see if it was effective.

2. Students view a video depicting a problem at home.

Tell students that they are going to watch a video of a common problem at home. Instruct students to take notes while they are watching in order to identify the steps of the problem solving process that are being followed. Tell students that they should also note indications that the steps are not being followed, such as someone who has not gathered enough information. Show the video to students.

3. Students identify the steps of the problem solving process that are evident in the video.

When the video is finished, ask students to list the steps of the problem solving process that were apparent in the video and identify the specific scenes or dialogue that relate to each step. Discuss students' responses and lead students to draw inferences about the steps of the problem solving process that were not overtly addressed in the video.

As students identify the steps in the video, create a rough storyboard on the board. (Draw a large, horizontal rectangle; then draw six boxes inside that rectangle. Each small box represents one step of the problem solving process.) Write in each box key words or dialogue from the scenes that relate to each problem solving step.

Part II Storyboard (20 minutes)

Purpose: Students develop storyboards to demonstrate problem solving techniques.

1. Students choose problem solving scenarios to illustrate.

Point out to students the sketch you have made on the board. Explain that this is an outline for a storyboard of the video they watched. Tell students that storyboards contain drawings or visual representations of each scene and are used by animators, artists, and filmmakers to create films and shows.

Tell students that they are now going to create storyboards that outline solutions for their problems at home. Divide the class into groups of four or five students. Referring them to the list of problems that they brainstormed in the starter, instruct the groups to each choose a problem that is important to them. Explain that each group will then create a storyboard to visually represent possible solutions to its problem.

2. Students create storyboards to demonstrate problem solving skills.

Display a completed storyboard for the class or label the sketch on the board to show students how to assemble their materials.

Distribute the card board, white paper, markers, glue, and other art supplies to each group. Students should design their scenes on white paper and attach these, in order, to the dark poster board. Give students about 20 minutes to work on their storyboards. Ask each group to post its finished storyboard on one of the classroom's walls.

Part III Gallery Walk (10 minutes)

Purpose: Students practice evaluation and feedback techniques.

1. Students prepare for a gallery walk.

Explain that the class is going to do a gallery walk around the classroom to evaluate the storyboards. Ask students if they have ever been to a gallery or art museum. Explain that in a gallery, people browse among the works, pausing to look at and think about each piece of art.

2. Students learn evaluation and feedback techniques.

Ask students what “evaluation” means. Direct them to define “evaluation” as determining the strengths and weaknesses of something through careful review. Explain that it is important to review all aspects of something in order to evaluate its overall impact. Tell students that they are going to practice evaluation by looking at and thinking about the storyboards.

Ask students what “feedback” means. Tell students that feedback consists of constructive comments that describe the impact of something. Explain that they are going to give feedback to each other by making notes about the storyboards.

Point out to students that effective feedback can be both negative (“I felt confused when I read this”) and positive (“I was excited to see that you did it this way because...”), but that it should always be constructive and help the person improve the project. Remind students to practice responsible communication by using I-Messages.

Remind students that providing carefully worded feedback is an important tool to use when addressing problem situations, particularly situations involving our families and others with whom we tend to interact rather informally.

3. Students participate in a gallery walk to provide feedback on the storyboards.

Give each student a small stack of sticky notes and instruct them to use the notes to provide feedback on the storyboards by writing their comments and sticking the notes on the wall near each poster. Tell students to focus on the ways that the storyboards convey the six steps of the problem solving process and whether they think that the solution is effective.

Allow students several minutes to circulate the room to review the storyboards.

Conclusion (2 minutes)

Ask students to name the steps of the problem solving process. Encourage them to focus on specific situations in their own lives in which problem solving might be useful. Elicit from students the following **key points** that were taught in this lesson:

- Cooperation reduces problems in the family.
- Handling stress helps problems become more manageable.
- Problem solving techniques work in family situations.

Student Assessment

1. What can you do to help build cooperation in your family?
2. Describe a problem that you have had at home. How did you overcome this problem? How could the steps of the problem solving process have helped you?

LESSON EXTENSIONS

Using Quotations

“We can not solve our problems with the same level of thinking that created them .”

As a class, discuss the meaning of the quote. Have students write possible solutions for solving problems at home.

Addressing Multiple Learning Modes

Have students imagine their family as a sports team. Ask, “What sport would you play? What position would each family member play? What would your team name and colors be?”

Have students meet in groups based on the sport their families would play (e.g., all soccer teams together). Have each group present the members of their league to the class.

Writing in Your Journal

Have students describe a situation in which their family used cooperation to solve a problem.

Using Technology

Have students research various services available to families.

Have students record a podcast to help families solve problems.

Homework

Have students watch an episode of a TV show that explores the dynamics within families and discuss how problems were managed. For example, The Fosters, Fuller House, This Is Us.

Additional Activity

Have students research songs about families or family members.

Have students discuss the lyrics of these songs and the messages they send about families and problems at home.