

Problem of the Week

Problem solvers are heroes in our world, whether you're finding a cure for a disease or finding a compromise for a disagreement between friends. Being able to look at information and rearrange it in a way that solves a problem is a special skill. It is a skill you can learn.

Many weeks you'll receive a math problem and you'll be asked to try to solve it. THE IMPORTANT THING IS NOT THE SOLUTION BUT THE WAY YOU TRY TO SOLVE IT. For that reason, you have to explain every step you took to get your answer. Any number you use should have a label and an explanation. Check out the rubric below you can use it to rate your effort:

- 0 - You don't attempt to solve
- 1 - You put down numbers/drawings or words but not any related to the problem
- 2 - You copy down data from the problem but don't take clear steps to solve it. CORRECT SOLUTION WITH NO EXPLANATION
- 3 - You take steps to solve problem but not ones that will lead to a solution. CORRECT SOLUTION WITH INADEQUATE EXPLANATION.
- 4 - you use correct data and take good steps toward a solution but you miss an important step.
- 5 - you make a mistake computing your numbers, all of your steps are well explained and will lead to a solution
- 6 - your solution is correct and well explained. Bravo!

Can I ask for a hint? The best hint you can give yourself is drawing a picture of the problem or acting it out. Often, when you draw out a problem you'll find a hint for how to get the solution.

A NOTE TO PARENTS: All problems of the week are designed to be able to be solved in more than one way. As you work with your child, ask questions to find out what he or she is thinking. Follow his or her lead. You may know a more efficient method to solve the problem but it may not be the one that makes the most sense to your child. EVEN IF THEY ARRIVE AT THE "INCORRECT" SOLUTION, respect the work and the thinking of your child and help record it; we have other exercises in which we stress accuracy. We also try to design problems that have more than one possible solution, so long as the reasoning is explained clearly. If you have any questions, please contact us.