

An Expanded Routine for Solving Story Problems

Review the text of the story and read it aloud. Encourage students to visualize what is happening in the story as you tell it. Suggest/ask:

- Close your eyes.
- Picture what is happening.
- Make a movie in your mind.
- What did you see? What happened in the story?

Act out/retell the story. Options:

- Several students retell the story in their own words. Or, ask students to “turn and talk” to tell each other the story.
- Acting out the story, using objects/counters to model the story, and making sketches can help students visualize the action of the problem.

Think through the problem.

- What do we know?
- What are we trying to figure out?
- Will there be more or less at the end of the story? How do you know?
- Is this a story about combining groups? removing a group? Comparing groups? Equal groups? Sharing?
- What’s an equation that shows what the problem is asking? (Note that there might be more than one.)

If students need support...

...getting started

- Is there something you know that can help you solve this problem?
- Does this problem remind you of any others we’ve solved before?
- What strategy might you use to solve this problem? (Refer to charts/posters/resources in the room.)
- What tool might you use to help you solve this problem? (e.g. cubes, number line, 100 chart, stickers)

...recording their work

- What did you do first? How can you show that? What did you do next? How can you show that?

Review their work

- How did you solve the problem? Can you explain to me your steps?
- How do these numbers/this equation connect to your representation? to the story?
- Does your answer make sense? Does it seem reasonable?