

## 2nd Grade Math: Real-World Two-Step Problems

### What Are Two-Step Problems?

A **two-step problem** is a math problem that requires two operations (such as addition, subtraction, multiplication, or division) to find the solution. In 2nd grade, students often work with **addition and subtraction** to solve two-step word problems.

### Steps to Solve Two-Step Problems

1. **Understand the Problem:** Read the problem carefully to figure out what is happening.
2. **Identify the First Step:** Determine which operation you need to do first (addition or subtraction).
3. **Solve the First Step:** Carry out the first operation.
4. **Identify the Second Step:** Determine what to do next.
5. **Solve the Second Step:** Complete the problem by solving the second operation.

### Example of a Two-Step Problem

**Problem:** Sarah had 10 apples. She bought 8 more apples. Then, she gave 5 apples to her friend. How many apples does she have now?

1. **First Step:** Sarah starts with 10 apples and buys 8 more.
  - Addition:

$$10 + 8 = 18$$

2. **Second Step:** Sarah gives away 5 apples.
  - Subtraction:

$$18 - 5 = 13$$

3. **Answer:** Sarah has 13 apples left.

### Word Problem Strategies

To help students solve two-step problems, encourage them to:

- **Draw a Picture:** Drawing can help students visualize the problem.
- **Use Number Sentences:** Write equations for each step of the problem.
- **Check Their Work:** After solving, students can reread the problem to make sure their solution makes sense.

## Practice Problems

1. **Problem 1:**

- There are 15 cookies in a jar. You bake 7 more cookies and put them in the jar. Then, your friend eats 6 cookies. How many cookies are left in the jar? (Answer: \_\_\_\_)

2. **Problem 2:**

- Alex has 12 marbles. He finds 4 more marbles. Then, he gives 5 marbles to his sister. How many marbles does Alex have now? (Answer: \_\_\_\_)

3. **Problem 3:**

- A store has 20 toy cars. They sell 9 cars, and then the store buys 5 more cars. How many toy cars does the store have now? (Answer: \_\_\_\_)

## Solving Two-Step Problems in Real Life

Two-step problems are not just in math class; they happen in real life too! For example:

- **Shopping:** You have \$20. You buy a toy for \$12 and a snack for \$3. How much money do you have left?
- **Sports:** A soccer player scores 3 goals in the first half and 2 goals in the second half. How many goals did they score in total?
- **Parties:** You invite 10 friends to a party. Three of them can't come, but 2 more people decide to join. How many guests will you have at the party?

## Conclusion

Two-step problems help students think critically and solve complex situations. By breaking problems down into two smaller steps, students can develop a better understanding of how addition and subtraction work together in real-world contexts.