

3rd Grade Math: Real-World Problems — Two-Step Problems

What Are Two-Step Problems?

- **Two-step problems** require performing **two operations** to solve the problem. You may need to add, subtract, multiply, or divide — and often use a combination of these operations to find the answer.

How to Solve Two-Step Problems

1. **Understand the problem:** Read carefully and figure out what information is important.
2. **Choose the first operation:** Solve the first part of the problem.
3. **Choose the second operation:** Use the result from the first step to solve the second part.
4. **Check your answer:** Make sure the solution makes sense in the context of the problem.

Example 1: Buying Items (Addition and Subtraction)

Problem:

You have \$25. You buy a toy for \$10 and a book for \$8. How much money do you have left?

Steps:

1. **Step 1:** First, find the total cost by **adding** the prices of the toy and the book:

$$10 + 8 = 18$$

2. **Step 2:** Next, **subtract** the total cost from your starting amount of \$25:

$$25 - 18 = 7$$

Answer:

You have \$7 left.

Example 2: Multiplying and Adding (Baking Cookies)

Problem:

You bake 3 batches of cookies, and each batch has 6 cookies. After baking, you eat 4 cookies. How many cookies do you have left?

Steps:

1. **Step 1:** First, find the total number of cookies by **multiplying** the number of batches by the cookies per batch:

$$3 \times 6 = 18$$

2. **Step 2:** Then, **subtract** the number of cookies you ate:

$$18 - 4 = 14$$

Answer:

You have 14 cookies left.

Example 3: Division and Subtraction (Sharing Toys)

Problem:

You have 20 toys, and you give an equal number of toys to 5 friends. After that, you give 2 toys to your neighbor. How many toys do you have left?

Steps:

1. **Step 1:** First, find out how many toys each friend gets by **dividing** the total number of toys:

$$20 \div 5 = 4$$

So each friend gets 4 toys.

2. **Step 2:** After giving toys to your neighbor, **subtract** the 2 toys:

$$20 - 2 = 18$$

Answer:

You have 18 toys left.

Example 4: Multiplying and Subtracting (Buying Tickets)

Problem:

You are buying 4 movie tickets, and each ticket costs \$8. After buying the tickets, you spend \$5 on popcorn. How much money do you spend in total?

Steps:

1. **Step 1:** First, find the cost of the tickets by **multiplying** the number of tickets by the price per ticket:

$$4 \times 8 = 32$$

2. **Step 2:** Then, **add** the cost of the popcorn to the total cost:

$$32 + 5 = 37$$

Answer:

You spend \$37 in total.

Conclusion:

- **Two-step problems** require solving two smaller problems to find the answer. Practice helps you decide whether to add, subtract, multiply, or divide to solve each part correctly! These problems mirror real-world situations where multiple calculations are needed to find a solution.