

# What's the Problem?

## Purpose

Students will write and solve number sentences from problem situations involving addition and subtraction.

## Materials

*For the teacher:* picture showing 2 kinds of animals (e.g., cows and pigs, dogs and cats), overhead projector, blank overhead transparency  
*For the students:* paper, pencils, crayons or markers, copies of Black Line Master (BLM) *What's the Problem?*

## Activity

### A. Introduction

1. Tell a story about a bus full of boys and girls going to the zoo (e.g., "There are 15 children on the bus. Six of them are boys. There are also four adults on the bus.").
2. Draw stick figures on the overhead or chalkboard to illustrate the characters in your story.
3. Tell students: "I know there are [*insert number*] children and [*insert number*] adults on the bus. How can I find out how many people are on the bus altogether? Write a number sentence to answer my question." (e.g.,  $15 + 4 = 19$ )
4. Tell students: "I know there are [*insert number*] children on the bus, [*insert number*] of them are boys. How many are girls? Write a number sentence to answer my question." (e.g.,  $15 - 6 = 9$ )

### B. Student Activity

1. Show the students the picture of the animals.
2. Tell them to write an addition and a subtraction problem in words using information from the picture (e.g., "There are six pigs and seven cows. How many animals altogether? There are seven cows, two of them are brown. How many are not brown?").
3. Have them write the number sentence used to solve the problem.

### C. Homework

1. Give students copies of the BLM *What's the Problem?*
2. Ask them to take the BLM home and write and solve a number sentence for each problem.



## INCORPORATING TECHNOLOGY

Have students create number sentences using clip art in a word processing program. First have the student choose the graphics (e.g., three cats and two dogs). Under the picture, have the student type the number sentence (e.g.,  $3 + 2 = 5$ ).



## MEETING INDIVIDUAL NEEDS

Allow students who are having difficulty with this activity to use counters to assist in solving problems.


**Standards Links**  
1.2.1, 1.2.2


## Questions for Review

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### Basic Concepts and Processes

Have students share one of their problems from the activity with you.  
Ask the students the following questions:

 Tell me what your problem is about.

 How did you decide how to solve your problem?

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## What's the Problem?

Write a number sentence and then solve it.

1. There are 7 fire engines.  
4 are going to a fire.  
How many fire engines are left?
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2. There are 6 green tractors.  
There are 2 red tractors.  
How many tractors are there in all?
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3. There are 5 trees in our yard.  
3 have no leaves.  
How many have leaves?
- 

4. There are 8 birds on the wire.  
6 flew away.  
How many birds are left on the wire?
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5. There are 5 black cats.  
There are 6 white cats.  
How many cats are there in all?
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# What's the Problem?

## Teacher Directions

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Distribute the BLM *What's the Problem?* For homework, have students write the number sentence for each problem and then solve it. Allow students to use counters to solve the problems if necessary.

## Answer Key

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1.  $7 - 4 = 3$
2.  $6 + 2 = 8$
3.  $5 - 3 = 2$
4.  $8 - 6 = 2$
5.  $5 + 6 = 11$