



Choose Your Division

4TH-5TH GRADE

6TH-8TH GRADE

9TH-12TH GRADE



January
PROBLEM SOLVING
& CRITICAL
THINKING

4TH-5TH GRADE

THEME OVERVIEW:

Puzzles and challenges help children think creatively and find multiple solutions.



Worksheet

4th-5th Grade

PUZZLE PACK – THINK IT THROUGH!

INSTRUCTIONS

Solve each puzzle. There's no time limit – take your time and try different ideas.

PUZZLE 1 - RIDDLES

Include 3 short, age-appropriate riddles that encourage logical thinking.

Example: I speak without a mouth and hear without ears. I have no body, but I come alive with wind. What am I?
(Answer: An echo)

Example: The more you take away, the bigger I get. What am I?
(Answer: A hole)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

PUZZLE 2 - LOGIC PUZZLE

A simple grid-based puzzle with clues to fill in the blanks.

Example: Three friends – Mia, Sam, and Liam – each brought a different snack to school (apple, banana, granola bar). Use the clues to figure out who brought what.

- Mia did not bring the banana.
- The person who brought the apple is not Liam.
- Sam did not bring the granola bar.

(Students fill in a 3x3 logic grid to solve.)

	banana	apple	granola bar
Mia			
Sam			
Liam			





Worksheet

4th-5th Grade

PUZZLE PACK – THINK IT THROUGH!

PUZZLE 3 - WORD CHALLENGE

Give a starting word and ask students to make as many smaller words as possible using only its letters.

Example: From the word *LEADERSHIP*, how many words of 3 letters or more can you make? (e.g., ship, lead, help, slip...)

PUZZLE 4 - PATTERN RECOGNITION

Show a sequence of shapes or numbers and ask "What comes next?"

Example:

Circle, Square, Triangle, Circle, Square, ?

(Answer: Triangle)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

PUZZLE 5 - FIND A BETTER WAY CHALLENGE

Present a common, everyday problem and ask students to brainstorm 2–3 new ways to do it more efficiently.

Example: "You have to help carry groceries inside. How can you make the trip faster or easier?"

Students might suggest:

- Using a backpack
- Grouping lighter bags together
- Asking a family member to help





FAMILY CHALLENGE:

Find a better way to do a common household chore.

REFLECTION PROMPT:

How did your new method help?

What else could you improve?





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PROBLEM SOLVING
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6TH-8TH GRADE

THEME OVERVIEW:

Middle schoolers can handle more complex, real-world problem scenarios and weigh multiple possible solutions.



Worksheet

6th-8th Grade

SCENARIO CARDS - WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

EXAMPLE SCENARIOS

The Group Project: Two group members disagree on the design. The deadline is tomorrow

The Lost Backpack: You find a backpack in the hallway after school with homework and money inside.

The Wrong Change: A store clerk gives you \$10 too much in change.

The Missing Equipment: A sports team's equipment is damaged before the big game.

Situation Description (2-3 sentences):

Situation Description (2-3 sentences):

Brainstorm Possible Solutions:

1.

2.

3.

Best Choice:

Why I Chose It:

Brainstorm Possible Solutions:

1.

2.

3.

Best Choice:

Why I Chose It:





Worksheet

6th-8th Grade

SCENARIO CARDS – WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

Situation Description (2-3 sentences):

Situation Description (2-3 sentences):

Brainstorm Possible Solutions:

1.

2.

3.

Best Choice:

Why I Chose It:

Brainstorm Possible Solutions:

1.

2.

3.

Best Choice:

Why I Chose It:





FAMILY CHALLENGE:

Pick one real-world issue at school or in the community. Brainstorm at least 3 solutions, then decide as a family which would be best and why.

REFLECTION PROMPT:

How did you choose the best option?

What would you do differently next time?





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9TH-12TH GRADE

THEME OVERVIEW:

Older students benefit from a structured decision-making process that teaches them to slow down, gather facts, and consider consequences.



Worksheet

9th-12th Grade

DECISION-MAKING FLOWCHART

FROM PROBLEM TO SOLUTION

Step 1: Identify the Problem - Write a clear, specific statement.

Example: Our club has less than half the needed funds for the trip.



Step 2: List Possible Solutions - Brainstorm at least 3 different options.

Example:

Hold a bake sale

Ask local businesses for sponsorship

Organize a car wash



Step 3: Evaluate Pros and Cons - Create a quick chart for each solution.

Example:

Hold a bake sale

Pro: quick, Con: small profit

Ask local businesses for sponsorship

Pro: bigger support, Con: takes time

Organize a car wash

Pro: fun, Con: weather risk





Worksheet

9th-12th Grade

DECISION-MAKING FLOWCHART

FROM PROBLEM TO SOLUTION

Step 4: Choose the Best Option - Circle your choice and explain why.



Step 5: Take Action - Write the steps needed to carry it out.



Step 6: Reflect on the Outcome - What worked well? What would you change?





FAMILY CHALLENGE:

Choose a current event or school-related issue and use the flowchart to analyze and decide on the best course of action.

REFLECTION PROMPT:

What impact would your solution have?

Who would benefit most?

