

What's the Problem?

Title	Genre	Summary	Aspects of theme explored
Going for Green	Report	Getting to Willow Primary could sometimes be dangerous. The school is near a busy intersection. Some students had an idea about how to fix the problem, but first they had to convince the City Council.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> working together to solve a problem community problems a process for problem solving
Down the Drain	Play	When Josh drops his great-grandad's medal down a drain, his friends help him try to get it out.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> taking responsibility for a problem trying more than one idea to solve a problem
Baking by Numbers	Interview/procedure	Some students raise some money for a school trip.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> classroom-based problems meeting a challenge maths problems
The Tuba	Narrative	It seemed like Eric was the only one who enjoyed the sound of the tuba. How was he going to learn to play it if he had nowhere to practise?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> noise problems asking for help with a personal problem
Big Quake, Little Shake	Explanation	The new City Museum is in an area that gets lots of earthquakes. How was it built to protect people and treasures from earthquakes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> being prepared using science to solve problems technology and problem solving

Suggestions for using *What's the Problem?*

Guided reading

See the following lesson plans.

Theme studies

This book could be used as part of a theme study on problem solving. It could also be integrated with a maths, science or technology content-area study.

- Introduce the theme and look at the contents page with the students. Discuss the range of genres. Ask the students to read the item summaries and discuss the way each piece relates to the main theme. The students could choose one of the items to begin the theme study.
- Use the whole book or items from it in your content-area teaching.
- Use the interview 'Baking by Numbers' to motivate the students and interest them in a class or school challenge.
- Use the Find Out More section as a springboard for further independent research.

Text comparisons

Comparing the play 'Down the Drain' with the narrative 'The Tuba' will allow the students to explore ways that people can get help to solve a personal problem. The students can compare the family situations in the two stories and act out the play. Small groups of students could adapt 'The Tuba' into a play and perform it to the class.

Shared reading

The diagrams from the explanation 'Big Quake, Little Shake' are suitable to enlarge for shared reading.

Independent reading

All of the items from *What's the Problem?* can be used for independent reading for pleasure.

Going for Green

Willow Primary has a problem because it's near a busy and dangerous intersection. Some students decide to find out how to fix the problem.

Features of the text

- Report
- Investigative research
- Graphs
- Mathematical concepts
- Formal and concise language

Purpose

'Going for Green' can be used to introduce and reinforce the following skills:

- making inferences;
- using subheadings to predict content;
- using the text as a model for writing.

Introducing the text

Select one or more of these discussion starters:

- *What problems are there around our school? What could you do to help solve them?*
- *What different kinds of research do you know of?*

Reading and discussing the text

Use some of the following suggestions to guide the students through the text:

- *Read the first section. What is the purpose of this section? Can you think of any solutions to the problems?*
- *Read to the end of the second section. Why did the students need to do a survey? What information would you expect to see in the results section? How could it be presented?*
- *What do you think convinced the mayor to have traffic lights installed?*

Following up

The students can:

- make a list of problems at their school that they could research
- carry out a survey in teams and write up the results using the text as a model
- write a letter as the mayor, telling the students of your decision and what persuaded you to take action.

Down the Drain

When Josh drops his great-grandad's war medal down a drain, his friends try to think of ways to get it out.

Features of the text

- Play
- Stage directions
- Plot, characters, setting, theme
- Italics, bold text, capital letters, parentheses, indented text, colons

Purpose

'Down the Drain' can be used to introduce and reinforce the following skills:

- making, confirming and revising predictions;
- understanding the features of plays;
- using stage directions;
- determining the author's purpose;
- reading aloud with expression.

Introducing the text

Select one or more of these discussion starters:

- *How is a play similar to a narrative?*
- *What do you think problem solving means?*
- *What is the best way to solve a problem?*

Reading and discussing the text

Use some of the following suggestions to guide the students through the text:

- *Read to 'Oh, no! It's gone down a drain!' What do you think will happen next? Why?*
- *Why was the medal dropped? How do you know this?*
- *Read to the part where Carrie enters. Predict what might happen next.*
- *What is the theme of this play? How do you know this?*
- *What additional information do the stage directions give?*

Following up

The students can:

- reread and chart the different kinds of information that the stage directions give
- draw a diagram to show the events that lead to the resolution in the play
- rehearse and present the play to the class.

Baking by Numbers

Miss Rossiter's class needed to raise a hundred dollars for a class trip. This interview describes how the students used maths to help them work out what they would need to do to raise the money.

Features of the text

- Interview
- Procedure
- Explanation
- Mathematical concepts
- Photographs

Purpose

'Baking by Numbers' can be used to introduce and reinforce the following skills:

- forming and revising questions;
- determining the author's purpose;
- exploring the features of an interview;
- interpreting maths in an authentic context;
- using the text as a model for writing;
- drawing conclusions from the text.

Introducing the text

Select one or more of these discussion starters:

- *What are some of the different ways a class could raise money?*
- *How do you write an interview? What do you think it looks like?*
- *What questions would you like to ask a class about how they have raised money?*
- *Why would a class want to raise money?*

Reading and discussing the text

Use some of the following suggestions to guide the students through the text:

- *Read page eight. What kinds of questions do you think the students will ask? How do you know?*
- *Read page nine. How do you know who was asked the question? Why do you think there are no speech marks?*
- *What information has been presented in the orange box on page ten? Why has it been included?*
- *What other questions would you have asked?*

Following up

The students can:

- reread the article and list all the reasons why the class was successful
- write a proposal for a class trip and identify how the money could be raised
- interview someone, having prepared the questions beforehand.

The Tuba

Eric has decided to learn the tuba, but he is having difficulty finding a place to practise.

Features of the text

- Narrative
- Problem solving
- Dialogue
- Characters, plot, setting

Purpose

'The Tuba' can be used to introduce and reinforce the following skills:

- making inferences;
- analysing a character's point of view;
- describing the sequence of events;
- identifying the theme.

Introducing the text

Select one or more of these discussion starters:

- *What do you know about tubas?*
- *What do you do when you have a problem? What do you do if your first solution doesn't work?*

Reading and discussing the text

Use some of the following suggestions to guide the students through the text:

- *Read to 'It sounds like a ship in a fog!' Who is going to have a problem in this story? What do you think the problem may be?*
- *Read to 'He slammed the door shut.' How does Eric try to solve his problems? What would you do next?*
- *What other problems does Eric have with his tuba?*
- *What is meant by 'you'll have to grow a thick skin'?*

Following up

The students can:

- write a list of all the solutions that Eric tried
- write a list of other solutions that he could have tried
- research to find out more about the tuba.

Big Quake, Little Shake

This article explains how buildings are designed and built to withstand earthquakes.

Features of the text

- Sequenced explanation of a process
- Text organisers such as captions and lists
- Specialised vocabulary
- Headings and subheadings
- Glossary words

Purpose

'Big Quake, Little Shake' can be used to introduce and reinforce the following skills:

- interpreting information from photographs and diagrams;
- using glossary words, context clues and rereading to make meaning;
- summarising information;
- using text organisation and layout to make meaning.

Introducing the text

Select one or more of these discussion starters:

- *What do you know about earthquakes?*
- *What kinds of damage can an earthquake cause?*

Reading and discussing the text

Use some of the following suggestions to guide the students through the text:

- *Read to the section called 'Problem.' How can we protect our buildings from earthquakes? Is this a new problem?*
- *Read to the section called 'What could the City Museum be built on?' Why has the checklist been included? What does it tell us?*
- *Read to the end of the article. Why did Bill Robinson test his idea?*

Following up

The students can:

- demonstrate, using props, how an earthquake affects a building
- write some questions to ask Bill Robinson about his research
- research earthquakes and make a poster telling the class what to do if there is one
- find out where in the world earthquakes often occur and mark the countries on a world map.

