

## Strategies for Reading Comprehension

# Problem-Solution



### What Is a Problem-Solution Chart?

The Problem-Solution chart is a variation of [column notes](#). It helps students focus on the four areas critical to problem-solving: identifying the problem, listing the consequences or results of that problem, isolating the causes, and proposing solutions. It is a great tool to use in social studies, but you can imagine how it might be every bit as useful in areas such as science or literature.

### How Does It Work?

A Problem-Solution chart breaks offers a way to visually organize the distinct components of problems toward educative ends. Because it uses a format based on column notes, students can readily understand its layout and function. Students (or the teacher) will first identify a problem; the effects or consequences of that problem are then listed. Students then brainstorm all the possible causes of that problem and also come up with solutions to the problem.

But don't think this is only good for content area topics...consider some other uses as well. For instance, if a student misbehaves, you might hand him a Problem-Solution chart to fill out before you counsel him about his behavior. Either you can identify the problem, or you can tell the student to identify the problem. Then, the Problem-Solution chart becomes a way for a student to reflect on his own behavior, its consequences, and what he might do to change it. Or perhaps it's time for a class meeting: you can tell your students you've tried everything you can think of, and you need their help to solve a problem. Put a Problem-Solution chart on the overhead, and tell them you want to solve the problem of homework not being turned in (or of the noise level in the lunchroom or...) It's a great strategy for jointly solving thorny issues that the class as a whole can address.

### How Is the Problem-Solution Chart Arranged?

Here's the basic idea...

Problem-Solution Chart	
What Is The Problem?	

<b>What Are The Effects?</b>	
<b>What Are The Causes?</b>	
<b>What Are Some Solutions?</b>	

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This site was created  
and is maintained by  
[Raymond Jones](#).

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