

Problem Solving for Students With Disabilities

About the lesson

This activity was developed by Tammy Moran, Special Education Teacher in Ferris Independent School District during the spring of 2020 as part of an NCII community of practice focused on virtual intervention delivery. Please note that NCII does not endorse specific intervention programs. As such, any programs noted in these documents are used for illustrative purposes only, or as potential resources for source materials (e.g., sample text, graphic organizers).

The Understand-Plan-Solve-Evaluate (UPSE) Method is a problem-solving strategy that can be used to support students struggling with word problems. The UPSE Method may be a helpful support for students who struggle with comprehension. This lesson can be used synchronously or asynchronously and does not require using multiple platforms.

Video tutorial of how to use the presentation

Below is a link to a video that virtually models successful implementation of the UPSE Method using a multistep word problem. This video is a great resource for educators looking to implement the strategy synchronously, but students can also use this strategy at home asynchronously.

- [UPSE Method Video Tutorial](#)

Tips for implementation

Educators should model how to use the UPSE Method using different types of word problems with students. For each step of the method, state the step aloud for students. Then, answer aloud the responses to each prompting question.

Additional scaffolds and supports. Many times, we have students who need additional supports and scaffolds to be successful in the learning environment. The following is a list of strategies that can accompany this lesson:

- Educators can give students a list of prompting questions to help them independently monitor and reflect during the problem-solving process. Make sure to select a reasonable number of questions rather than an exhaustive list, because too many prompts can be overwhelming and slow down the problem-solving process. Educators can print these prompts or can add them to presentation slides to help students monitor and reflect.
 - [Problem-Solving Reflection Questions](#)
- A Frayer Model may be used to define unfamiliar vocabulary from word problems for students. This graphic organizer can be sent electronically to students to print or can be completed in Word or Google Docs for students who do not have access to printers.
 - [Frayer Model Template](#)