Theme 4: Problem Solvers
CHALLENGE ACTIVITIES FOR

Problem Solvers

Selections

1. My Name Is María Isabel
2. Marven of the Great North Woods
3. The Last Dragon
4. Sing to the Stars
1. Problem-Solving Skit

**DAY 1**

**Decide on the Problem**

Tell students that each member of the group should contribute at least one problem and solution to the list. Refer students to page 1 of the Practice Book to help them come up with ideas.

**English Language Learners:** You might want to review the terms *problem* and *solution* with students. Pair students with primary English speakers or students with a more advanced facility with the language.

**DAY 2**

**Write Your Skit**

Tell students that their skit should stick to the problem as the main topic and that their dialogue should relate to the problem or solution.

**DAY 3**

Check with students on the progress of their skit.

**DAY 4**

Allow students enough time to practice and revise their skit.

**DAY 5**

**Share What You Know**

You might want to mediate the discussion about the skit between the group and the audience. Invite other classes to watch the skit.
2. Go, Team, Go!  60 MINUTES  INDIVIDUAL

**Materials:** sports pages (optional) and sports almanac (optional)

Point out that students’ predictions should be backed up by evidence such as recent statistics and/or an analysis of a player’s or team’s potential.

3. Alternative Solutions  60 MINUTES  INDIVIDUAL

Remind students to focus their efforts on a solution that is entertaining and workable. You might want to have students share their alternative endings with the class.

### Additional Independent Work

#### Connecting/Comparing Literature

Have students compare the Leveled Reader selection *The Right Fly* with the anthology selection *My Name Is María Isabel*, using what they have learned about Predicting Outcomes. Students may discuss or write about their comparisons.

### Other Activities

- Theme 4 Assignment Cards 1, 2, 3, 4
- TE p. 406, Literature Discussion
- TE p. 411, What’s in a Name?
- TE p. 411E, Challenge Word Practice
- TE pp. R9, R17, Challenge
- Education Place: www.eduplace.com
- More activities related to *My Name Is María Isabel*
- Accelerated Reader®, *My Name Is María Isabel*
- TE p. 411E, Challenge Word Practice
- TE pp. R9, R17, Challenge

### Expected Outcome

A good prediction will include
- a clearly stated theory
- details that support the theory
- a well-reasoned argument

A good rewrite will
- be consistent with details from the story
- follow the story’s point of view
- present a clear and workable solution

### Challenge Master CH 4–2

#### 2. Go, Team, Go!

A common saying in sports is “Wait until next year.” People say this because they hope that the next season will be better. Choose your favorite sports team or athlete. Use a prediction chart, like the one on page 4 of the Practice Book, to list details about your subject, such as:
- talents and abilities
- past achievements
- changes that might affect performance

Then write a prediction of how that team or athlete will do next season.

#### 3. Alternative Solutions

Choose a sports team or athlete you know a lot about. State your prediction clearly.

Choose a solution that could actually work in the story.

Rewrite the ending of the story so that the problem gets solved using your solution. Be sure your ending fits the story.

Expected Outcome

A good rewrite will
- be consistent with details from the story
- follow the story’s point of view
- present a clear and workable solution
THEME 4: Problem Solvers

1. A Change in Cast

**Materials:** Graphic Organizer Master 3, drawing paper, poster board, crayons, and markers

**Challenge Master CH 4–3**

1. **A Change in Cast**

**Materials:** Graphic Organizer Master 3, drawing paper, poster board, crayons, and markers

**Choose the Story**

Tell students that if they have chosen to add or alter a character, they might find it helpful to write a character sketch describing the new character. Explain that removing the main character when there is only one is not an option.

**Plot the Effects**

Check with students on the progress of their modifications. Tell students that they may find that they have to struggle to get the plot to come out the way they want it to. If this happens, they should rework their stories and make new character changes until the plot works.

**Share What You Know**

Allow students time to pull together their presentations. Lead a discussion among students and their audience that talks about the challenges involved in altering a story.

**Expected Outcome**

A good alteration will include:

- An altered character who is both interesting and believable
- Developments that are consistent with the characters’ natures
- A story resolution that works with the altered story elements
2. Who Stole The Wizard of Oz?
60 MINUTES  INDIVIDUAL  PAIR

(Challenge Theme Paperback)

Remind students that their altered summary will work best if they make small or subtle changes.

3. Prize-Winning Problem Solvers
60 MINUTES  INDIVIDUAL

(Social Studies)

Materials: reference sources, such as almanacs and encyclopedias, and Graphic Organizer Master 1

Emphasize that the point of this activity is to show that one way of solving a large problem is to break it down into smaller parts and work on each one. Refer students to page 24 of the Practice Book for additional support.

Additional Independent Work

Connecting/Comparing Literature ★

Have students compare the Leveled Reader selection Samuel de Champlain in Canada with the anthology selection Marven of the Great North Woods, using what they have learned about Problem Solving. Students may discuss or write about their comparisons.

Other Activities

- Challenge Theme Paperback, Who Stole The Wizard of Oz?
- Theme 4 Assignment Cards 5, 6, 7
- TE p. 442, Literature Discussion
- TE p. 449, Health
- TE p. 449E, Challenge Word Practice
- TE pp. R6, R11, R19, Challenge
- Education Place: www.eduplace.com

More activities related to Marven of the Great North Woods
- Accelerated Reader®, Marven of the Great North Woods
The Last Dragon

1. From Parts to Whole  

(Social Studies)

Materials: reference sources, construction paper, poster board, crayons, markers, scissors, and glue

DAY 1

Choose the Project

Emphasize to students that they are to develop a project that can be completed with materials on hand in the time available. Remind them to generate and discuss several ideas before proceeding.

DAY 2

Students continue to work on this project.

DAY 3

Division of Labor

Check with students on their progress in assigning tasks. Emphasize that the activity involves problem solving—how to work in a group to produce an acceptable product. Tell them this kind of problem solving requires

- organization
- cooperation
- self-checking

DAY 4

Students continue to work on this project.

DAY 5

Share What You Know

Have students evaluate their projects by creating a chart that summarizes what they learned from the experience. Have group or team members share positive feedback with everyone for his or her contributions. Have students discuss ways to improve on their process.
2. **Beyond the Frame**  
**60 MINUTES  INDIVIDUAL PAIR (Art)**

**Materials:** art reproductions and **Graphic Organizer Master 8**

Point out to students that each person brings his or her own experiences to viewing art. Sharing observations about the art creates a better understanding.

3. **The Spelling Dragon**  
**60 MINUTES  INDIVIDUAL PAIR SMALL GROUP**

**Materials:** poster board, crayons, markers, small colored squares or circles (markers), index or oaktag cards

Students might want to expand the game with other spelling words.

### Additional Independent Work

**Connecting/Comparing Literature**

Have students compare the Leveled Reader selection *I Know, I Know!* with the anthology selection *The Last Dragon*, using what they have learned about Drawing Conclusions. Students may discuss or write about their comparisons.

### Other Activities

- Theme 4 Assignment Cards 8, 9, 10
- TE p. 478, Literature Discussion
- TE p. 485, Art
- TE p. 485E, Challenge Word Practice
- TE pp. R13, R21, Challenge
- Education Place: www.eduplace.com

More activities related to *The Last Dragon*

- Accelerated Reader®, *The Last Dragon*
1. Open Your Ears!  
(Music) (Art)

**Materials:** CDs or tapes of classical, folk, country, and jazz; CD or tape player with earphones; poster board, construction paper, crayons, markers, and paints

**Expected Outcome**
A good response will include
✔ an analysis of a different kind of music
✔ work related to the specific musical piece
✔ a creative work

**Choose the Music**
Advise students to listen to the selection as music, not as a kind of music.

**English Language Learners:** Students might offer music from their primary cultures as styles for others to choose from.

**Respond to the Music**
Check with students on the progress of their responses. Remind them to respond
• to their own feelings about the music
• in a medium that suits both their interests and the music

**Share the Response**
You may wish to have students follow up their presentations by discussing, as a group, how their attitudes toward different kinds of music may have broadened or changed.
2. Sequels and Structures

60 MINUTES  INDIVIDUAL

Materials: Graphic Organizer Master 3

As an additional challenge, have students write and illustrate their sequels. Remind students to include the main characters, the setting, the problem to be solved, key events, and the solution in their maps.

3. Making Music

60 MINUTES  INDIVIDUAL

Materials: large and medium plastic bottles and containers, large rubber bands, old balloons, water

Allow students time to practice with their instruments.

Additional Independent Work

Connecting/Comparing Literature

Have students compare the Leveled Reader selection Shaji in New York with the anthology selection Sing to the Stars, using what they have learned about Story Structure. Students may discuss or write about their comparisons.

Other Activities

- Theme 4 Assignment Cards 11, 12, 13
- TE p. 506, Literature Discussion
- TE p. 511E, Challenge Word Practice
- TE pp. R15, R23, Challenge
- Education Place: www.eduplace.com
- More activities related to Sing to the Stars
- Accelerated Reader®, Sing to the Stars!

Expected Outcome

A good sequel will include:
- an interesting beginning, middle, and end
- a problem
- a resolution that involves Ephram and Mr. Washington

A good instrument presentation will include:
- correct use of materials
- a musical and/or rhythmical sound
- a well-practiced presentation

TIP 1:
- Your story should have a beginning, middle, and end.
- Make sure that the problem can be solved by the character(s).

TIP 2:
- Use clean, recyclable materials.
- Come up with a pattern for your group to play during the presentation.