

DESIGN THINKING: PROBLEM SOLVING



This activity is intended for small groups or whole class projects but can also be used as a guide for independent problem-solving.

INSTRUCTIONS

In your group, first identify a problem that needs to be solved. This problem can be a classroom problem, a school problem, a neighborhood/community problem, or a problem in the world. It should be a problem we have some control over.

For example, if your problem is that the sun is too hot, we don't have control over the sun, BUT if the problem is that we need shade from the sun, that might we something we can brainstorm or "ideate" about.

Your problem can be something requiring physical items for a solution like a tarp or wood for shade, or it can be a social problem like bullying. The important parts of this activity are to work together and be creative!

1. **DEFINE:** What is the problem? Describe the problem in detail.

2. **EMPATHIZE:** How does the problem affect or impact people?

3. **IDEATE:** Brainstorm – What are some possible solutions or ideas that will help to solve this problem?

4. **PROTOTYPE:** Action Planning – Let’s create our plan to try out one or more of our ideas.

5. **TEST:** Test out your plans. Did it work? Almost work? What changes are needed?

REMEMBER

Even if your ideas don’t work the first time, this doesn’t mean it’s a failure. It means we haven’t found the right solution YET. There has not been any invention that worked the right way on the first try. It just means we need new ideas and to keep on working together!

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