

## General Topics

### How do I solve word problems?

To solve word problems you need to answer at least three questions:

- 1.) What numbers are needed to answer the question?
- 2.) What mathematical operation(s) are needed to arrive at an answer?
- 3.) Does your answer make sense?

### 2.) What mathematical operation(s) are needed to arrive at an answer?

*In other words, you need to decide if you will add, subtract, multiply, or divide.*

Let's practice determining the correct mathematical operation(s) by identifying words that indicate addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division and identifying typical situations where a given operation is used.

### Subtraction

There are certain words found in problems that traditionally indicate subtraction is required:

#### Example

In the morning, 32 copies of the Automotive Cooling System Repair textbook were on hand at the bookstore. If 20 copies were sold during the day, how many textbooks were left?

#### Example

My checkbook has a balance of \$350. If I then write a check for \$78.50, how much money remains in my checkbook account?

#### Example

Karen's mutual fund went from \$29.50 per share down to \$28.70 per share last week. How much did the price fall (drop) last week?

#### Example

Last month Ray's production line made 14,566 water valves. This month his line made 13,880. What was the decrease in the amount of water valves made?

Other subtraction words are, *less than, more than, difference, reduce, lost, nearer, farther, change.*