

CRITICAL THINKING & PROBLEM SOLVING

Parent Resource

GRADES
3–5

What is critical thinking and problem solving?

Critical thinking and problem solving means gathering information to think through and determine the best solution.

As your child gets older, he or she will need to continue developing critical thinking and problem solving skills to be successful in school and life. He or she can use these skills to make responsible choices, accomplish goals and maintain positive relationships through effective communication, collaboration and conflict resolution.

In grades three through five, children begin or continue:

- ✓ Recognizing the importance of building relationships even when there are disagreements.
- ✓ Identifying solutions and potential outcomes when problems arise.
- ✓ Understanding the importance of taking ownership for personal actions.

Below are ways you can help your child learn, practice and demonstrate critical thinking and problem solving skills:

UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANCE OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Support critical thinking and problem solving by helping your child understand the importance of conflict resolution. Strategies for resolving conflicts can include compromise, negotiation, agreeing to disagree, and analyzing pros and cons. By practicing these strategies, your child will be better equipped to develop solutions for both everyday and more significant problems.

APPLY ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGIES

When practicing critical thinking and problem solving skills, your child can apply organizational strategies to complete complicated tasks. Discuss and create a strategy to tackle the problem, such as breaking it down into smaller steps that are more manageable for your child.

WORKING WITH YOUR CHILD TO UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANCE OF CRITICAL THINKING AND PROBLEM SOLVING WILL HELP HIM OR HER TO BECOME CONFIDENT, INDEPENDENT AND SUCCESSFUL.

SKILLS TO CONSIDER PRACTICING WITH YOUR CHILD:



Identifying successful strategies for adjusting to change and setbacks.



Comparing conflict resolution methods to identify potential solutions to interpersonal challenges.



DINNER TABLE CONVERSATION STARTER

Discuss how you used critical thinking skills to overcome a recent obstacle. What steps were necessary in that process? Share how you gathered information to make the best choice.