

Word Problems Using the Four Operations

Chapter 7: The Cleanest Village · Topic 2

Key Concept

Reading a word problem carefully helps us decide which operation to use - key words like 'total' suggest addition, 'left' suggests subtraction, 'each' suggests multiplication, and 'shared equally' suggests division.

Some word problems need more than one operation - for example, 'Buy 3 packs of 4 pencils each, then give away 5 pencils. How many are left?' needs multiplication ($3 \times 4 = 12$) then subtraction ($12 - 5 = 7$).

Drawing a picture or writing down the numbers and operation before solving helps avoid mistakes in multi-step word problems.

Practising word problems with all four operations builds strong problem-solving skills useful in daily life and future maths.

Quick Revision Notes

- Key words hint at which operation to use.
- 'Total' suggests addition; 'left' suggests subtraction.
- 'Each' suggests multiplication; 'shared equally' suggests division.
- Some problems need more than one operation.
- 3 packs of 4 pencils, minus 5, needs multiplication then subtraction.
- Writing down numbers and operations helps avoid mistakes.
- Practice builds strong problem-solving skills.
- This skill helps in daily life and future maths.

Practice Questions

- 1 Solve: A shop has 5 shelves with 8 books each, then sells 12. How many books left?
- 2 Create your own two-step word problem.
- 3 Identify the operations needed in three different word problems.
- 4 Solve a word problem using a picture to help.
- 5 Write a word problem using multiplication and subtraction.
- 6 Solve three more mixed operation word problems.