



## ***Problem Solving***

# ***The United States Post Office***

***(Miss Kelly's 3rd Graders)***



## Problem Solving Process

(Miss Kelly's Version)

**Problem Finding** (Find it.) → **Solution Finding** (Solve it.) → **Solution Using** (Use it or Sell it.)

1. **Get to know the problem.** Read about it, hear about it, think about it, study it, ask questions about it, gather data about it, brainstorm the problem family, see it from multiple perspectives, etc.
2. **Choose one problem.** Select one great, big, juicy problem to solve. You should know enough about it to describe it in great detail. It should be the problem that, when solved, will solve many other related problems.
3. Brainstorm many, varied, and unique solutions.
4. How will you know what is a good solution?  
(Develop criteria.)
5. Compare your five best solutions & choose one.  
(Use a Decision Making Matrix.)
6. Use your solution to solve the problem, (actually implement it or write a story describing the implementation.)  
OR  
**Describe & Convince:** Describe your final solution in a way that will convince others to agree with you by writing a detailed description of it.

# *The facts are these...*



The USPO does not have enough money to continue to do its job.

The USPO is required by law to have 5 billion dollars set aside for retirement funds.

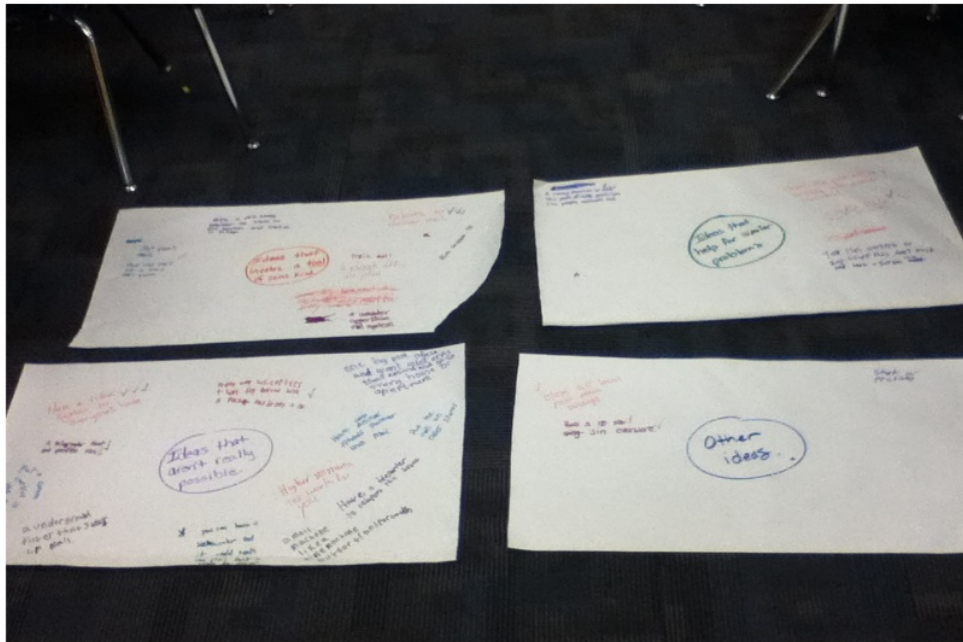
The USPO has to get its plans approved by Congress. They can't make big decisions on their own.

The USPO is trying new things like: teaming up with other businesses (Staples, Amazon), closing some local post offices, ending Saturday mail delivery, selling popular culture stamps, etc.

## Generate Ideas

Brainwriting stations:

- (1) ideas that aren't really possible
- (2) ideas from other problems like this one (when there is not enough to go around)
- (3) ideas that involve a tool of some kind.
- (4) other ideas



Ideas that  
aren't really  
possible.

# Master List of Ideas

- ~ start a petition to make Congress give the USPO more money
- ~ close all post offices - keep processing centers open
- ~ encourage people to stop sending mail (hang signs)
- ~ have one large post office with huge robot arms to deliver mail
- ~ animal friends will deliver mail
- ~ mail on skates
- ~ minions deliver mail
- ~ share buildings (post office plus another business)
- ~ donations to USPO
- ~ tiny helicopters
- ~ a mail train
- ~ have a bake sale for the USPO
- ~ jet pack mail
- ~ robots deliver mail
- ~ teleportation
- ~ suckinator tubes
- ~ a mail boat
- ~ USPO garage sale
- ~ remote control mail
- ~ professional skateboarders deliver mail

# Decision Making Matrix

|                              | Customers will enjoy it | fast to do | Save money | last a long time | TOTAL |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|------------|------------|------------------|-------|
| Suckinator tubes             | 2                       | 2          | 1          | 5                | 10    |
| higher the Minions           | 4                       | 1          | 4          | 2                | 11    |
| robots to deliver mail       | 3                       | 3          | 3          | 4                | 13    |
| pro skateboarders            | 5                       | 4          | 2          | 3                | 14    |
| close all local post offices | 1                       | 5          | 5          | 1                | 12    |

# Describe Your Solution

Write a paragraph to describe your solution.