

worked on the problem together. Of course, some groups were more successful than others, but all groups were more actively involved than before. They had manipulatives to use to act out the problem which helped a lot.

Beverly's Thoughts

At the first grade level communication is a big part of problem solving/strategies to solve problems. We usually begin discussions with a knee to knee partner then add two other knee to knee partners or think pair share. The students are comfortable enough now to share out their way for solving a problem and then someone else shares a different way. We use pictures, words, manipulatives or act out a problem to come up with solutions. For those students that still need a little more help or guidance I use the Elmo to display the problem and a different student every week will come up and show their solution on the screen. This seems to calm everyone's frustration level while celebrating someone's solution.

Engrid's Thoughts

For the problem "How Many Berries Did I Eat?," my first graders would communicate effectively through pictures and manipulatives. We use these in math a lot to explain our thinking or show our work. Many times they can explain themselves through pictures and manipulatives better than words. When they see a problem model out, they tend to understand it better. Also working with partners or in groups can help them hear and see different strategies.

I think a good way to develop student communication with this problem is to first start with a Think-Pair-Share. That way they can communicate with a partner and share the thinking. They would have access to white boards and manipulatives, too. After talking with a partner, they could share with another group. Then we could have a class discussion.

We hope this information is useful in helping you make the most of this Primary Problems of the Week. If you have stories to tell about this or other problems, we'd love to hear from you.

<https://www.nctm.org/contact-us/>