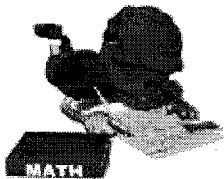


Key Words for Solving Word Problems

The hardest part of solving a word problem is actually understanding the problem and determining the operation (or operations) that needs to be performed. Listed below are a few of the most commonly used key words in word problems and the operations that they signal. Keep in mind that same key words may signal more than one operation. It is then up to you to picture in your head what is going on and then determine which operation best fits that scenario.

SUBTRACTION	
KEY WORDS / PHRASES	SELECTED EXAMPLES
decreased by	The population of whales decreased by 400 in the last year.
minus	She had ten dollars, minus the amount she spent on the drink. How much did she have in all?
less	She had five cards, less the two she gave her brother. How many did she have in all?
difference between / difference of	What was the difference between their earnings last week?
More than	Jacob has 6 more marbles than Carlos.
Less than	Carlos has 6 marbles less than Jacob.
Fewer than	Jenny has six fewer cookies than Elizabeth.
How many more	How many more daisies does Kate have than Jacob?
How much more	How much more money does Alex need to buy the computer?
Left	How many eggs are left?
"remain" or "remains"	How many students remain on the bus?
Words ending in "er" Examples: higher, longer, faster, heavier, larger, shorter, slower, farther, etc.	How much heavier is Jack's bag than Mark's? How much farther does Susan need to run?
Take away	If Elizabeth takes away 2 of Jaime's baseball cards, how many will he have?
Only	



EQUALS

Is, are, was, were, will be, gives, yields