## Are you stumped by story problems?

Many times there is a word or phrase that may give you a hint as to how to solve the problem. I refer to these as "clue words". Certain words tell us to add, subtract, multiply or divide. You can make story problems even more enjoyable for students by making the process more fun. Try having the student pretend to be a detective to try and solve the mystery of the story problem by hunting for clues within the problem. Once they have spotted the "clues", then they can try the operation to solve the problem. Don't forget that clue words often lead you to the correct operation, but there are always some ways to use a clue word in a tricky way. This doesn't happen very often, but it does happen. Therefore, it is important to always check to see if your answer makes sense.

| Addition | Subtraction | Multiplication | Division | Equals | Variables |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Sum | Difference | Product | Quotient | Is | Unknown |
| Plus | Subtract | Times | Ratio | Becomes | Letter |
| Added to | Less | Multiply | Divided by | Same as | Variable |
| Increased | Less than | Twice | Half | Equal to | Some number |
| Combine | Subtract from | Double | One-third | Was | A number |
| Gain | Get rid of | Triple | Put into groups | Replaced by | Can change |
| Expand | Smaller than | For | Divide | Will be |  |
| More than | Remainder | Squared | Divisor | Are |  |
| Grow | Decreased by | Cubed | Dividend | Answer |  |
| In all | Drop | Repeated | Remainder | Means |  |
| Add | How much with a comparison word (how much more, how much less, etc.) | Repeated addition | Goes into | Equivalent |  |
| Total | Taken away from | Of | Average | Even |  |
| And | Minus | Multiple | Share |  |  |
| Altogether | Lower | Factor | Split |  |  |
| Together | Eliminate | Per |  |  |  |
| Addend | Reduce | Each |  |  |  |
| Found | Subtrahend |  |  |  |  |
| Deposit | Minuend |  |  |  |  |
| Credit | Lost |  |  |  |  |
|  | Fewer |  |  |  |  |
|  | Withdraw |  |  |  |  |
|  | Debit |  |  |  |  |
|  | Removed |  |  |  |  |

