

Solving Problems SODAS Method

When faced with a problem, students need a way to work through it to find a workable, appropriate solution. SODAS – which stands for Situation, Options, Disadvantages, Advantages, and Solution – is a specific method for solving problems that students can learn to use. The SODAS method provides structure to the process of solving problems and gives students a new way to approach situations where they might have acted hastily or inappropriately in the past.

Although the SODAS method is similar to that of POP, it requires students to take a closer look at the disadvantages and advantages of different options in order to make a decision and come up with a solution. Helping students develop viable options is important if they are to truly learn to effectively solve problems.

The goal of the lesson is to teach students the SODAS method of solving problems.

The objectives of the lesson for students include:

- learning the SODAS method of problem-solving.
- practicing the skill.
- generalizing the use of the skill to different places and different people.

Introduce the Skill

Discuss a problem with the students that they might encounter during their school day (e.g., forgetting to complete a homework assignment, being left out of the group during lunch, wanting to miss work to go to a party with friends, hearing someone in the hallway talking about how he or she is going to “get

someone” after school). Have students provide their suggestions for how they might go about solving the problem.

Write down the behaviors students say they would use to solve the problem on the blackboard. Reinforce student responses.

NOTE: Responses might include talk to the teacher about it, skip work, join the group anyway, etc.

Describe the Appropriate Behavior

Provide students with the behavioral steps for the SODAS method.

NOTE: Steps can be posted on a bulletin board or shown on an overhead, etc. Please adapt the steps to fit your expectations and the needs of your students.

SAY: “Here are the steps of the skill of the SODAS method for solving problems.”

- 1. Identify the problem Situation.**
- 2. Consider the Options for the situation.**
- 3. List the Disadvantages and Advantages of each option.**
- 4. Choose a Solution and follow through.**

ASK: “How do these steps (behaviors) match the ones you identified in the earlier discussion?”

NOTE: Allow time for discussion and modify the steps of the skill if necessary.

SAY: “These are the steps we are going to use to solve problems with the SODAS method in this class and building.”

Give a Reason

Ask the students to provide reasons for why they think it might be important to solve problems using these steps. Here are some examples of reasons to use in case students have difficulty thinking of ones on their own:

- You might make better decisions if you take the time to really think them through.
- You consider other options rather than choosing the first thing that comes to your mind.
- You might avoid getting into trouble because you made a poor choice.

Practice

Choose one or more of the following activities to complete your lesson by allowing the students to practice the skill.

1. Provide students with typical school-related problems they might encounter (e.g., someone gets in your way at your locker, you are late to class, someone has materials you need to complete your assignment, you see someone cheating, you see someone bullying another student, you come to class without the day's homework, the coach tells you someone will start in your place in the soccer game). Hand out copies of the SODAS sheet at the end of the lesson plan and have students work through the problem.

2. Journaling ideas

- Ask students to write about a time when they chose to solve a problem and they got in trouble. Using the steps for SODAS, have students identify what they might do differently if they were in the same situation again.
- Ask students to write about a time when they solved a problem and the solution they chose worked out for them. Ask them what parts of the SODAS method they used before they followed through with their solution.

SAY: “Thank you for completing the practice activity. We will continue to discuss the SODAS method for the rest of the week.”

NOTE: Each day of the week, review the steps of the skill, discuss why it is important to use the skill, and practice when possible.

Preventive Prompt

There are many times during the course of the school day when you can prompt students that they are going to have to solve a problem. Prompt students to repeat the steps to you or review the steps with them prior to them using the skill.

Other Ideas for Practice

NOTE: As you develop other ideas for practicing the skill, write them here and share them with other staff members in your building.

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Solving Problems with SODAS



Situation

Options

Option 1

Option 2

Option 3

Disadvantages

Disadvantages of Option 1

Disadvantages of Option 2

Disadvantages of Option 3

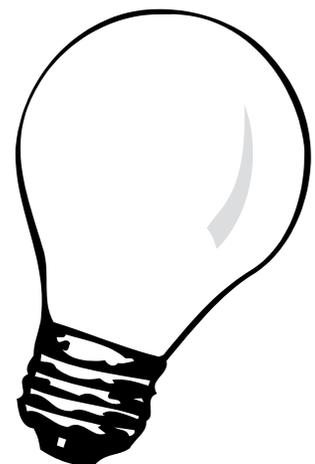
Advantages

Advantages of Option 1

Advantages of Option 2

Advantages of Option 3

Solution



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- 2. Consider the Options for the situation.**
- 3. List the Disadvantages and Advantages of each option.**
- 4. Choose a Solution and follow through.**