

What Is My Child Learning?

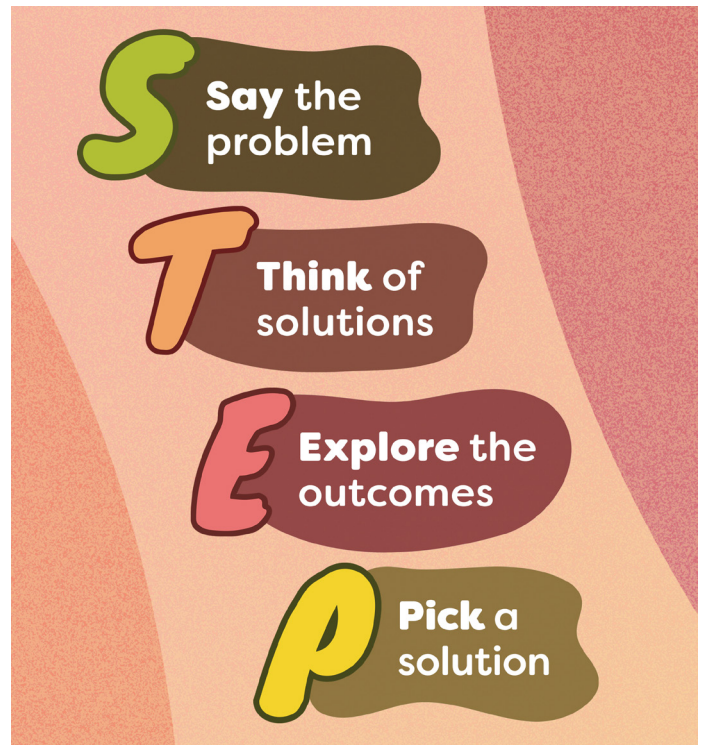
Unit Themes

Your child is learning how to use a multistep process to solve common interpersonal problems—disagreements or misunderstandings between two or more people. By fifth grade, kids start to deal with more complex problems that can result in hurt feelings, such as not being included in an activity or feeling disrespected by words or actions. Fifth graders practice each part of the STEP process, paying special attention to when, where, and with whom it makes sense to work on problems, and reflecting on the possible outcomes.

Why is it important?

Research shows that children who learn the skills in this unit are more likely to:

- **Have better mental health**
- **Make more positive choices**
- **Be more connected and compassionate**



Practice at Home

What to Look For

Notice and praise your child when you hear them name an interpersonal problem without blame or name-calling. For example, instead of saying “She’s so mean!” your fifth grader may say, “She said something that hurt my feelings.” You can say, **I’m sorry to hear that. I appreciate how you’re describing the problem in a respectful way. That’s a good first step to figuring out how to handle it.**

Try This!

Discuss: Take turns talking about an interpersonal problem, including what went well, what didn’t, and what you’d do differently. For example, **I forgot I made plans with a friend. When he called, I acted like it was no big deal. Now I know I hurt his feelings. If it happens again, I’ll apologize and make sure he knows I care about him.**

Practice: Help your child think through solutions to problems by asking questions such as:

- **When is the best time to work on this problem?** Find times when everyone can feel calm.
- **Where is the best place?** Think of places where people can focus.
- **Who should be included?** Involving too many people can sometimes make problems worse.