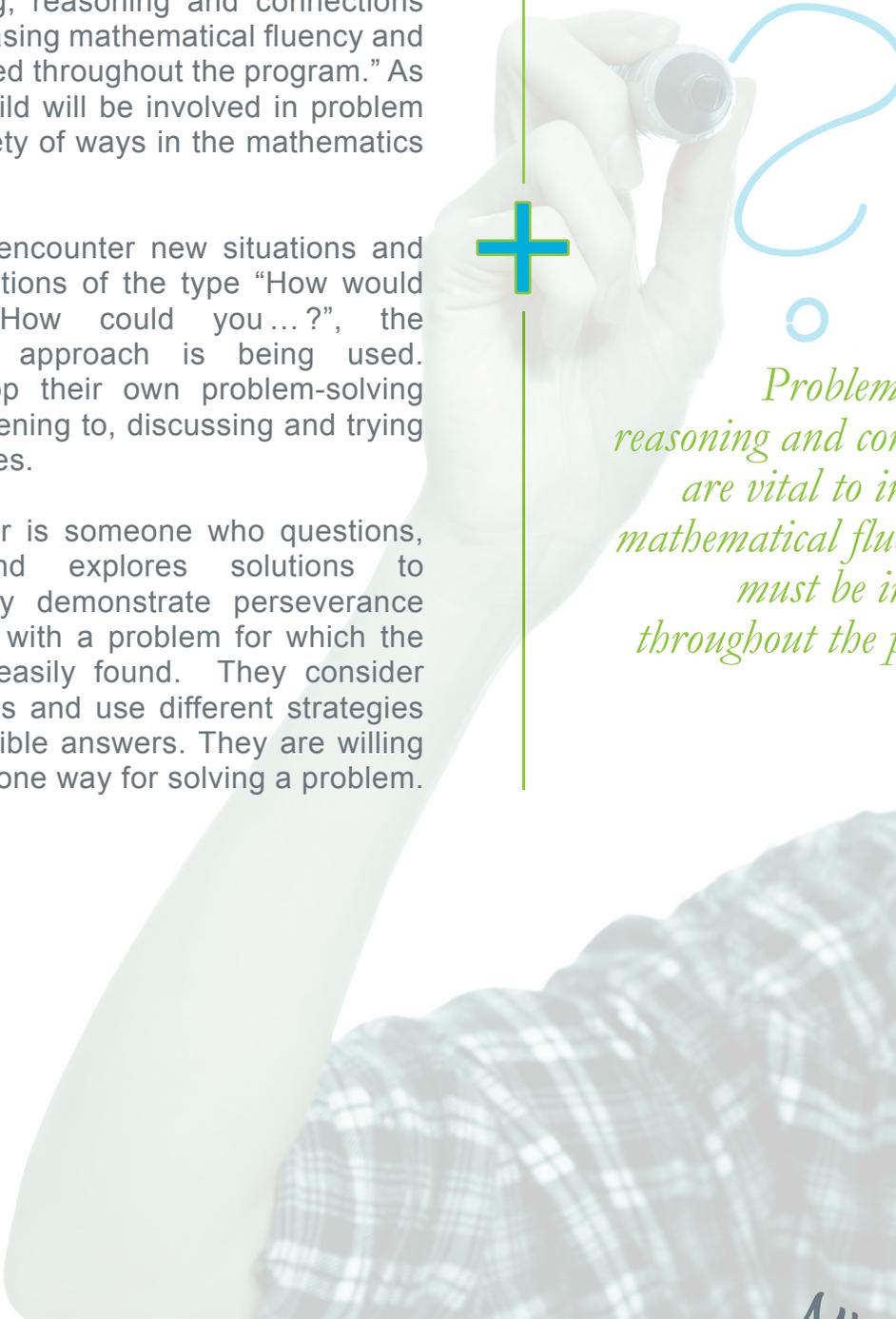


Why is the focus in my child’s math class on problem solving?

The revised Mathematics Kindergarten to Grade 9 Program of Studies states that “Problem solving, reasoning and connections are vital to increasing mathematical fluency and must be integrated throughout the program.” As a result, your child will be involved in problem solving in a variety of ways in the mathematics class.

When students encounter new situations and respond to questions of the type “How would you...?” or “How could you...?”, the problem-solving approach is being used. Students develop their own problem-solving strategies by listening to, discussing and trying different strategies.

A problem solver is someone who questions, investigates and explores solutions to problems. They demonstrate perseverance when presented with a problem for which the solution is not easily found. They consider many possibilities and use different strategies to arrive at possible answers. They are willing to try more than one way for solving a problem.



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Students who use reasoning are able to justify and explain the process they used when solving a problem. They think logically and identify relationships among elements in the problem.

Some of the work your child brings home may not look like the practice questions you were used to seeing in math. The math resources have an increased emphasis on activities that get students to problem solve, communicate and reason. The work your child produces may also look different from what you are used to seeing in a math class.

How might I support my child with problem solving?

- *Remind your child that if he or she could find the answer immediately, it really wouldn't be a problem.*
- *Play games and puzzles with your child that involve the use of logic and reasoning, such as Sudoku, Clue and Risk.*
- *Search the Internet for “logic problems” at your child’s specific level.*
- *Talk to your child’s teacher for additional ideas and resources.*



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