Chapter 3

Activity SS3-2 Problem Solving

Directions: The first step of problem solving is to identify the problem in clear terms. Write a statement that defines what the actual problem is that needs to be solved in the following situations.

Situation 1:

Ryan lives with his parents while he goes to college. He takes a bus to get to his classes and part-time job. One of his goals is to save money so he can buy a car. In a relatively short period of time, Ryan was able to save approximately $7,000. While viewing a website for a used-car dealership, he found three cars he can buy without having to finance. The first car is eight years old, has 153,000 miles on it, gets around 24 miles per gallon, and costs $5,000. It needs some minor work, but it is a nice-looking sports car Ryan has always desired. The second car is five years old, has a mileage reading of 84,000, gets approximately 30 miles per gallon, and costs $6,250. The third car is two years old, has been driven 66,000 miles, reaches 35 miles per gallon, and costs $6,850; however, the third car only seats two people.

Definition of problem:

Situation 2:

Lupe goes to school at a local college and works part-time at a local restaurant. She takes 13 credits at school and works 20–25 hours each week to help pay for her classes. Every morning, she wakes up at 6:35, showers, makes her breakfast, and leaves for train that will take her to class. She has class until 3:45, with breaks scheduled throughout for studying and homework. After school, she goes to the gym for an hour before working at the restaurant from 6–10 each evening. She follows this routine every day and relies on the regularity of her schedule to keep her organized.

One night, Lupe prepared her clothes for the morning, checked her alarm clock to make sure it was on, and drifted off to sleep. That same evening, a heavy storm blew through Lupe’s town and knocked out her electricity. When she opened her eyes the following morning, her alarm clock showed 7:17; she had overslept by over 40 minutes and missed her train to school.

Definition of problem: