Math Story Problem Templates

The following math story problem templates are for you to create math story problems individualized to your children. They are grouped together based upon the Cognitive Guided Instruction Model's Types of Word Problems.

Choose a Problem Type

First, pick the type of problem your child needs to work on. There are various types of problems for addition and subtraction (pages 2-7). And a few for multiplication and division (pages 7-8). Each problem is worded slightly differently. Practice a variety of problems with your children so they can conceptualize the problems no matter how it is worded.

Create the Problem

Once you have picked the type, replace each *someone* with a person's name that is meaningful to your child. Replace each italicized, underlined *some* with numbers that would be appropriate for your child to be working with. (There are other italicized words you can customize as well, such as *color* and *place*.)

For example, if your child is working on making 10, create problems that practice that skill. If they are doing double digit addition, include double digit numbers in your problems. You can make each problem as easy or as hard as you would like.

Examples are given to get you started.

Note: For ideas of how to present the problems to your children and guide them through solving them, check out: Teaching Math With Story Problems, Not Word Problems

Join: Result Unknown

1. There were *some* *animals* in the *place*. Then, *some* more *animals* entered the *place*. How many *animals* are in the *place* now?

(E.g., There were 25 birds in the tree. Then, 15 more birds flew into the tree. How many birds are in the tree now? (**40 birds)** Or you could use: bugs on a log, cows in the barn, etc.)

2. There were *some* *things* on/in the *place*. Then, *someone* put *some* more *things* on/in the *place*. How many *things* are on/in the *place* now?

(E.g., There were 47 books on the shelf. Then, the librarian put 32 more books on the shelf. How many books are on the shelf now? **(79 books)** Or you could use: cups on the counter, pencils on the table, etc.)

Join: Change Unknown

1. *Someone* had *some* *things*. She/he bought some more *things*. Then, she/he had *some* *things*. How many *things* did *someone* buy?

(E.g., Gina had 15 markers. She bought some more markers. Then, she had 50 markers. How many markers did Gina buy? **(35 markers)** Or you could use: James had 15 books, Aaron had 3 pieces of candy, Davian had 12 baseball cards, etc.)

2. *Someone* has *some* *things* in their collection. She/he wants to have *some* *things* in her/his collection. How many more *things* does *someone* need to complete their collection?

(E.g., Hannah has 25 stickers in her collection. She wants to have 50 stickers in her collection. How many more stickers does Hannah need to complete her collection? **(25 stickers)** Or you could use: Aiden has 32 matchbox cars, Jaylynn has 3 dolls, etc.)

Join: Start Unknown

1. *Someone* had some *things*. She/he bought *some* more *things*. Then, she/he had *some things*. How many *things* did *someone* start with?

(E.g., Chloe had some notebooks. She bought 8 more notebooks. Then, she had 20 notebooks. How many notebooks did Chloe start with? **(12 notebooks)** Or you could use: Nate had some balls, the dog had some bones, etc.)

2. Some *animals* were *doing something*. *Some* more *animals* joined them. Then, there were *some animals doing something* altogether. How many *animals* were there to start with?

(E.g., Some ants were crawling in the sand. 6 more ants joined them. Then, there were 15 ants crawling in the sand altogether. How many ants were there to start with? **(9 ants)** Or you could use: Some bugs were walking along a branch, some sheep were eating grass, some birds were singing in the trees, etc.)

Separate: Results Unknown

1. *Someone #1* has *some things*. He/she gave *some things* to *someone #2*. How many *things* does *someone #1* have left?

(E.g., Lucas has 12 baseball cards. He gave 4 baseball cards to his friend. How many baseball cards does Lucas have left? **(8 baseball cards)** Or you could use: Jenna has 32 pencils, Eli has 8 hockey pucks, Sarah has 10 bookmarks, etc.)

2. *Some animals* were *doing something*. *Some animals left*. How many *animals* are still *doing something*?

(E.g., 15 fish were swimming in the pond. 10 fish jumped into a creek and swam away. How many fish are still swimming in the pond? **(5 fish)** Or you could use: 5 cats were hunting in the woods, 22 ducks were eating bread crumbs, etc.)

Separate: Change Unknown

1. *Someone #1* had *some things*. She/he gave some *things* to *someone #2*. Then, *someone #1* had *some things*. How many *things* did *someone #1* give to *someone #2*?

(E.g., Aaron had 13 pieces of candy. He gave some candy to his little sister. Then, Aaron had 9 pieces of candy. How many pieces of candy did Aaron give his little sister? **(4 pieces of candy)** Or you could use: Billy had 15 books, Darren had 35 basketball cards, etc.)

2. *Someone* found *some things*. Then, she/he lost some. Then, she/he had *some things*. How many *things* did she/he lose?

(E.g., Jaylnn found 32 seashells. She lost some. Then, she had 26 seashells. How many seashells did she lose? **(6 seashells)** Or you could use: Hannah found 25 rocks, Aiden found 15 leaves, etc.)

Separate: Start Unknown

1. *Someone* had some *food*. He/she ate *some food*. Then, he/she had *some food* left. How many *foods* did *someone* have before he/she ate any?

(E.g., Damian had some pretzels. He ate 12 pretzels. Then, he had 8 pretzels left. How many pretzels did Damian have before he ate any? **(20 pretzels)** Or you could use: Sadie had some apple slices, Jack had some raisins, etc.)

2. The library had some books about *something* on the shelf. Then, *some* of them were checked out. Now, there are *some* books about *something* still on the shelf. How many books about *something* were on the shelf to start with?

(E.g., The library had some books about France on the shelf. Then, 8 of them were checked out. Now, there are 4 books about France still on the shelf. How many books about France were on the shelf to start with? **(12 books)** Or you could use: books about soccer, books about giraffes, etc.)

Part-Part-Whole: Whole Unknown

1. *Someone* had *some* *adjective* *things*. He/she also had *some* *adjective #2* *things*. How many *things* does she/he have altogether?

(E.g., Tess had 10 blue shirts. She also had 5 red shirts. How many shirts does she have altogether? **(15 shirts)** Or you could use: different colored flowers or different colors or kinds of fruit.)

2. *Some people/animals #1* went to a *place*. *Some people/animals #2* also went to a *place*. How many *people/animals* are at the *place*?

(E.g., Five cows walked into the barn. Eight sheep walked into the barn. How many animals walked into the barn? **(13 animals)** Or you could use: boys and girls at a party, adults and children at the doctor's, etc.)

Part-Part-Whole: Part Unknown

1. There were *some* *animals* in a *place*. *Some* of the *animals* were *doing something*. How many *animals* were not *doing something*?

(E.g., There were 15 geese at the pond. Five of them were swimming. How many were not swimming? **(10 geese were not swimming)** Or you could use cows eating, squirrels chasing each other, etc.)

2. *Someone* has *some* *things*. *Some* of them have *something*. How many of the *things* do not have *something*?

(E.g., Maria has 5 dogs. Three of the dogs have spots. How many of the dogs do not have spots? **(2 dogs)** Or you could use: Plates that are red, shirts with pictures, books that are hardcover, etc.)

Compare: Difference Unknown

1. *Someone #1* has *some things*. *Someone #2* has *some things*. How many more *things* does *someone #1* have than *someone #2*?

(E.g., Miguel has 12 football cards. Will has 6 football cards. How many more football cards does Miguel have than Will? **(6 more football cards)** Or you could use jewelry, books, toys, food, etc.)

2. *Some people/animals* are *doing something #1*. *Some people/animals* are *doing something #2*. How many more *people/animals* are *doing something #1* than *doing something #2*?

(E.g., Twelve turtles are sitting on rocks. Five turtles are swimming in the water. How many more turtles are sitting on rocks than swimming in the water? **(7 more turtles)** Or you could use children swinging and children on the monkey bars, children playing games and children dancing, etc.)

Compare: Larger Quantity Unknown

1. *Someone #1* bought *some things*. *Someone #2* bought *some* more *things* than *someone #1*. How many *things* did *someone #2* buy?

(E.g., Rochelle bought five bracelets. Jasmine bought four more bracelets than Rochelle. How many bracelets did Jasmine buy? **(9 bracelets)** Or you could use: buying a food item, books, etc.)

2. There are *some* people (or animals) in *place #1*. There are *some* more people (or animals) in *place #2* than in *place #1*. How many people (or animals) are in *place #2*?

(E.g., There are 12 people in the children's section of the library. There are 8 more people in the adult section of the library than there are in the children's section of the library. How many people are in the adult section of the library? **(20 people)** Or you could use: people in a car and on a bus, cows in a barn and outside of the barn, etc.).

Compare: Smaller Quantity Unknown

1. *Someone #1* has *some* *things*. She/he has *some* more *things* than *someone #2*. How many *things* does *someone #2* have?

(E.g., Jonathan has 17 sticks of gum. He has 5 more sticks of gum than Jocelyn. How many sticks of gum does Jocelyn have? **(12 sticks of gum)** Or you could use: stickers, jewelry, baseball cards, etc.)

2. *Someone #1* *did something* for *some* *distance or time*. *Someone #2* *did something* for *some* fewer/less *distance or time* than *someone #1*. How many *distance/time* did *someone #2* *do something*?

(E.g., Anna ran for 15 minutes. Jose ran for 5 minutes less than Anna. How long did Jose run for? **(10 minutes)** Or you could use: riding bikes or driving cars for a number of miles, cleaning or playing for a number of minutes or hours, etc.)

Multiplying with Equal Groups: Product Unknown

1. There were *some* *people/animals*. They each had *some* *things*. How many *things* did they have altogether?

(E.g., There were 3 dogs. They each had 4 toys. How many toys did they have altogether? **(12 toys)** Or you could use: children and food, seeds, stickers, cards or animals with food, spots, legs etc.)

2. There were *some* *people/animals* *doing something*. Each *person/animal* did *some* *things*. How many *things* did they *do something to* altogether?

(E.g., There were 5 children making cookies. Each child made 10 cookies. How many cookies did they make altogether? **(50 cookies)** Or you could use: squirrels storing nuts, dogs chewing bones, children making cards, children planting seeds, etc.)

Dividing with Equal Groups: Group Size Unknown

1. *Someone* has *some things*. He/she puts the *things* into *some places*. If he/she puts the same number of *things* in each *place*, how many *things* will be in each *place*?

(E.g., Shayna has 40 stickers. She puts the stickers on 8 cards. If she puts the same number of stickers on each card, how many stickers will be on each card? **(5 stickers)** Or you could use: cupcakes in boxes, coins in pockets, socks in drawers, markers in cups, etc.)

2. *Someone* goes to the store and buys *some things*. He/she buys *some* packs/cartons/boxes of the *things*. If each pack/carton/box is the same size, how many *things* are in each pack/carton/box?

(E.g., Mrs. Smith goes to the store and buys 48 small bags of chips. She buys 6 boxes of the chips. If each box is the same size, how many bags of chips are in each box? **(8 bags of chips)** Or you could use: juice boxes, cookies, cans of soup, etc.)

Dividing with Equal Groups: Number of Groups Unknown

1. *Someone* gave *some things* out to each *person*. She/he gave out *some things*. How many *people* received the *things*?

(E.g., The man gave 2 water bottles to each runner. He gave out 38 water bottles. How many runners received water bottles? **(19 runners)** Or you could use: cookies at a party, gifts on Christmas morning, pencils to students, etc.)

The *people* made *some things*. Each *person* made *some things*. How many *people* made *things*?

(E.g., The children made 72 cookies. Each child made 8 cookies. How many children made cookies? **(9 children)** Or you could use: children making cards, people making gift boxes, boys planting seeds, etc.)

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