

Drawing a picture is a strategy that is always available to students. It helps students understand a problem and see a math idea that otherwise would be abstract. Additionally, it is a way for them to show their thinking to others.

Students might use this strategy whenever they have a math problem that has more than one step, when a problem doesn't make sense and they need to *see* what is happening in the problem, or when they are solving a word problem.


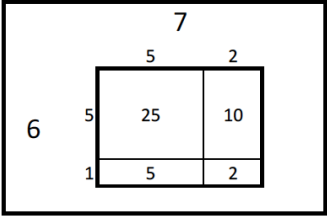
When students use this strategy, it is important to remember these points:

- A picture is a great way to see a problem when a three-dimensional object (manipulative) isn't available.
- Drawing a picture can be used at any grade level and can be either simple or more involved (lower elementary versus upper elementary).
- Drawing a picture should not take a lot of time. It doesn't need a lot of details.

How You Can Help Your Child with This Strategy at Home

1. When working on math with your child, model how you might draw a picture to help you see the problem. Remind your child that there might be more than one way to draw what is happening in the problem, and that is okay.

Example:

Lower Elementary	Upper Elementary
$4 + 5 = \underline{\quad}$ 	$7 \times 6 = \underline{\quad}$ 

2. After modeling for your child, ask them to draw a picture to solve a different problem. Ask them, "How does drawing a picture help me see what is happening in the problem?"
3. Remind your child that what is most important when drawing a picture of our math is that we understand what we're drawing. It is a useful strategy only if it helps us understand the math better.
4. Also, remind them that sometimes we *don't* need to draw a picture, and that's okay, too. Discuss with your child when you might need to draw a picture (for example, "when I come to a problem I don't understand") and when you might *not* need to draw a picture (for example, "when the problem makes sense to me and I can find the answer easily").