

## Skill 36: *Identify Problems*

For this lesson plan, each student needs exclusive use of a computer.

Students will be able to (SWBAT):

1. Define the skill *Identify Problems* and identify why the skill is important.
2. Develop a plan to improve their own proficiency in the skill *Identify Problems*.

Provided Materials:

- Skill 36: *Identify Problems* – Finding Evidence
- Skill 36: *Identify Problems* – Development Plan

**Skill Definition:** *Identify Problems* means knowing how to define a problem and come up with evidence to support the problem's existence.

**Warm Up Brainstorm (5-10 minutes):** Write the provided skill definition on the board for students to copy in their notes and begin a discussion about problems, using an example such as **too much homelessness in America's big cities**. Discuss how it is necessary to have evidence to support the problem's existence, carefully explaining the difference between knowing a problem exists and having the evidence to convince others it exists. **In the case of the problem above, you would need statistics from several large cities in America to demonstrate that large percentages of their populations are homeless.** Explain that evidence comes in the form of statistics/numbers and statements from experts on the topic.

**Guided Activity (20-25 minutes):** Give students the handout **Skill 26: *Identify Problems* – Finding Evidence** to complete at their individual computers. The worksheet asks students to find evidence to demonstrate that six different problems exist. While there are many sources of evidence in the real world, for the purpose of this exercise if they can't find it using the Internet then we will "assume" there is no evidence to prove there is actually a problem. Once they investigate each problem, the question becomes: **if you can't find evidence of a problem, how do you prove to others it exists?** This drives home the importance of this skill.

**Independent Practice (5-10 minutes):** Students complete **Skill 36: *Identify Problems* – Development Plan**.

**Evaluation:** Assess the quality of the plans completed by the students and provide feedback using Part Three of this manual; compare to the responses they gave for Skill 36 in their initial **Student Skills Assessment**.

**Extension Activity:**

- Require students to have evidence to demonstrate problems or defend opinions in their work for your class.

### Skill 36: Identify Problems – Finding Evidence

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** There are six problems stated below. Using the Internet, find evidence to support that each problem exists and document both the evidence and its source.

Problem	Did you find evidence that proves this problem exists: Yes or No? If yes, what is the evidence?	Also if yes, what is the source of the evidence?
1. There is too much crime in the city of Syracuse, New York.		
2. The city of Helena, Montana is overpopulated with owl species.		
3. At your school, students are too loud in the hallways during class time, even with doors closed.		
4. There are too many unwanted teen pregnancies in the United States.		
5. The United States provides too much financial support to countries with corrupt and undemocratic dictators.		
6. Too few college students are graduating on time (either in two years or four years, depending on the school they go to).		

### Skill 36: *Identify Problems* – Development Plan

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Give yourself a rating of 1, 2, 3, or 4 in this skill, with 1 indicating poor proficiency and 4 indicating excellence in the skill. Provide evidence for your rating.

Rating: \_\_\_\_\_

Evidence:

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Where do you want to be in six months and how will you measure your progress?

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List academic and non-academic activities to help you achieve your goal in six months, using the back of this page if necessary. Each activity should be a specific academic experience, class, community service project, extra-curricular activity, internship or job. List them in order from the most important to the least important.

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