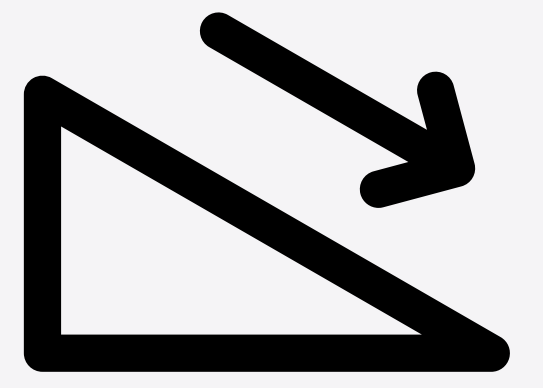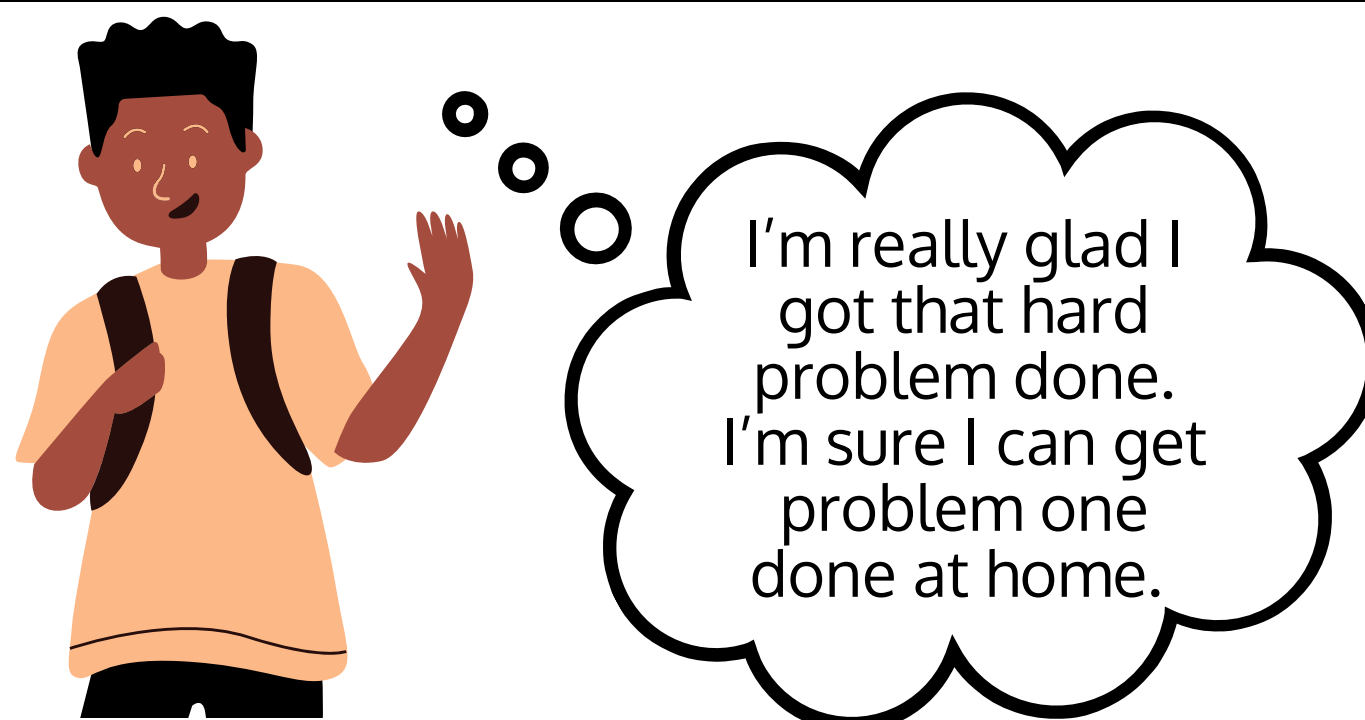# GOING DOWNHILL

Save the easy ones for later

TRY IT

If you give students time to start their homework in class, have them start with the hardest problems first.

WHY TRY IT?

Problem sets typically increase in difficulty and students often do their homework in sequential order. If students have support in class from their teachers and peers, they should prioritize the problems they are most likely to need assistance with while that support is present.

WHEN STUDENTS ARE WORKING ON PROBLEMS, SUGGEST THEY START WITH THE HARDEST ONES FIRST.

Maybe I should start with number three first because that looks hard. Then maybe number two and then one last.

1. $5x - 8 = 7$

2. $7x - 5 = 3x + 3$

3. $12 + 6x = 3(x - 4)$

I'm really glad I got that hard problem done. I'm sure I can get problem one done at home.

STUDENTS LEAVE CLASS FEELING MORE CONFIDENT

TEACHER NOTES

Notice which problems students identify as most difficult as a form of formative assessment.

Students can change their minds on which one to start with if they want to try different problems.

Not all students need to start with the hard one first, but it is an option.

⚠ CAUTION

Avoid telling students which problems you think will be most difficult. Let students choose which ones they think are hardest.

LEVEL UP

Ask students to explain what made them pick the first problem to do in class.

Allow students to omit 1-3 of the easy problems if they can explain how they would do them.

Ask students to create a problem for the problem set and have them explain which order they'd complete it in and why.

⬇ DOWNLOAD · +1 TRY ANOTHER · HOW'D IT GO?