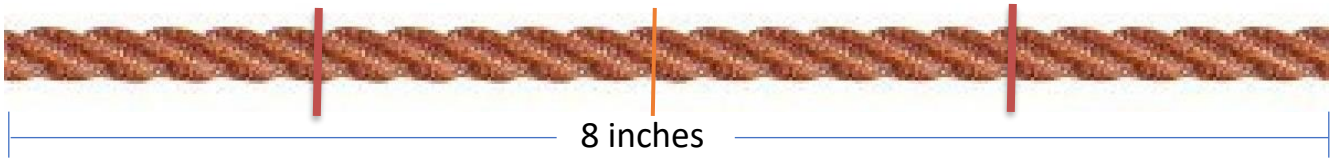
DRAW A PICTURE/DIAGRAM/MODEL

Drawing a picture/diagram/model is the most common problem-solving strategy. Very often, students need to draw a picture/diagram/model just to understand the problem. The picture/diagram/model represents the problem in a way students can "see" it, understand it, and think about it while they look for the next step.

Example 1:

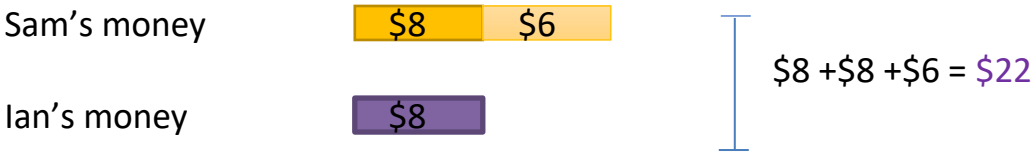
Dana found a piece of 8 inches rope. She cut the rope into equal length. She made 3 cuts. How long is each piece of the rope now?



Each piece of rope is now only 2 inches.

Example 2:

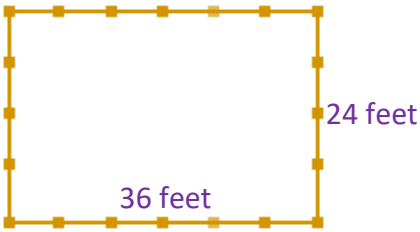
Sam had $6 more than Ian. If Ian had $8, how much did they have altogether?



By drawing a model of how much each kid had, students can visualize the problem and solidify their concrete thinking

Example 3:

Luke wants to fence a lot for his dog, Charlie. The area to be fenced is a rectangle with a measurement of 36 feet long and 24 feet wide. If the fence posts are to be placed 6 feet apart, how many posts are needed?



Looking at the diagram, Luke will need 20 posts.