Future Problem Solving Program International

Action-based Problem Solving

What is Action-based Problem Solving?

- AbPS is Future Problem Solving Program's problem-solving component designed specifically for use in the regular classroom.
- AbPS introduces the classroom teacher and students to creative problem solving, higher-level thinking, and action skills in a hands-on, non-threatening manner.
- The concepts behind each problem-solving step are taught in short, challenging lessons, making the concepts easy to understand and apply.
- AbPS actively engages all students in learning, constructing meaning, and applying both knowledge and process to real-life situations.
- AbPS is performance based and has real-world applications for authentic learning. It is designed to guide students into the problem solving process and provides support for future success with Global Issues Problem Solving and/or Community Problem Solving.
- The Action Fair provides students and teachers with an opportunity to identify a local need or problem area, create a comprehensive plan of action using the AbPS model, and introduce the local community to the upcoming project through the presentation of a five minute skit based on the action plan. Teams of any size can engage in an Action Fair coordinated by the FPS Affiliate Program or individual school(s).
- AbPS provides a model that is effective in the classroom for all students and can be implemented as:
    - a strategy for use in the inclusion model,
    - a curriculum in exploratory classes,
    - an extension of any curriculum unit, and
    - a model to introduce higher level thinking skills to students.

Why Action-based Problem Solving?

Future Problem Solving Program International provides the tools and strategies students need to face the challenges of today and the future. Action-based Problem Solving provides opportunities for students to develop and exercise the skills necessary to meet and exceed standards through research and investigation of topics relevant to their world. Action-based Problem Solving provides a convenient package designed to stimulate the creative and critical thinking skills younger students need in order to synthesize the massive amount of data brought to them by Information Age technology.

FPSPI teaches students how to make informed choices and solve complicated problems. AbPS facilitates discovery by presenting the students with perplexing issues and providing the means to become active inquirers. AbPS provides students with the procedural, brainstorming, decision-making, and communication strategies needed for learning. The hands-on model turns the classroom into an authentic learning community, bridging the gap between school and the real world. Students learn to work cooperatively toward a common goal, discovering how to manage time as well as the project. They begin to see a purpose for their education and develop a personal commitment to learning.

Those involved in Action-based Problem Solving practice powerful problem solving skills using critical and creative thinking. Participants improve their communication skills through collaboration and learning to writing with a specific focus in mind. The non-fiction/informational text reading skills, writing skills, and teamwork collaboration skills address many academic standards identified by Common Core, STEM, 21st Century Skills, and NAGC (Nat'l Association for Gifted Children) as critical skills.

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Who can participate in Action-based Problem Solving?

Students may participate in Action-based Problem Solving in three divisions: Primary (grades K-3 or the equivalent), Junior (grades 3-6), and Middle (grades 6-9).

AbPs 2015-16 Topics

Primary Division

Treatment of Animals
Recovering from Natural Disaster

Junior/Middle Division

Treatment of Animals
Disappearing Languages
Recovering from Natural Disaster

What is the composition for AbPS?

- Four to six students comprise a team and may vary from problem to problem.
- Teams typically work on one topic for the year in Primary Division and one topic per semester in Junior/Middle Division.
- It is recommended a team complete all steps in the second semester topic in order to prepare for the Action Fair.

How does Action-based work?

- Team members (four to six students) may vary from problem to problem.
- The Action Fair provides students and teachers with an opportunity to identify a local need or problem area, create a comprehensive plan of action using the AbPS model, and introduce the local community to the upcoming project through the presentation of a five minute skit based on the action plan. Teams of any size can engage in an Action Fair coordinated by the FPS Affiliate Program or individual school(s).

How do I register students for Action-based Problem Solving?

Each Affiliate Program determines its own processes, fees, and due dates for registration and entries. Your Affiliate can provide you with registration and submission materials, and may be able to put you in touch with experienced coaches. If you need contact information for your Affiliate, you can find it at fpspi.org under Affiliate Directory.

How are AbPS booklets evaluated?

AbPS booklets are scored by trained evaluators who carefully read and assess the written booklets. Some Affiliate Programs require that all coaches receive evaluation training and participate as evaluators. If yours does not, serving as an evaluator is highly recommended and always improves coaching skills!

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