Problem Solving & Reference Sheet

There are 4 steps to solving a word problem:

1. ____________ - you have to understand the problem
2. ________ - you can’t solve the problem if you don’t decide how to do it
3. ________ - complete your plan
4. ________ - make sure your solution is right

1. To _______________ the problem:
   a. Read the question carefully. Read pieces at a time, or make notes if you want.
   b. Find the question. Identify what you need to solve.
   c. Is there enough information to solve it?

2. To ______ a strategy:
   a. How can I solve this? How can I use what I know?
   b. Do I need to +, -, x, or ÷?
   c. Should I draw a picture, make a list, create an equation, or use another way?

3. To _____ the plan:
   a. Do it! Execute your plan.

4. To __________ your work:
   a. Check your math.
   b. Does your answer make sense?
   c. Reread the problem. Did you answer the question?

Example 1: There are 7 people at a party. Each person shakes hands only once with each other person. How many handshakes occur?