



# YALE NATIONAL INITIATIVE

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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative  
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## **Creating a Culture of Critical Thinkers in the Mathematics Classroom: Reducing Dependency on Key Words**

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Creating a Culture of Critical Thinkers is a unit concerned with building confidence in the elementary student's ability to approach written math problems. This unit is intended for use in a fourth grade classroom, but can be applied to a wide range of settings. It is the intention of this unit to prepare students to parse and discuss many types of one and two-step, addition and subtraction word problems in an analytic and reasoned manner. Problems will be analyzed through whole group discussions and cooperative learning. In addition to giving examples on how to facilitate whole class discussions, a standard method for problem solving and a set of word problems will be included. It is my hope that students will begin to view themselves as expert problem solvers by the end of this unit.

(Developed for Mathematics, grade 4; recommended for Mathematics, grades 3 and 5)

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