5 Important Strategies for Solving PSLE Maths Problems

No	Strategy	Explanation
1	Read the Problem Carefully	• **Strategy:** Always read the problem at least twice to make sure you fully understand it. Try to picture the problem in your mind and break it into smaller parts. If it's a story problem, imagine what's happening in the scenario. • **Example:** If the problem says, "A shop sells 50 apples in the morning and 30 more apples in the afternoon. How many apples were sold in total?", read it twice. The first time, get a general idea. The second time, focus on details like "50 apples in the morning" and "30 more in the afternoon."
2	Find the Important Information	• **Strategy:** Look for and highlight the key details in the problem. Circle or underline important numbers, words, or phrases that will help you solve it. Summarizing the problem in your own words can also help you understand it better. • **Example:** If the problem says, "A rectangle has a length of 12 cm and a width of 8 cm. What is the perimeter of the rectangle?", underline "12 cm" and "8 cm." Recognize that "perimeter" means you need to add up all the sides of the rectangle.
3	Pick the Right Formula	• **Strategy:** Make sure you choose the correct formula or method for the problem. It helps to keep a formula sheet and regularly review it. Pay attention to keywords like "area," "perimeter," or "volume" to guide you. If the problem requires more than one formula, make sure you recognize that too. • **Example:** For a problem that asks, "What is the area of a triangle with a base of 10 cm and a height of 5 cm?", you should use the area formula for a triangle, $$\text{Area} = \frac{1}{2} \times base \times height$$
4	Show Your Steps	• **Strategy:** Write down all your working steps clearly and in order. This helps you keep track of your thought process and allows you to spot any mistakes easily. Even for simple problems, showing your steps is important. You can use arrows or brackets to organize your work and make it easier to read. • **Example:** If you need to solve 12 x (4 + 6), write out: $$4+6=10$$ $$12\times10=120$$

		Showing each step makes sure you don't miss anything.
5	Check Your Answer	• **Strategy:** After solving the problem, always go back and check your answer. Don't just check your calculations—also ask yourself if your answer makes sense. Try to work the problem backward to see if you get back to where you started. • **Example:** After finding that "The area of a square with a side length of 9 cm is 81 cm^2," ask yourself, "Does this make sense? The side is 9 cm, so the area should be 9 × 9, which is 81."