

Give to Yourself: Forming Strong Foundations



grades: 1-2



35 minutes

“Build a strong foundation and you can reach even the most unthinkable heights.” – M.J. Moore

Heart of the Lesson

- What is a foundation?
- Why a strong foundation is important.
- How caring for yourself helps build a solid foundation.

Lesson Summary

- Students explore the importance of strong foundations—both in building structures and in caring for themselves.
- They learn how self-care supports a solid personal foundation, helping them better care for others.
- Then they begin sharing their kind actions on the Build Bulletin Board.

NOTE: Have questions? Refer to the Educator Guide ([PDF](#)).

Pre-Lesson Prep

- (Optional) Send home the ThinkGive@Home: Give to Yourself ([PDF](#)) (1/student).
- Gather items to build a weak foundation (e.g., paper towel tubes, cereal boxes, paper) and a strong foundation (e.g., shoe boxes, wood, blocks), as well as building blocks (THINK.GIVE section).
- If choosing Option 1, pre-assign partners or groups (THINK.GIVE section).
- Print and post the Action Prompt: Forming Strong Foundations ([PDF](#)) on the Build Bulletin Board (CONNECT + CLOSE section).



MATERIALS

Educator Guide ([PDF](#))
 ThinkGive@Home: Give to Yourself ([PDF](#))
 ThinkGive Journals | Guide ([PDF](#))
 Image: Tower ([PDF](#))
 Foundation-building items (see Pre-Lesson Prep)
 Blocks
 Action Prompt: Forming Strong Foundations ([PDF](#))



MEDIA TO PREP

Slides: [Forming Strong Foundations](#) | Slide Notes ([PDF](#))
 Video: [Time-lapse Video of Construction Site](#) (1:13)
 Video: [Self-Care Activities](#) (3:08)

WARM-UP ACTIVITY

Super Smile

Challenge students to set a record for the fastest contagious smile! Form a circle with everyone facing in. Start a stopwatch. One student makes eye contact with someone across the circle and smiles. When that person smiles back, they begin gently jumping up and down and pass a smile to someone new. Continue passing smiles—each new person jumps once they receive a smile—until everyone in the circle is jumping. Then stop the time. Play another round and see if you can beat your record!

REFLECT + SHARE

Suggested time: 5 minutes

Ask: Since our last ThinkGive session, what kind of positive actions have you noticed, and where did they happen?

OPEN

Suggested time: 5 minutes

Image

Show the Image: Tower ([PDF](#)).

Ask: What does this image mean to you?

THINK • GIVE

Suggested time: 20 minutes

Ask: Have you ever seen a building being built? What did you notice at the bottom—the part in the ground (the foundation)?

Watch: [Time-lapse Video of Construction Site](#) (1:13).

Discuss:

- What was the very first thing they did to start building?
- What does a building need to have a strong foundation?

Explain: Buildings need a strong base, called a foundation, to stand tall and not fall. And so do people! To build a kinder world, we need to start by making sure our foundations are strong—by taking care of ourselves.



VOCAB

Foundation: noun; the lowest load-bearing part of a building and underlying support base.

Self-Care: noun; taking care of your body, mind, and feelings by being kind to yourself.

Activity: Forming Foundations

Hold a block up and drop it.

Say: Without a strong base, we can't build!

Option 1 (Hands-On):

Students work alone, in pairs, or in small groups. Give each group a mix of materials—some strong, some weak. First, students use the weak materials to build a foundation. They test it by stacking blocks on top and noticing what happens. Next, they rebuild the foundation using strong materials and test it again the same way. Afterward, students share what they noticed—what worked, what didn't, and why.

Option 2 (Educator Demo):

Students watch as you build a foundation first with the weak materials and test it by stacking blocks on top. Then build a foundation with the strong materials and test it again while they watch. After each test, students share their observations aloud and discuss what worked, what didn't, and why.

Discuss:

- Which type of foundation worked best? Why?
- How is taking care of yourself important in building a strong foundation?
- What are some ways you can take care of yourself?
- When is it especially important to take care of yourself?

Watch: [Self-Care Activities \(3:08\)](#). This video explains the importance of self-care and provides self-care ideas.

Discuss:

- What is one self-care activity from the video that you already do?
- What is one self-care activity you want to try? When will you try it?

DIGGING DEEPER

What Does "Foundation" Mean to You?

Students write the word "foundation" in their Toolbox Books (journals), then draw or write about ways they take care of themselves to build a strong foundation.

CONNECT + CLOSE

Suggested time: 5 minutes

Take Action

Explain: Before our next ThinkGive session on [give date], choose one action you can take to help your body or mind feel good—and build a strong foundation.

★ THINKGIVE THREE

1. True: true is YOU ... act from your heart.
2. Small: small is all!
3. Brave: step into your courage zone and try something new.

Action Prompt

Take care of yourself to build a strong foundation. Then draw or write about your action and add it to the Build Bulletin Board.

Post the Action Prompt: Forming Strong Foundations ([PDF](#)) on the Build Bulletin Board.

★ TEACHER TIP

Refer to the Educator Guide ([PDF](#)) for instructions on adding student actions to the Build Bulletin Board.

Brainstorm Actions

Here are some action ideas to inspire students. Brainstorm more together if needed to build confidence in taking true, small, and brave actions.

- When I felt tired after a party, I went to my room and read a book.
- When I felt mad, I swung on the swings to calm down.
- When the monkey bars felt hard at recess, I took a break and then tried again.

Closing Quote/Image

Show the Image: Tower ([PDF](#)).

Ask: What does this image mean to you now?

Extensions

WATCH

Video: [10 Daily Positive Affirmations](#) (1:02). This call-and-response video invites you to say positive affirmations out loud.

Discuss:

- How did you feel when you said the affirmations?
- How can saying positive affirmations help you take care of yourself?