

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

Lesson Summary

Use this lesson to introduce students to the importance of building solid foundations for physical structures and self-care. Students explore how self-care plays a crucial role in laying a solid foundation, enabling them to care for others effectively. They start sharing their kind actions on the Build Bulletin Board.

NOTE: Have questions? Remember to check your Educator Guide ([PDF](#)).

Students will Examine

- What is a foundation?
- Why is a strong foundation important?
- How caring for yourself builds your solid foundation.

Pre-Activity Prep

- Gather items to build a weak foundation (e.g., paper towel tubes, cereal boxes, paper, etc.) (THINK.GIVE section).
- Gather items to build a strong foundation (e.g., shoe boxes, wood, blocks, etc.) (THINK.GIVE section).
- Gather building blocks (THINK.GIVE section).
- If choosing Option 1, pre-assign partners or groups for the building activity (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 Three Posters (Yellow [PDF](#) | Purple [PDF](#))
 (Optional) ThinkGive Journals
 Foundation-building items (see Pre-Activity Prep)
 Blocks
 Action Prompt: Forming Strong Foundations ([PDF](#))
 Image: Tower ([PDF](#))



MEDIA TO PREP

Slides: [Forming Strong Foundations](#)
 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 ever! Form a circle with everyone facing each other. Start a stopwatch, then make eye contact with someone across the circle and smile. When this person smiles back, start gently jumping up and down. The person who received your smile then passes a smile to a new person in the circle and begins gently jumping up and down. Continue passing smiles until everyone in the circle has received and passed a smile. When everyone is jumping, stop the time. Play for two or more rounds to see if you can beat your record for the fastest contagious smile.

Refer to the ThinkGive Warm-up Activities ([PDF](#)) for other ideas.

REFLECT + SHARE

Suggested time: 5 minutes

Ask: Have you seen any construction sites? What did you notice about the foundations of the buildings—the very bottom that is at or below ground level?

Watch: [Time-lapse video of Construction site](#) (1:13).

Discuss:

- What were the first steps in the construction of this building?
- What does a building need to have a strong foundation?
- Why is a strong foundation important?

Explain: Buildings need a solid foundation to stay standing. And so do we! To help build a kinder world, we need to start by building our strong foundations—we need to care for ourselves.



VOCAB

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

THINK • GIVE

Suggested time: 20 minutes

ACTIVITY: Forming Foundations

Hold a block in the air and let it fall to demonstrate that buildings need foundations. Without a foundation, you cannot build anything!

OPTION 1:

Decide whether students will work individually, in pairs, or in small groups. If they will work in pairs or groups, assign them accordingly. Give students a variety of materials (both weaker and stronger items) to create foundations for their block buildings. Students experiment with building foundations to understand which materials are strong enough to support the blocks. After experimenting, they take turns explaining what they discovered about building foundations.

OPTION 2:

Demonstrate the difference between solid and weak foundations by building blocks on top of something flimsy (e.g., paper or cardboard tubes attached). Then, use the same blocks to build on top of something sturdy (e.g., a layer of blocks in a box to replicate the hole for the foundation). Note what happens.

Discuss:

- Which type of foundation works best? Why?
- How is being kind to yourself like building a solid foundation?
- What actions can you take to build a strong foundation for yourself?
- Are there times when taking care of yourself is especially important?

DIGGING DEEPER

What Does “Foundation” Mean to You?

Students can add a definition for “foundation” to their Toolbox Books (Journals) and write a journal entry about what they need to do to ensure their strong foundations.

CONNECT + CLOSE

Suggested time: 5 minutes

REVIEW

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

Explain: We will record our kind actions by adding [your chosen building material] to our Build Bulletin Board. First, we need to build our strong foundations through self-care—then, we can be strong enough to give to others.

★ 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.

TAKE ACTION

Explain: What actions do you take to keep yourself healthy and feeling good? Choose one and take that action before our next ThinkGive session on [give date]. Your action will strengthen your foundation! After taking action to care for yourself, write or draw about it on a [your chosen building material]. We will add them to the foundation level of our Build Bulletin Board.

Action Prompt

Start laying a solid foundation by taking action to care for yourself. Then, record your kind action and post it to the Build Bulletin Board. Post the Action Prompt: Forming Strong Foundations ([PDF](#)) on the Build Bulletin Board.

Closing Quote/Image

Read the quote: "Build a strong foundation and you can reach even the most unthinkable heights." – M.J. Moores

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

Discuss:

- What does this quote mean to you?
- How are this quote and this image connected?



VOCAB

Self-Care: noun; being kind to yourself physically, mentally, and emotionally.



TEACHER TIP

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



CONNECTION

M.J. Moores is a Canadian author of adventure, fantasy, and science-fiction novels.

Sample Actions

- When I was tired after the birthday party, I got comfy in my room and read a book.
- I got mad when my baby sister broke my Lego building, so I went outside and swung high on my swing to calm down.
- I tried to join my friends on the monkey bars at recess, but my hands started hurting. I rested and then told myself to try again!

Extensions

WATCH

Video: [10 Daily Positive Affirmations](#) (1:02). This call-and-response style video provides positive affirmations for viewers to repeat.

Discuss:

- How do you feel when you say these affirmations?
- Why is saying positive affirmations a way to take care of yourself?