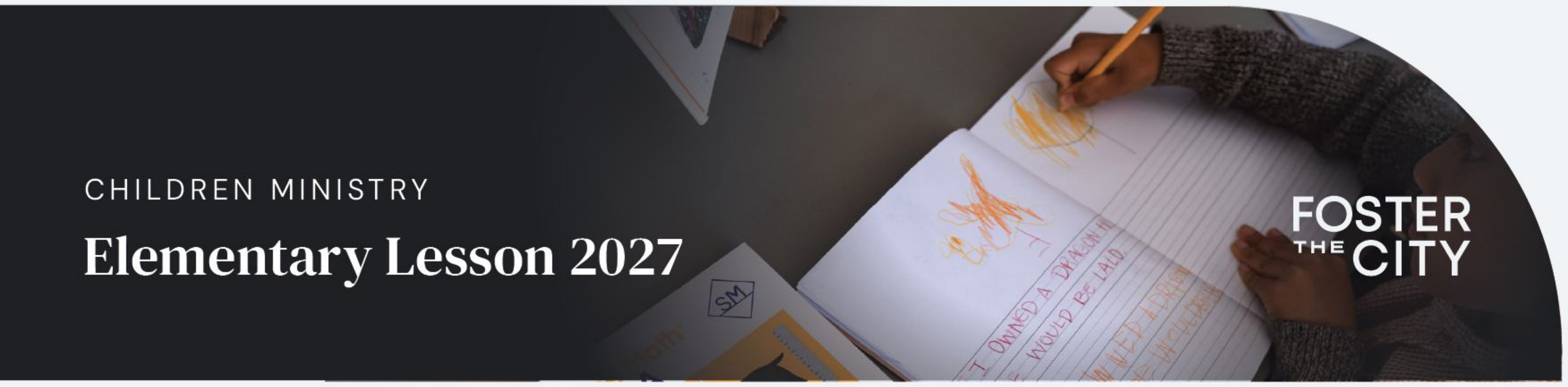


Theme: On Mission Together
Scripture: Mark 2:1-12
Key Point: Living like Jesus is a team effort.
Sticky Truth: We can work together to help others experience Jesus.

Teacher Preparation and Mindsets:

Remember, you aren't just teaching children what happened in Mark 2. You're inviting them to imagine how God wants to use them today. Help your students see that following Jesus isn't something we do alone. God designed His Church to work together- to notice people who are hurting, step into difficult situations, and help others experience the love of Jesus.

As you teach, look for opportunities to celebrate compassion, perseverance, teamwork, and faith. Encourage your students to ask, *"Who can I help bring closer to Jesus this week?"*

1. Opening Activity: Puzzle of Hints (5 minutes)

Materials: One "Puzzle of Hints" worksheet (Included in Resources below) per child, pens.

As kids arrive, hand each child a worksheet.

Instructions: Tell kids to look carefully at each comic panel and try to solve the puzzle.

After several minutes, gather everyone's attention.

SAY: "Wow! You all came up with some great ideas! And if this story was brand new to you, I hope you had fun making your best guesses.

Here's the funny thing... If I had been given this worksheet before hearing the story for the first time, there's NO WAY I would have guessed what really happened!

Today's Bible story is **so surprising, exciting, and completely unexpected**. This story shows us what happens when some determined friends refuse to give up, and what Jesus can do when we bring people to Him.

Are you ready to find out what really happened?"

2. Lesson (10 minutes)

Supplies: *(Hold up a small container of dirt with twigs or pieces of broken ceiling tile,clay, terracotta, or cardboard.)*

[Opening] SAY: Have you ever gotten REALLY messy?

Raise your hand if you've ever come home so dirty that your parents made you take your shoes off before you came inside!

(Pause.)

SOMETIMES making a mess means you're working hard.

Today we're going to meet four friends who weren't afraid to get their hands dirty (literally) because they wanted someone they loved to meet Jesus.

[Tell the Story] SAY:

Jesus was teaching inside a house. People had packed into every room. There were people standing by the doors. People crowded around the windows. There wasn't any room left. Now Mark chapter 2 tells us that there was a man who couldn’t walk. We don’t know why, but his legs didn’t work. He had four friends who were determined to get him to Jesus. They believed that Jesus had the power to heal their friend when no one else could.

So they laid their friend on a mat and carried him all the way to the house where Jesus was teaching.

Can you imagine how heavy that must have been?

But when they arrived, they couldn't even get through the front door. There were SO many people crowding around the house trying to get to Jesus.

What would you do?

Would you say, "Well... we tried." "Maybe another day." Or would you keep looking for another way?

(Pause.)

The four friends refused to give up. They were desperate. Then someone had an idea. "What if we dig through the roof?"

(Hold up a small container of dirt with twigs or pieces of broken ceiling tile,clay, terracotta, or cardboard.)

Roofs back then weren't made like our roofs today. Many were made from wooden beams covered with sticks, packed dirt, and clay. Can you imagine digging through a roof made of dirt?

(Pass around the dirt or let a few children touch it.)

When they left their homes that morning, the four friends didn’t expect to be digging through a roof. They didn’t come prepared with tools, like shovels or gloves. So what do you think they used?

(Pause.)

Their hands. Imagine how dirty and dusty their hands were. They probably had clay stuck in their fingernails. They probably got splinters from the twigs and sticks they were unearthing.

And dirt would be falling everywhere, even on the people inside. I bet dirt was even falling on Jesus as he spoke to the crowds.

But the friends kept going. They didn't mind getting messy. They didn't mind what other people thought of them. They didn't mind working hard. Because helping their friend get to Jesus was more important.

After making a hole in the roof, they carefully lowered their friend down...right in front of Jesus. And the Bible says something amazing. It says, "When Jesus saw their faith..." he healed the paralytic man. Jesus noticed all five of them. He saw four friends who loved someone enough to do whatever it took to bring him to Jesus.

Jesus forgave the man's sins. Then He healed him. The man stood up, picked up his mat, and walked home! Everyone was amazed.

[Application] SAY:

Did you notice something amazing in today's story?

The man on the mat couldn't get to Jesus by himself. But he wasn't alone. He had four friends who noticed he needed help. They worked together, didn't give up, and did whatever it took to bring him to Jesus.

Why?

Because they believed Jesus could heal broken things.

And that's still true today!

Our world has lots of broken things. Some people are sick. Some feel lonely. Some are hungry. Some are scared or hurting. God sees every broken heart, and He loves making broken things right.

Here's the really cool part:

God created **the Church** to be His team of helpers on earth. God uses us to make broken things better. When we all work together, we can do so much more than we ever could by ourselves.

That's exactly what the four friends did. None of them could have carried the man to Jesus alone. But together, they made a way for their friend to experience Jesus.

No one can do everything, but **everyone can do something.**

When each of us does our part, we become like the four friends. Together, we help carry people to Jesus, the One who brings hope, healing, and makes broken things new.

Bottom Line: *We work together to help others experience Jesus.*

3. STEM Activity (20-25 minutes): Build a Bridge

Goal: Build a bridge that: Spans a 12-inch gap and holds a Bible for at least **10 seconds**.
**This activity works best when each group of students has an adult checking in on them every few minutes to help them work together as a team.*

Materials (Per Team of 4): 150 Popsicle sticks, 1 roll of masking tape, 15 drinking straws, 4–5 feet of string, Scissors, One Bible (for testing), Team Role descriptions (4)

SAY: In Mark 2:1–12, a man who couldn't walk needed help getting to Jesus. Four friends worked together to carry him, overcome obstacles, and find a creative solution. Because everyone did their part, their friend experienced the healing and forgiveness of Jesus. Today, your team will work together just like the four friends.

STEP 1: Form Groups (3 Minutes)

Assign kids to groups of four and hand out the team role descriptions. Allow kids to work together to assign each kid in the group a role. (if you have groups of 5, 2 kids can share the role of Beam Builder.

Student cards on next page

STUDENT 1

Beam Builder

Mission: Build the four long side beams that will support the bridge.

Instructions:

- Build **four beams that are each 12 inches long**.
- Tape popsicle sticks end-to-end.
- Make both beams the same length.
- If the beams bend, reinforce them by adding another layer of popsicle sticks.

Tip: The side beams are the backbone of your bridge. Strong beams make strong bridges.

STUDENT 2

Triangle Engineer

Mission: Build the triangle supports.

Instructions:

- Use three popsicle sticks to make one triangle.
- Tape all three corners securely.
- Continue building until you have **6 triangles.**

Tip: Triangles are one of the strongest shapes in engineering. They help keep bridges from collapsing.

STUDENT 3

Deck Builder

Mission: Build the bridge deck.

Instructions:

- Lay popsicle sticks side by side.
- Tape them together into one flat platform.
- Make the deck approximately **12 inches long** so it matches the side beams.

Tip: A wider deck spreads weight more evenly.

STUDENT 4

Project Manager & Tester

Mission: Help the team work together.

Responsibilities:

- Make sure every teammate has supplies.
- Help teammates who need support with their roles.
- Check that everything lines up evenly and pieces are secured together.
- Test the bridge with small objects before testing the Bible.
- Encourage teammates.
- Lead redesigns if improvements are needed.

Tip: Great leaders encourage others instead of doing all the work themselves.

STEP 2: Build (10 minutes)

Each student completes his or her assigned role.

When everyone finishes, begin assembling the bridge.

STEP 3: Assemble Your Bridge (Picture instructions provided) (5 Minutes)

1. Lay the two side beams parallel to one another.
2. Tape the triangle supports underneath between the beams.
3. Tape the deck across the top.
4. Add straw braces underneath wherever the bridge bends.
5. Reinforce every connection with masking tape.

Remember:

The strongest bridges don't depend on one strong piece, they depend on many pieces working together.

STEP 4: TEST (3 Minutes)

Before using the Bible, test your bridge using smaller objects.

ASK:

- Where does the bridge bend?
- Where does it wobble?
- Which part needs more support?

If your bridge needs more support, how can you use the straws or string to help reinforce your bridge?

STEP 5: IMPROVE (5 Minutes)

Engineers almost never get it perfect the first time. How can you make your bridge stronger? Use what you learned to improve your bridge.

Add:

- More triangle supports
- Extra tape
- More straw braces
- Additional layers to weak areas

STEP 6: Final Bridge Test

Place your bridge across a 12-inch gap. Slowly place the Bible in the middle. Can it hold the Bible for **10 seconds**? Celebrate every team's effort!

If your bridge doesn't hold, remember:

Great engineers don't always succeed immediately. They learn from mistakes and the building process.

4. Small Group Discussion (10 minutes)

ASK:

Why do you think we built a bridge today?

SAY: "In today's Bible story, four friends noticed that a man was hurting, and they wanted to do something about it. They saw a problem, and they knew Jesus was the answer.

They became a bridge.

Our bridge connected one side to the other. The four friends connected one hurting man to the One who could heal him. This is the job of the Church.

The Church isn't just a building- it's God's team. Jesus calls us to notice problems in the world that cause people pain and work together as a team to solve them.

There are people all around us who need help. Some are lonely. Some are hungry. Some are sick. Some children need safe places to live. Jesus doesn't ask one person to solve every problem. He asks His people to work together.

When we follow Jesus, we become bridges. We help connect people to hope. We connect people to kindness. We connect people to the love of Jesus.

ASK:

What stood out to you in today's Bible story?

Can you think of ways followers of Jesus can work together to help people in need?

Have you ever seen someone serve Jesus or others in a way that inspired you? Who was it? What did they do?

Parent Take Home

Bible Story

Jesus Heals a Man
Scripture: Mark 2:1–12- Jesus heals the paralytic man

Big Idea

Living like Jesus is a team effort.

Bottom Line

We work together to help others experience Jesus.

Family Conversation Starters

- Why do you think the friends were willing to work so hard to help someone else?
- Who has helped you experience Jesus?
- Is there someone in our neighborhood, school, or church who might need a friend or some extra help this week?
- How can our family work together to show someone the love of Jesus?

Prayer

Jesus, thank You for the friends who carried the man to You. Help our family notice people who need hope, love them the way You do, and work together to help others experience You. Give us willing hearts that aren't afraid to get our hands dirty serving others. Amen.

Resources on next page

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

PUZZLE OF HINTS

Use the pictures below to figure out what happens in today's Bible story!

Write your guess at the bottom.

1

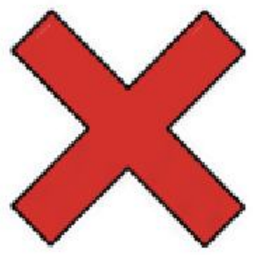




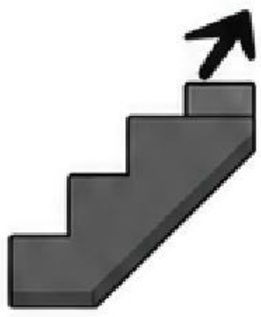
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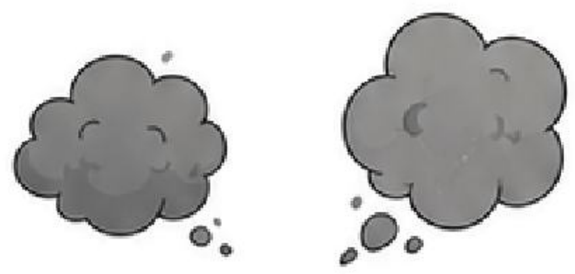




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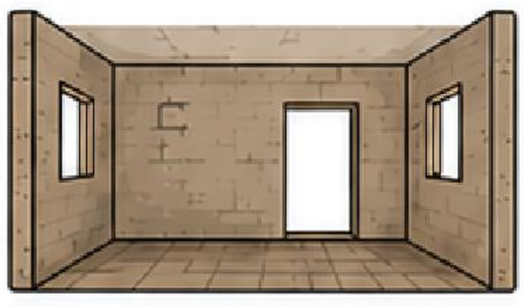




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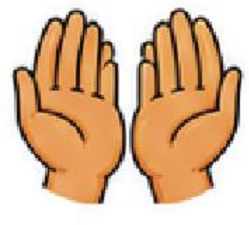
6















MY GUESS: _____

_____

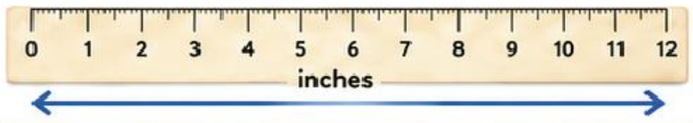
WHAT HAPPENS IN THE STORY?

STUDENT 1: BEAM BUILDER

Your job is to build
FOUR LONG SIDE BEAMS
that will support our bridge.

YOUR GOAL:

Build FOUR beams that are **12 inches** long.



YOU WILL NEED:

- Popsicle sticks
- Masking tape
- Ruler



WHAT YOUR BEAMS SHOULD LOOK LIKE:

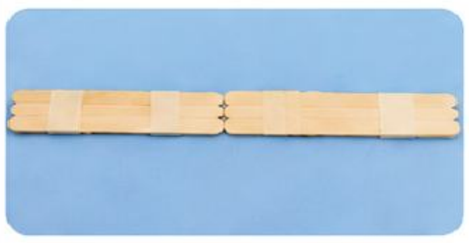


TIP:

The side beams are the "backbone" of the bridge. Strong beams make a strong bridge!

STEP-BY-STEP: BUILD YOUR FOUR 12-INCH BEAMS

1 Line up 6–8 popsicle sticks end-to-end.



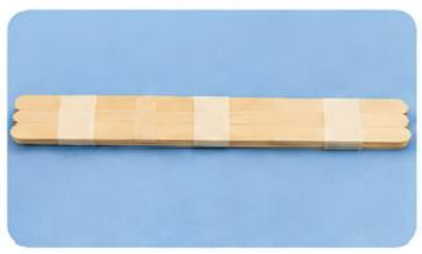
About 12 inches
(Use your ruler to check!)

2 Put tape over each joint.



Tip: Tape makes the beam strong!

3 Keep adding sticks and taping the joints.



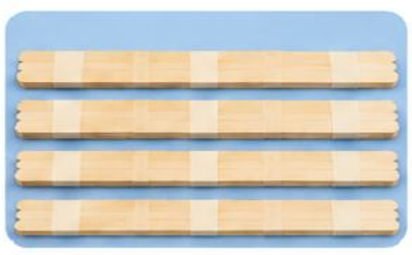
Check the length as you go!

4 Make sure your beam is 12 inches long.



The end should line up with the 12-inch mark on your ruler.

5 Build three more beams the same way.



All four beams should be the same length!

HOW TO MAKE IT EVEN STRONGER (IF YOUR BEAM BENDS):

1 Add another layer of popsicle sticks on top.



2 Tape the extra layer down tightly.



3 Now your beam is extra strong!



YOU DID IT!

You built the four side beams that will support our bridge.
Great job!

STUDENT 2: TRIANGLE ENGINEER

Your job is to make
TRIANGLE SUPPORTS.
These will help make our bridge super strong!

TIP:

Engineers love triangles because they are one of the strongest shapes in construction!

YOU WILL NEED:

- Popsicle sticks
- Masking tape
- Scissors (if needed)



YOUR GOAL:

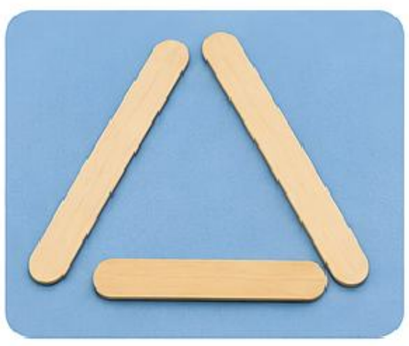
Build as many triangle supports as you can!
Build at least 4–6 triangles.



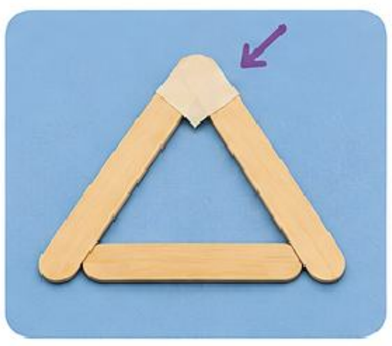
These are triangle supports!

HOW TO BUILD A TRIANGLE SUPPORT:

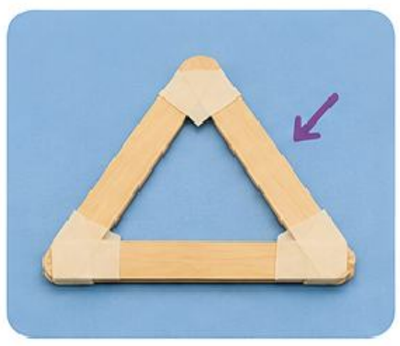
1 Lay out 3 popsicle sticks like this.



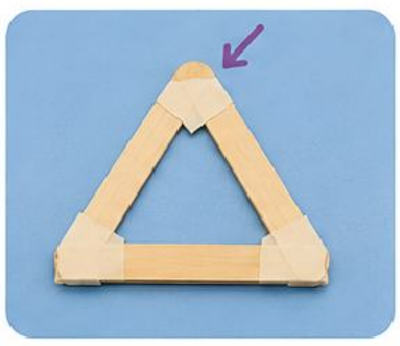
2 Tape one corner together.



3 Tape the second corner.



4 Tape the third corner.



5 Your triangle support is ready!



BUILD MORE!

Keep building triangles!
Try to make at least
4–6 triangle supports.



CHECK YOUR WORK:

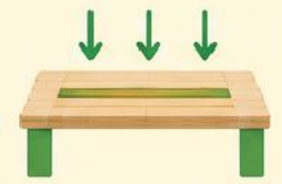
- Are all 3 corners taped tightly?
- Is your triangle flat and strong?

Awesome!
You're building strong!

STUDENT 3: DECK BUILDER

Your job is to build the **SURFACE PEOPLE WILL WALK ACROSS.** This is the top of our bridge!

TIP:
A wider deck spreads weight more evenly!



YOU WILL NEED:

- Popsicle sticks
- Masking tape
- Ruler
- Scissors (if needed)





YOUR GOAL:

- Lay popsicle sticks side by side.
- Tape them together into one flat platform.
- Make it long enough to reach from one table to the other.

WHAT YOUR DECK SHOULD LOOK LIKE:



LONG ENOUGH TO SPAN THE GAP!

(Measure the distance between the two tables.)

HOW TO BUILD YOUR DECK:

1. Lay your popsicle sticks side by side.
   Make them as even as you can.
2. Tape one end across all the sticks.
   Press the tape down so it sticks well.
3. Tape the other end across all the sticks.
   Now both ends are taped!
4. Add extra tape in the middle to make it strong.
   This helps keep your deck from bending.
5. Check that your deck is long enough to reach across the gap.
   It should reach from one table to the other!



MAKE IT STRONG!

A wider deck is stronger! Try to make your deck at least 6–8 sticks wide.



CHECK YOUR WORK:

- ☐ Is your deck flat with no big gaps?
- ☐ Is it long enough to reach the other side?

GREAT JOB!

You built the deck where people will walk across!

STUDENT 4: PROJECT MANAGER & TESTER

Your job is to **KEEP EVERYONE WORKING TOGETHER!** You help your team succeed!

TIP:
Great leaders encourage their teammates instead of doing everyone's job.



YOU WILL NEED:

- Team supplies
- Masking tape
- Small objects to test (pencils, erasers, small books, etc.)
- Our goal: The Bible!



YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES:

- ☐ Make sure every teammate has what they need.
- ☐ Help tape the different sections together.
- ☐ Check that everything lines up correctly.
- ☐ Test the bridge with small objects before the Bible.
- ☐ Lead redesigns if something doesn't work.



YOU HELP YOUR TEAM BY:

- Encouraging everyone.
- Keeping everyone on task.
- Checking and testing.
- Helping us improve.
- Celebrating our successes!

WHAT YOU DO:

You are the team leader! You make sure everyone has what they need, help put the bridge together, check that it is even and strong, test it with small objects first, and help the team make it better if something doesn't work. You keep everyone working together and having a great time!

TESTING TIPS:

- ☐ Place test objects in the middle.
- ☐ Add one at a time.
- ☐ Watch for wiggling or bending.
- ☐ Stop and fix weak spots.
- ☐ Keep testing until it's strong!



IF THE BRIDGE DOESN'T WORK:

ASK YOUR TEAM:

- Where is it weak?
- What can we change?
- How can we make it stronger?

Try again and make it better!

CHECK YOUR WORK:

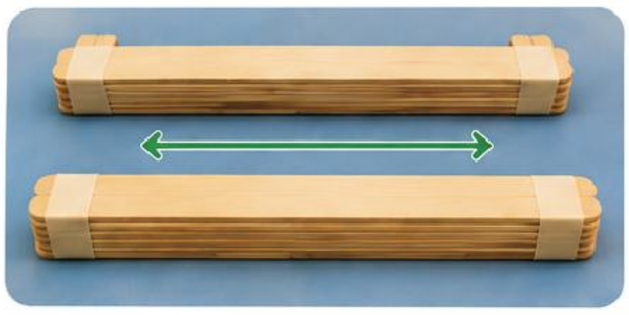
- ☐ Did everyone help and have what they needed?
- ☐ Is our bridge straight and even?
- ☐ Did we test and make improvements?
- ☐ Is our bridge strong and not wiggly?
- ☐ Are we ready for the Bible test?

GREAT JOB, LEADER!

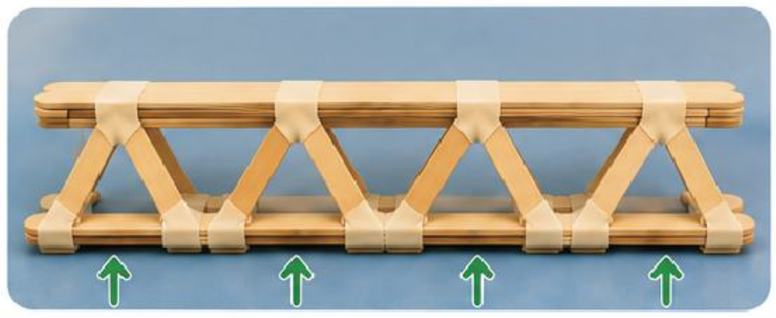
You helped our team build something strong and amazing!

ASSEMBLE YOUR BRIDGE

1 Lay the two side beams parallel to one another.



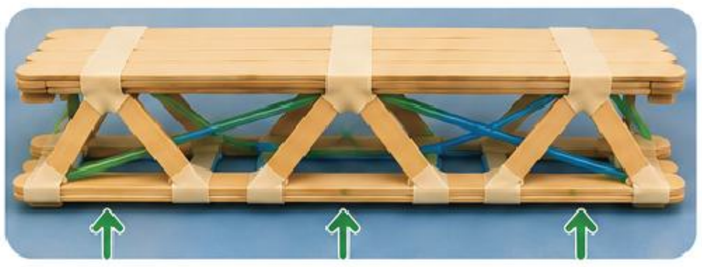
2 Tape the triangle supports underneath between the beams.



3 Tape the deck across the top.



4 Add straw braces underneath wherever the bridge bends.



5 Reinforce every connection with masking tape.



CHECK YOUR WORK!

- Is the bridge straight?
- Are all the parts taped tightly?

REMEMBER:

The strongest bridges don't depend on one strong piece—they depend on many pieces working together.

FINAL PRODUCT



Great job, builders! You worked together and built something strong!