



No materials required.

Prep Time: 0 mins.



As this is the last Monday of the month, please consider sharing or re-sharing the Monthly Kick-Off activity, and if appropriate, video at www.everymondaymatters.org. Additionally, a three-minute recap of the previous weeks may add extra context to this week and help connect the dots around the monthly theme.

WEEKLY KICK-OFF

1) SHARE THIS WEEK'S THEME WITH STUDENTS: "BUILD BRIDGES"

2) ASK 1-3 OF THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS TO HELP STUDENTS EXPLORE THE WEEK'S FOCUS:

***NOTE:** *Choose questions appropriate to your students' ages, grades, ability levels, and classroom goals. Students may share their answers in pairs, small groups, or as a large group.*

• **What does it mean to "BUILD BRIDGES"?**

- Answer: To improve the relationship between people, including and especially those who are very different or do not like each other

• **How have you "BUILT BRIDGES" in your life before?**

• **Has anyone ever "BUILT" a "BRIDGE" with you?**

- What did they do and how did it feel?

• **How do you actively "BUILD BRIDGES" between yourself and your friends and family?**

• **How do you "BUILD BRIDGES" between yourself and people in your local, global, or school community?**

• **Do you always agree with people around you?**

• **What are some ways you "BUILD BRIDGES" between yourself and others you disagree with on big or small issues?**

• **Do you think it's possible to "BUILD BRIDGES" between yourself and others who have different backgrounds or belief systems?**

- How can you do this?

• **What is the opposite of "BUILDING BRIDGES"?**

- How do you see people doing the opposite of "BUILDING BRIDGES" in your own life and in current events?

• **Why is it important to intentionally choose to "BUILD BRIDGES" with other people?**

- What kind of world are you contributing to when you choose to “BUILD BRIDGES” with others instead of turning away from them and those relationships?
- Is “BUILDING BRIDGES” always easy?
- How can “BUILDING BRIDGES” create a more “UNDERSTANDING” world?
- How does “BUILDING BRIDGES” show you that YOU MATTER?
- How can “BUILDING BRIDGES” with others show them that they MATTER?
- What would the world be like if we all chose to “BUILD BRIDGES”?
- Do you think we would all know that WE MATTER through these actions?

3) READ THE WEEKLY INTRODUCTION ALOUD OR ASK A STUDENT TO DO SO:

Relationships are the foundation of a good and happy life. That’s why we’ve spent this whole month getting understanding. Being curious, empathetic, and understanding helps us to BUILD BRIDGES with others. Bridges are beautiful things. They take us from one side of a situation to another. They’re places where people can meet halfway. They create understanding so that relationships can both exist and thrive. This week, we’re asking you to be courageous and find ways to build bridges in your life. We want you to connect with people you have relationships with already, and connect with those you don’t. We want you to explore how to connect with people who are different than you, whether that be in their beliefs, identity, or circumstances. We want you to make building bridges to others a priority instead of building walls around yourself and your community. This week, bring understanding, respect, and care to others and to your relationships. Building bridges matters.

4) REVIEW HOW THIS WEEK SUPPORTS THE MONTH’S THEME OF “MONDAY GETS UNDERSTANDING”:

- **Explain:**
 - There are many people in this world, and those many people have many different ways of living
 - It’s important to “BUILD BRIDGES” to others instead of “BUILDING” walls around ourselves, isolating ourselves and others just because people are different than us
 - When we “BUILD BRIDGES,” we’re contributing to an “UNDERSTANDING” world, one where we can connect with others and have relationships with people who are both similar to us and not
- **Continue:**
 - To start “BUILDING BRIDGES,” it’s important to try to “UNDERSTAND” that all of us share similarities
 - Even the people who seem most different than us have common goals or core desires, though they may look different in their actions and choices
 - You can “GET UNDERSTANDING” and “BUILD BRIDGES” by viewing interactions with individuals that are different than you as opportunities to expand your knowledge, perspective, respect, empathy, and wisdom
 - You can also “GET UNDERSTANDING” and “BUILD BRIDGES” by realizing that every person’s perspective is as valid and valuable as your own, and is based on their own unique background and belief system
 - Focusing on how you can “UNDERSTAND” and respect people and perspectives that are different than you will actually help you better “UNDERSTAND” yourself
 - Focusing on “GETTING UNDERSTANDING” and “BUILDING BRIDGES” will bring you more purpose and joy in life because your primary goals of any conflict will be to learn and “BUILD” strong relationships instead of simply trying to feel “right” or “better than” someone else
- **Ask:**
 - Why do you need “UNDERSTANDING” to “BUILD BRIDGES” with others?
 - How might “BUILDING BRIDGES” help you “UNDERSTAND” yourself and others more?
 - How might your life change by “BUILDING BRIDGES” with others more often?
 - Are you ready to make “BUILDING BRIDGES” the primary goal of your relationships with others, regardless of if they’re similar to you or very different?

5) PRESENT THE WEEKLY GOALS:

- Discover personal beliefs that “BUILD” walls and replace them with new beliefs that embrace empathy, love, connection, and a sense of global community
- Identify how to bring more people into our inner circles to grow our sense of comfort, belonging, and family
- Practice looking for similarities, common ground, and shared goals between seemingly different people
- Understand how “BUILDING BRIDGES” is an important part of this month’s theme, “MONDAY GETS UNDERSTANDING”

“DEEP DOWN, WE ALL WANT THE SAME THINGS. WE ALL WANT LOVE AND PEACE AND HAPPINESS.”

- STEPHANIE KILLEN