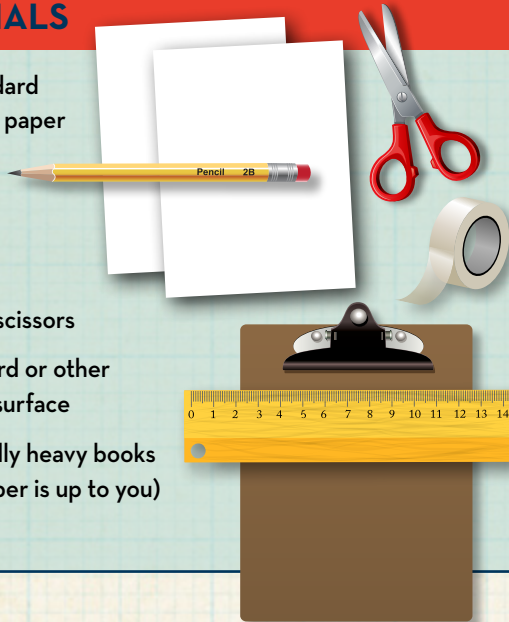


STRONGER THAN IT SEEMS

Teach your family about trusting in God with a simple piece of paper.

MATERIALS

- ▶ Two standard sheets of paper
- ▶ A pencil
- ▶ A ruler
- ▶ Tape
- ▶ A pair of scissors
- ▶ A clipboard or other nice, flat surface
- ▶ Some really heavy books (the number is up to you)



By Mackenzie Brown

Think about a piece of paper—just your standard, run-of-the-mill sheet. What could you do with this piece of paper? Write notes on it? Fold it? Make an airplane out of it?

What if I told you that a little piece of paper could be used to hold up to 60 lbs. (27 kg)? What, you don't believe it? Good. Then your family won't believe it either!

Before you begin the lesson, prepare one of your pieces of paper by turning it horizontally. Next, use your ruler and pencil to draw five vertical lines every $1\frac{1}{16}$ inches (3.65 cm) or so apart. Now on to the lesson!

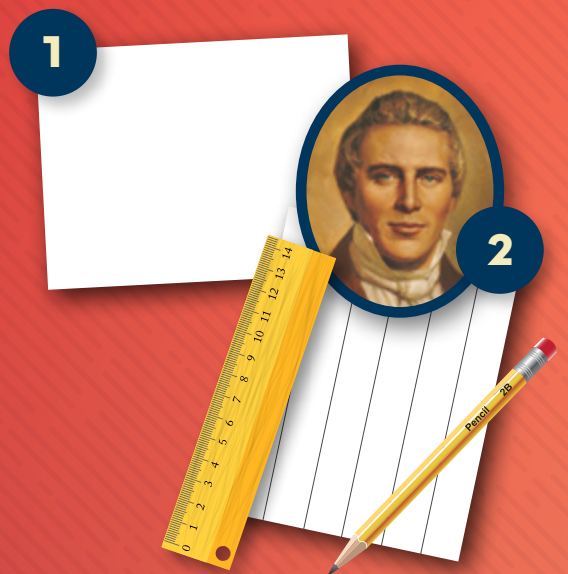
1. BUILDING SUSPENSE

Show your family your unprepared, regular piece of paper. Roll it up into a loose cylinder and hold it up to them. Ask them how much weight they think the piece of paper could support before collapsing. Maybe a water bottle? Your cell phone? Tell them that you can make a piece of paper hold up to 60 lbs. (27 kg).

2. JOSEPH SMITH AND US

Bring out your marked piece of paper. As you're doing this, tell your family the story of Joseph Smith, as recorded in Joseph Smith—History 1:8–26. Pay special attention to verse 22.

“My telling the story had excited a great deal of prejudice against me . . . ; and though I was an obscure boy, only between fourteen and fifteen years of age, and my circumstances in life such as to make a boy of no



consequence in the world, yet men of high standing would take notice sufficient to excite the public mind against me, and create a bitter persecution; and this was common among all the sects—all united to persecute me” (Joseph Smith—History 1:22).

As it says in the scripture, Joseph Smith was young—just like you—when he talked with God. The many trials that Joseph faced shaped him into the prophet God needed him to be.

3. SETTING THE STAGE

Start cutting off the strips of paper as marked. Ask your family members to talk about when they’ve faced hard times that were out of their control. As you’re telling stories, hand the strips of paper to your family members and tell them to roll up the strips as tightly as they can. Pass around tape to stop the paper from unrolling, and collect the cylinders from your family. Stand the cylinders on a table and arrange them in two lines of three. Set your flat surface on top of the paper rolls, making sure it’s stable and will distribute weight evenly.

4. STACKING UP

Now, with your platform ready, start stacking the books (carefully) on the platform. Tell your family that while Joseph’s hard times were painful, and he must’ve felt lonely and sad (see Joseph Smith—History 1:22–23; D&C 121), the Lord was preparing him to be His faithful servant and usher in the last dispensation.

5. STAYING STRONG

When you’ve finished stacking all the books, your family can admire the tall tower supported by the little rolls of paper.

Bring out your first piece of paper. Ask your family what they think of that piece of paper now. How much strength does it possess?

We’re just like the paper. When we allow ourselves to be shaped by a Master Builder’s plan, we become so much greater than we would have been on our own.

Cool, huh? **NE**

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