



Paper Structures



The purpose of this activity is to experience the M⁵ Early Math Approach through a meaningful math investigation. In this activity, you will create a tall structure and find a way to measure its height using the materials provided.

Key Concepts

- Experience M⁵ practices
- Apply various math concepts

Materials and Setup

- 10–20 sheets of paper of any kind for each group
- tape
- paper clips
- 3 feet of string or yarn for each group



20–30 minutes



small groups



in-person professional learning



tables or floor space

Activity Instructions

1. With your group, use the materials provided to build a tall structure.
2. Measure the height of your structure.
3. Compare the height of your structure to that of another group's structure.
4. If you finish before the other groups, consider rebuilding your structure to make it taller. You might consider other ways to rebuild your structure. For example, making it wider—and just as tall—or more stable.

Reflect and Discuss

Reflect on and discuss these questions with a partner or in a small group.

- In what ways did your lived experiences influence the ways you built your structure?
- In what ways did you experiment?
- What math vocabulary did you use?
- In what ways did the materials support your math learning?
- How did you measure the height of your structure?