

6TH GRADE: EARTHQUAKES

As Californians, we know what it's like to live with earthquakes. Sixth grade students recently completed a unit on earthquakes which culminated in a lab activity where they had to build the tallest, seismic-safe structure they could using only spaghetti noodles and marshmallows.

They implemented real-life engineering strategies such as cross-bracing and flexibility. Although most of their buildings survived a 10 second earthquake on the shake-table, a few did collapse. This led to a wonderful discussion about why earthquakes are often deadly. It's not the earthquake, but the collapsing structures that result in fatalities. Students realized that building seismic-safe structures matters because of the value of human life. It's a practical way to "love our neighbor" as Jesus commanded in Mark 12:31.

Sophie Flett believes that, "As Christians, we should care [about making earthquake-proof buildings] because the commandments of God say to love others, and we can love them by protecting them."

Anson Ballton noted that, "Christians should care about earthquake-proof buildings because God says to care for one another, and if we have earthquake proof buildings it can potentially save lives."

Joanna Hernandez pointed out that, "Human lives are very valuable because they are made in God's image." Chase Stewart summed it up well, "Earthquake proof buildings are important because it's to protect people during an earthquake. We should care because people are the most important thing to God."

