



This article and lesson discuss people who were affected by the Los Angeles wildfires: a sensitive topic if there are students who were affected. Please use discretion when discussing this subject. If you'd like to help those affected, visit the city's website at [ti.me/LAstrong](https://ti.me/LAstrong) for access to relief resources.

# BOOKS MATTER

In this lesson, students will think about some possessions they value and consider why people value books. Then they'll choose a book that brings them joy and share it with someone else.

## Grade Levels 3–6

Note: Lessons are designed to support multiple grade levels.

### Standards

#### Common Core State Standards (CCSS)

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.1  
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.3  
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.7  
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.1

#### Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL)

SOCIAL AWARENESS  
RESPONSIBLE DECISION-MAKING

#### Social Studies Standards (NCSS)

Individual Development and Identity  
Individuals, Groups, and Institutions

### Essential Question(s)

- What impact can books have on people?
- How can you spread joy with books?

### Learning Objectives

- I can explain why books might be important possessions to some people.
- I can choose a book that brings me joy and explain why.
- I can share books with others to bring them joy.

### What You'll Need

"Book Support" article from TIME for Kids; "Sharing the Joy" worksheet

## INSTRUCTIONAL PLAN

### Introduce It

Have students take a few minutes to consider what possessions they'd save in a fire. Have them write about these items and what makes them special. Explain that when wildfires tore through Los Angeles earlier this year, some people had time to pack and evacuate, but others were not as fortunate. Many people lost all of their belongings. (For background info, students can read "Fires in Los Angeles," 1/9/25, at [ti.me/LAfires](https://www.time.com/2025/01/09/los-angeles-fires/)). What belongings do students think kids would want to replace first after a fire?

### Read About It

Have students read the article "[Book Support](#)." As they do, have them identify why Rohan Mukhopadhyay wants to replace kids' books.

### Discuss It

Bring the class back together to discuss the following:

- Why is Reading Among Ruins an appropriate name for Rohan Mukhopadhyay's program?
- Where did the idea for this program originate?
- How do you think Rohan measures success? Would you say the program has been successful?
- Why might books be an important thing to replace for kids who have lost their belongings?

### Act on It

Return to the question asked at the beginning of the lesson: What belongings do students think kids would want to prioritize replacing after the fires? Did anyone mention books? Have volunteers share the reasons that books might be important to the people affected by the fires. Can books change how we feel?

The article describes books as bringing comfort and joy. Tell students that they'll have the opportunity to share joy through books, as well. Provide them with the worksheet "Sharing the Joy," at [ti.me/sharingJoy](https://www.time.com/2025/01/09/sharing-joy/). You may want to print copies on card stock. Have students fill out the section about their book. Have them fill out the log as Reader 1. Then have them cut out the two sides and glue them together. If they have a copy of the book that they're willing to share, have them give it to a peer, with the bookmark. If not, they can pass the bookmark along and invite peers to check the book out of a library.

To extend the lesson, have your class organize a book drive. Have students provide their friends and families with copies of the "Sharing the Joy" bookmarks. Ask them to donate a book and to fill out the bookmark for the book they're donating. Then work as a class to identify a community group or school that would benefit from these books.