



## Hurricane Helene & Hurricane Milton

### Learning Targets

- Empathize with people impacted by Hurricane Helene and Hurricane Milton
- Collaborate with peers to determine how to help

### Standards

- NFTE Mindsets – Critical Thinking & Problem Solving; Future Orientation
- CASEL: Social Awareness
- UN SDG 15 – Life on Land
- ISTE: 1.7 Global Collaborator

### Age Range

- 4<sup>th</sup> grade and up

### Time Commitment

- 30-45 minutes



Back-to-back hurricanes overwhelmed the southern United States in just a few short days. Hurricane Helene made landfall on September 26, 2024 and caused catastrophic flooding, damaging winds and power outages across six states, including Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia. Hurricane Milton made landfall in Florida on October 9, 2024, and was one of the fastest-growing storms in the Gulf of Mexico on record, as it intensified from a tropical storm to a Category 5 hurricane in just over 48 hours. As Hurricane Milton neared land, it caused more than a dozen deadly tornadoes, leading the National Weather Service to issue 126 warnings – a record for this state.

It is estimated that between the two storms, over \$300 billion in damages occurred. Many people lost their homes, buildings were destroyed, schools were flooded, thousands of trees were damaged, and many animals were displaced. These are just a few of the needs that arise in the aftermath of hurricanes, and when you take action to help you will make a difference.

## Your Challenge

Determine how you can take action to make a difference.

First you must decide what needs you want to impact. Does anyone in your school or neighborhood have a family member or friend who has been impacted by a natural disaster? Who are the people in Florida who need your help? Are there kids in Florida who could use your help? What organizations are already helping? What needs are they filling and how can you contribute?

Do you know what it's like to be hungry and want to help people have food to eat? Do you know what it is like to feel afraid and want to help other kids feel safe? Are you concerned about kids having books to read or clothes to wear? Have you lost a pet or seen homeless animals and want to help them find their pets or adopt pets who've lost their family? If a child lost a friend or has to go to a new school, do you know how they feel?

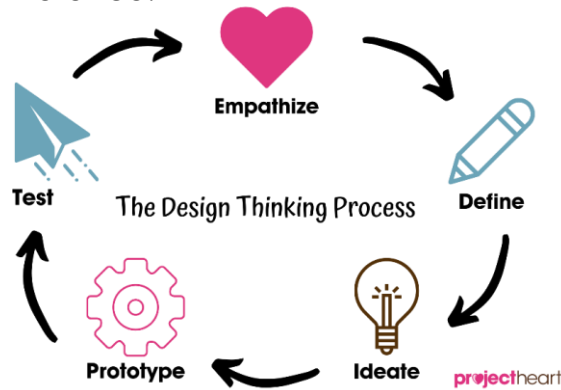
How will you use your 3Ts (time, talent and treasure) to make a difference? Are there items you can make or collect to send? Is there a service or product you can sell to raise money for a cause that speaks to your heart related to the hurricane? Are there lawmakers in your town or state who you can write to and ask them for help? Do you have natural disasters like tornadoes or hurricanes in your state, too? Can you write to companies to convince them to help in a specific way? Can you and your friends devise a campaign to encourage others to care about this cause and join in your efforts? Can you host an event to get more people involved?

Helpful websites could be

- <https://www.fema.gov/blog/4-ways-help-hurricane-helene-survivors>
- <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/help-victims-hurricane-helene-rcna173627>
- <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/09/30/us/hurricane-helene-victims-aid.html>
- <https://www.redcross.org/about-us/our-work/disaster-relief/hurricane-relief/hurricane-helene.html>
- <https://www.cnn.com/2024/10/03/weather/hurricane-helene-north-carolina-before-after-images-climate/index.html>

## Getting Started

To effectively create change, you need to follow a plan of action. We use the Design Thinking Process to help us better understand the problem we see and walk us through steps to creating a plan to make a difference!



## The Design Thinking Process



Empathize

To **empathize** means to understand and share the feelings of another. As it relates to the design thinking process and [Project Heart](#), to empathize specifically means to learn about the audience or group that you wish to impact.



Define

**Define** means to share your problem statement with others. As it relates to Project Heart, the define stage of design thinking means you've thought about your personal passions and how to apply the 3Ts of your group to make a greater social impact. The define stage helps you clearly state the need or problem so others can understand.



Ideate

To **ideate** means to form an idea, thought or concept. As it relates to the design thinking process, to ideate specifically means to brainstorm ideas based on what you have learned about your target audience and the point of view or problem statement you have defined. Related to Project Heart, your ideas should also incorporate the specific time, talent and/or treasure that you wish to contribute.



Prototype

To **prototype** means to model or create an example. As it relates to Project Heart, to prototype specifically means to plan out in detail one of your impact project ideas.



Test

To **test** means to check the quality, reliability or performance of something. As it relates to the design thinking process, to test specifically means to gain feedback on your prototype from your target population. As it relates to Project Heart, testing means implementing your plan and reflecting on your success and failures.

## Activity

**Use the spaces below to work through the design thinking process.**

Tips: To build empathy, do some research and interview experts in this area (which can include your peers!). Find out what people impacted by the fires really need. Find out who is already helping and learn from them.

When you decide on your prototype idea, remember to access the Illumination Fund for materials funding or a matching donation to a U.S. based non-profit

<https://myprojectheart.org/illumination-fund>



**Empathize**



**Define**



**Ideate**



**Prototype**



**Test**

**Reflect**