

10 Easy Steps to Create a Bucketfilling Classroom

A bucketfilling classroom is led by a bucketfilling teacher who knows:

1. The importance of keeping their bucket filled;
2. The value of ongoing bucket filling with students, parents, co-workers, and family; and
3. How to create a classroom culture of kindness that leaves a lasting, positive impact.

Here are ten easy steps to create a bucketfilling classroom:

1. **PERFORM A DAILY BUCKET CHECK.** How is *your* bucket? Is it full, so-so, or empty? Teachers need to be aware of their level of happiness and be careful not to operate from an empty-bucket mindset. When your bucket level is low, be honest and tell your students that you need *their* help by being great bucket fillers. Even though many things are outside our control, we can create a respectful, positive, and safe classroom environment. Encourage your students that you can make it a great class if you all work together by being great bucket fillers.
2. **INTRODUCE THE CONCEPT.** Read and discuss the bucketfilling book that you think is best suited for your class. (See attached list.)
3. **PLEDGE AND REPEAT.** After reading your chosen bucketfilling book, ask your students if they would like to pledge to be a bucket filler. Then, invite them to recite, with you, the Bucket Filler's Pledge. Repeat the pledge with them daily or weekly:
 - 1) **Pre-K and early elementary:** *"I pledge to do my best to be a bucket filler every day at home, at school, and everywhere I go."*
 - 2) **Upper elementary:** *"I promise to do my best every day to be a bucket filler, not to dip, and to use my lid for myself and others at home, at school, and everywhere I go."*
4. **MAKE A CLASSROOM COMMITMENT.** Work together to make a large sign that announces:
WE ARE BUCKET FILLERS! Sign the commitment with each of your students.
5. **USE THE LANGUAGE.** Reinforce bucket filling by using periodic statements such as:
 - 1) *"It really fills my bucket when you _____."*
 - 2) *"Is someone dipping into my bucket right now?"*
 - 3) *"Thanks for filling my bucket today."*
 - 4) *"Remember to fill a bucket tonight at home."*
6. **OBSERVE AND RECOGNIZE.** Get a small bucket and bag of pom-poms for your classroom. Draw a smiley face on the bucket. Tell your students that you will add one pom-pom to the bucket each time you observe bucket filling. When the classroom bucket is full, let your students help choose a fun and positive activity or reward to celebrate.
7. **BUILD POSITIVE CONNECTIONS.** Tell your students you want to fill each of their buckets. One at a time, stand, sit or kneel in front of each child. Then, speaking from your heart, tell them two or three specific, behavior-related reasons why they are special to you.
8. **GIVE EXTRA ATTENTION TO EMPTY BUCKETS.** Be intentional about giving positive attention to children who are your biggest challenge. Look for their good qualities. Fill their buckets every day with a smile, eye contact, and sincere words of encouragement, kindness, or praise.
9. **BRAINSTORM.** With your students, brainstorm how you can all fill buckets in class. Some ideas are listening, helping, working together, or complimenting each other. Write these ideas down and post them for all to see. You can also create a separate list of how buckets are dipped in class with ideas like name-calling, interrupting, not doing assignments, cheating, or excluding others.
10. **BRAG TO ONE PARENT EACH WEEK.** At the end of each week, reach out to one parent whose child has made progress. Praise their improvement or effort. Share specific details to fill that parent's bucket.

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Instructional Bucketfilling Books by Grade Level

PreK-K: *Fill a Bucket*

This 24-page picture book describes bucket filling only, with no mention of bucket dipping.

1st Grade: *Have You Filled a Bucket Today?*

Also available in Spanish and French, this 32-page picture book describes bucket filling and bucket dipping. This book is appropriate to use for any age.

2nd Grade: *Bucket Filling from A to Z*

This rhyming, 32-page picture book shows many ways children can keep buckets filled.

3rd Grade: *Buckets, Dippers, and Lids*

This 48-page "bridge" book (between a picture and chapter book) describes bucket filling, bucket dipping, and the lid.

3rd Grade and higher: *Growing Up with a Bucket Full of Happiness*

This 88-page chapter book explains the importance of bucket filling, not dipping, and using your lid for your bucket and others.

Faith-based Schools: *Best Bucket Filler Ever!*

This 32-page picture book describes God as the world's best bucket filler, who created us to be bucket fillers, too.