



Bucket Fillers



12 Easy Ways to Create a Bucketfilling Classroom

Bucketfilling teachers create a classroom learning environment that is wonderfully fun and positive for all! Any time is a great time to create a bucketfilling classroom. However, there is no better time than in the first days of a new school year. We hope you will use them as school begins or whenever you would like to improve your classroom environment.

1) INTRODUCE OR RESURRECT THE CONCEPT. Read and discuss the book, *Have You Filled a Bucket Today? A Guide to Daily Happiness for Kids – 10th Anniversary Edition* at the beginning of each year. (Be sure you have explained the concept to parents also.)

2) PLEDGE. Ask your students if they would like to make a personal pledge to be bucket fillers. Invite them to recite with you the Bucket Filler's Pledge and repeat it daily or weekly:

- **Preschool and early elementary:** *"I promise to do my best to be a bucket filler every day at home, at school, and everywhere I go."*

- **Upper elementary and above:** *"I promise to do my best 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."*

Make and post your own pledge/promise banner.

3) MAKE A STATEMENT. Make or purchase a classroom sign that announces, ***WE ARE BUCKET FILLERS!*** Place it over or next to your classroom door.

4) USE THE LANGUAGE. Use statements like, *"It really fills my bucket when you _____."* *"Is someone dipping into my bucket right now?"* *"Thanks for filling my bucket today."*

5) BRAINSTORM. With your students, brainstorm different ways that you and your students can fill each others' buckets in class, i.e. by paying attention, helping, working together, congratulating, etc. Write the suggestions on large paper and post. You can also create a separate list of how you and your students might dip into each others' buckets in class, i.e. by interrupting, not completing assignments, cheating, excluding, etc.

6) REMIND. Tell your students often: *"Remember to be a bucket filler today."*

7) RECOGNIZE. Buy a small bucket and bag of pom-poms for your classroom. Add a smiley face. Tell your students that each time you observe bucket filling you will add a pompom to the class bucket. When it's full, let your students choose a possible way to celebrate.

8) DISPLAY AND USE. Buy or make small buckets for each child and other people related to your class or school. Make buckets from plastic drinking cups with pipe-cleaner handles or a paper bucket. Display the buckets on a classroom shelf or wall. Add names. We suggest filling these buckets with notes for short periods of time, such as one special month or week. You can make "Bucket Filler Notes.". Encourage your students to fill each other's buckets. Remind and monitor, as needed for this short period of time, to be sure that each bucket is filled.

9) REWARD. Be alert. Compliment and reward bucket filling in action. Consider awarding a "Bucket Filler of the Week" certificate for outstanding bucket filling. If possible, allow your class to participate in the selection process. Consider a grand prize for the "Bucket Filler of the Year."

10) GIVE ATTENTION TO EMPTY BUCKETS. Make it a priority to give positive attention to the children who are your biggest challenges. Look for the good. Fill these buckets each day with a smile, eye contact, appropriate touch, and sincere words of encouragement, kindness, or praise.

11) SHARE GOOD NEWS. At the end of each week, call, email or text one parent whose child has made significant progress. Praise their child's improvement, sharing specific details that will fill the parents' buckets.

12) CONNECT. After you've learned more about your new students and they know more about you, walk around the room, then stand or kneel in front of each child, one at a time, and give two or three sincere, specific, behavior-related reasons why they are special to you. You may find that you will shed a few tears of happiness. And that's okay because it means that you are speaking from your heart.