



Have You Filled a Bucket Today?

By Carol McCloud

Themes: Peace, S.T.A.R., Kindness, Community

Grade: pre-K - 5

Story Synopsis: This charming story teaches that everybody carries an invisible bucket to hold all their good thoughts and good feelings about themselves.

Having a full bucket makes you feel good about yourself, while having an empty bucket leaves you with uncomfortable feelings. Through colorful illustrations and examples, readers learn the difference between choosing to fill a bucket – by doing kind things for others – and choosing to dip a bucket – by acting in a mean or hurtful way. In this way, readers learn the importance of kind actions in their community, and the good feelings fostered by bucket filling.

Why We Love This Book: We use this wonderful book as a foundational text for many of our lessons, as well as our production of *Have You Filled a Bucket Today? The Play*. Bucket filling and S.T.A.R. Power, with their shared focus on kindness and on each person's power to help themselves and others feel good, go hand in hand. Students love picturing themselves filling their invisible buckets, and enjoy finding ways to fill other people's buckets, too. The concepts of bucket filling and dipping also give students and staff a shared language with which to address unkind behavior. We love seeing how excited young children are to become bucket fillers, and how insightful older students are at identifying and addressing bucket filling and dipping.

Learning Goal/Objective:

Students will be able to:

- Define bucket filling and bucket dipping
- Identify ways they can fill buckets at school and in their community
- Brainstorm how to respond when they notice bucket dipping taking place

Estimated Time: 10 minutes (7 min. to read, 3 min. to debrief)

Before Reading:

- Review listening procedures. (*Listening Lesson*)
- Review Voice Levels: Voice Level 0 during reading; Voice Level 2 during discussion
- Explain to students that you will be reading them a special book that contains a powerful way to feel good about themselves.

- Tell students that your school will soon be seeing/recently saw the Peaceful Schools production of *Have You Filled a Bucket Today? The Play*, a staged production that brings to life the concepts in the book. If reading the book after the play, remind students about the lessons that Trey and his friends learned from Bucket Filling Fairy, Professor Smarty Pants III, and Counselor Mark.

During Reading/Active Engagement:

- Use an animated voice as you begin reading, to communicate how exciting bucket filling can be.
- Highlight the illustrations on each page. Show students that all kinds of people have buckets. Ask students what they notice about the bucket illustrations on each page. (*Each person's bucket is drawn to resemble the actual person!*)
- Ask students to show with their faces or bodies what it feels like to have a full bucket.
- On page 14-15, instead of reading "A bully is a bucket dipper," say "Someone who bullies dips others' buckets."

Note to Teachers/Staff/Parents: Labeling someone as a "bully" suggests that their behavior is unchangeable; referring instead to a person's "bullying behavior" implies a choice, allowing and inviting them to actively choose kinder, more respectful behavior in the future.

After Reading:**Discussion questions to reach Learning Goals:**

- What are some things you can do at school to fill someone's bucket? (*Ask someone new to sit with you at lunch, say something nice to a classmate, raise your hand when you have something to say, etc.*)
- What can you do if you notice someone dipping someone else's bucket? (*Talk to them about it, support the person whose bucket was dipped, tell a trusted adult, etc.*)
- What could you do if you feel that someone is dipping your bucket? (*Ask them to stop, go seek a friend to cheer you up, tell a teacher, etc.*)
- How could you respond if someone tells you that you dipped their bucket?
 - Everybody makes mistakes. The responsible thing to do is to listen to that person, acknowledge your behavior, apologize if necessary, and do something to make things better.
- What would you say or do to teach someone else about our invisible buckets and how to fill them?