

Have You Filled a Bucket Today? A Guide to Daily Happiness for Kids

Carol McCloud

Glenn Zimmer, Illustrator

Bucket Fillers (Oct 1, 2015)

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Have You Filled a Bucket Today? is a helpful guidebook for young children about how to be happy in their daily lives.

Carol McCloud's timeless picture book *Have You Filled a Bucket Today?* teaches kids that other people's happiness should matter to them.

Designed as a lesson for children ages 4-9, the book is a how-to on becoming "bucket fillers," or people who live a happy, rewarding life. It builds upon the idea that we all carry around an invisible bucket to "hold your good thoughts and good feelings about yourself." A full bucket means that you're happy; an empty bucket signifies sadness or loneliness.

Discussing the differences between filling the bucket and emptying one, the book reminds children that taking from someone else's bucket won't help to fill their own, while helping other people to fill their buckets will fill their own in turn. The text works toward a satisfying ending reminding children to ask themselves whether or not they've filled a bucket at the end of each day.

The text is didactic—describing the purpose of the invisible bucket, how to fill and empty one, and why it matters. Filling a bucket is easy and doesn't take much time, according to the book's examples, and it promises that seeing a smile on another person's face is worth it.

Prescriptive rather than narrative, the book is full of examples and ideas. It makes space for all children, in service of its belief that everyone makes choices about whether to be a bucket filler or a bucket dipper.

David Messing's illustrations are polished and consistent. Children of all ages, races, sizes, and temperaments are represented, and the pictures are colorful and descriptive, depicting feelings clearly and personifying the messages that words leave; a full bucket is shown matching the emotions of the characters on its page.

Have You Filled a Bucket Today? is a helpful guidebook for young children about how to be happy in their daily lives, demonstrating its tools in action and leaving children with actionable advice.

REBECCA MONTERUSSO (January 8, 2019)

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