



Strive FOUNDATION: Middle School

Length: 60 minutes

Lesson Plan #3: Fuel Tanks II

Character & Leadership Competencies Taught:

Self-Awareness, Motivation

Lesson Objectives:

At the end of this lesson, students will be able to understand the concept of energy tanks and articulate where their tank level is and why.

At the end of this lesson, students will understand the role of Appreciations as a leadership tool and begin to create and share Appreciations with their classmates.

Materials Required:

- Pencils, pencil sharpeners
- Construction paper (or fuel tank template, which can be found in handouts) and other fuel tank craft supplies as desired - including scissors, glue, markers, crayons, paper fasteners for fuel gauge
- Fuel tank and Appreciations signs for Leadership Tool Box

Overview Day 3:

- A. Welcome
- B. Mindfulness
- C. Make Your Own Fuel Tank
- D. Appreciations
- E. Try It On Challenge
- F. Sticky Board

Time	Lesson Content	Facilitator Notes
Before class	<p>Classroom Preparation</p> <p>Prepare fuel tank supplies so that they are easily accessible.</p> <p>Prepare to add today's tool to your toolbox, based on your chosen toolbox display.</p> <p>Create five sticky notes with the following questions on them and place them under four different seats before students enter the room:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Why do we give Appreciations? Why are they important? ● How did it feel to give or receive an Appreciation? ● What do you notice when people GIVE authentic vs. inauthentic Appreciations? ● What do you notice when you RECEIVE an authentic Appreciation? ● What do Appreciations have to do with leadership and being your best self? 	<p>Plan to make your own fuel tank as well so you can model its use and join the class in daily reflection. You can make yours ahead of time if you anticipate needing to be hands-on in managing the classroom, or join the students and make yours today during class. Encourage assistant teachers/counselors to make one too!</p>
5 mins	<p>Welcome</p> <p>PPT: High Five Slide, Schedule Slides</p> <p>Open class with discussion questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>What is a fuel tank?</i> ● <i>What fills it up?</i> ● <i>What empties it?</i> ● <i>Can we change other people's tanks? Our own?</i> ● <i>Was anyone able to complete the Try It On Challenge (Check-in with someone and ask where their tank is)?</i> 	
10 mins	<p>Mindfulness</p> <p>PPT: Be Where Your Feet Are At Slide</p> <p><i>Yesterday we focused on our breath and paid attention to its rhythm. Going forward, we are going to start each mindfulness lesson by taking three intentional breaths. I will ring the bell, we will all take three breaths, and then I will ring the bell again. Let's start by putting on our</i></p>	<p><i>Inviting students to ring the bell:</i></p> <p>This is an important element for the students to own this tool of mindfulness. Try to include as many student volunteers as possible in mindfulness exercises. If there are more students than bell-ringing moments in your</p>

mindful bodies. (Give students a little time to settle.) Ready for three breaths?

Put on your mindful bodies, let your eyes close or look toward the floor. **Ring the bell.** Take three breaths. **Ring the bell.**

By practicing mindfulness, we develop the skill of noticing and observing our emotions, sometimes reducing their impact on us. We are going to explore how to do this today.

Yesterday we talked about finding our anchors when breathing - can anyone remind us what your anchor is? Why is an anchor helpful? (It helps us to pay attention to the present moment - where our feet are at.) Today we will count our breaths as a way to help us stay focused on breathing. Breath has two parts. It has an inhale and an exhale. Everyone take an inhale through your nose and now an exhale through your nose. So one breath is both of those parts put together.

To count your breath, when you take one breath in and out, say "one" gently in your mind after your exhale. After the next exhale, say "two," and so on. See how high you can count before you notice you have forgotten or become lost in thought. When you realize it, simply acknowledge it and start counting again with one. This isn't a contest - we are simply trying to focus on our breath!

Put on your mindful bodies and let your eyes close. Place your attention on your anchor, the place where you feel your breath most obviously.

Ring bell. Give one minute for counting. **Ring the bell.**

Would anyone like to share how it felt when you were able to stay focused on your breathing? How about when you noticed you were thinking? When you started thinking, were you able to return to your anchor, in other words, were you able to be where your feet are once again?

You might have noticed that your mind is very busy. It is thinking about many things and it may not be easy to pay attention. That's perfectly normal. When you find your mind is very busy and you have lost your anchor, then simply notice that and then return to your anchor.

mindfulness lessons, see if you can incorporate taking three breaths at other times during class (it can be a nice transition to settling into an activity).

If students have difficulty thinking of when it might be useful to take a pause and focus on breathing, ask them when are times in their day that they wish their mind was quiet? Like when they are trying to sleep, read, study, take a test.

	<p><i>Does anyone have ideas about when it might be useful to take a pause and focus on your breathing?</i></p> <p><i>Let's try counting our breath one more time. See what number you can go up to this time.</i></p> <p><i>When you hear the sound of the second bell, listen to the whole sound of the bell, and when you cannot hear the sound of the bell anymore, open your eyes.</i></p> <p>Ring bell. Give one minute for counting. Ring bell again to end.</p> <p><i>Next time I'd like to invite one of you to start our mindfulness lesson by ringing the bell for our three breaths. Everyone who wants to will have a chance. Would anyone like to volunteer?</i></p>	
<p>30 mins</p>	<p>Make Your Own Fuel Tank PPT: Make Your Own Fuel Tank</p> <p><i>Last time we talked about fuel tanks. Can each person share one thing that drained your tank in the past day? How about one thing that filled your tank?</i></p> <p><i>Now we are going to make a representation of our own fuel tanks so that when we come into class each day we can set them so others know where our energy levels are. What are we able to do when we know where others' tanks are?</i></p> <p>Using the art supplies present, have students create their own fuel tank. Share examples in the powerpoint to generate ideas. Students may have free reign for creative design - remind them that the images on the slides are just starting points - but every tank should be able to be adjusted daily to show how full or empty the student's tank is. Let students know the fuel tank stays in the classroom until the last day of class and will be set each day as they enter class. It's important for students to know that they don't need to explain the "why" behind their tank level; sometimes it is confidential and the class will respect that.</p> <p>Just before calling for clean-up time, have everyone set their fuel tanks at their current level. Ask if anyone would like to share their tank design and/or explain the setting they chose for</p>	<p>The goal of this activity is to provide students with a tangible way to identify where their energy and emotions are each day (naming) and to also see where their classmates' are. With the visual of an actual fuel tank, the class gains a tool for taking action: normalizing talking about energy and emotions, providing practice opportunities for empathy, and offering in-the-moment chances to raise their own and others' tanks.</p> <p>TA: Checking in with oneself is a form of mindfulness. Remember that this can be difficult for those who have experienced trauma, and may be foreign to many of your students. Continue to normalize the idea that "whatever you feel is okay."</p> <p>The effectiveness of this tool lies with you, the facilitator. Model daily engagement with the</p>

	<p>today.</p> <p><i>So what do fuel tanks have to do with leadership? Does anyone have any ideas?</i></p> <p>Explain that it's a strength to know and understand yourself and that we can be better leaders and classmates when we take a minute to check in with our own energy and emotions. When our tanks are low, we are more rigid and don't relate as well with other people. A good leader will notice if their own tank is running low and look for ways to refuel before they start engaging in low-energy behaviors like negativity, sarcasm, and putting people down. A good leader will also pay attention to the fuel tanks of the people around them - always looking for ways to raise people's tanks and offer support.</p> <p>Offer the idea that paying attention to the level of your fuel tank is a simple mindfulness practice they can do every day - you can pause for a minute, think about how you're feeling, set your tank if you're in Strive class or just think about it to yourself, and then ask a wondering question: I wonder what I could do to raise my energy level today?</p> <p><u>Leadership Toolbox</u> PPT: Leadership Toolbox</p> <p><i>Now that we know about our fuel tanks and know how to use them, let's add it to our toolbox!</i></p>	<p>fuel tank and look for ways to use it as a connection point with your students.</p> <p>TA: Be aware that there can be many reasons a child's tank is low to empty, many of which are confidential, sensitive, and not appropriate for class discussion. But it is always appropriate to offer supportive, tank-filling gestures when you see a student needs it - and to encourage the same from classmates.</p> <p>TA: If in the course of setting fuel tanks it becomes apparent that a child is dealing with a larger personal challenge, use the policy in place in your school or program to connect them with additional support (counselor, etc.)</p>
<p>10 mins</p>	<p>Appreciations PPT: Appreciations Slide</p> <p><i>We want to shift gears a little to talk about something we will start doing in class and even in our lives outside of class. How does it feel when someone gives you a sincere thank you or compliment? At Strive we have a tradition of building each other up through Appreciations. It fills people's tanks when we appreciate them and it also fills our own, which is something special about gratitude - the benefits come to everyone involved. We will talk more about this in a later lesson.</i></p> <p>PPT: Appreciations Slide</p>	<p>The objective of Appreciations is to give students a tangible way to fill tanks and to plant seeds for a gratitude practice which will be expanded upon in future lessons. Appreciations not only raise energy, but also offer public speaking experience, reinforce positive classroom behavior, and build culture. Being comfortable articulating an appreciation is a strong leadership skill.</p> <p>TA: Expressing gratitude can be difficult for</p>

Explain that Appreciations are a way that we fill people's tanks by being truthful and specific about something positive we see in them. Explain that Appreciations follow a clear procedure (act it out as you walk through it):

- *Step One: Raise your hand to be called on.*
- *Step Two: Stand up and wait for the room to get quiet.*
- *Step Three: State a brief, specific Appreciation for one or more people, saying "I would like to appreciate (NAME) for (FILL IN THE BLANK)."*
- *Step Four: End with three claps by saying, "Three claps for (NAME)!" Clap-clap-clap*
- *...and don't forget: speak clearly, slowly, and loudly!*

Have two Appreciations ready to give as an example for the class. These should be honest and authentic.

- *For example. I want to appreciate _____, our counselor in the room, for helping me clean up these fuel tank supplies and always making sure the markers are picked up at the end of class. I also love how you give me a big smile when you enter class each day. Thank you! For _____, three claps!*

Ask if there are any volunteers and be patient as students get used to the process. Have two or three students try giving Appreciations.

HOT SEAT: Have students reach under their chairs to see if there is a sticky note with a question on it. If so, that student takes the first stab at answering the question before it's opened to the group for answers. Questions and possible answers are below:

- *Why do we give Appreciations? Why are they important?*
- *How did it feel to give or receive an Appreciation? I know I sometimes feel a little embarrassed when someone gives me an Appreciation but I know that's normal and my response will change over time.*
- *What do you notice when people give authentic versus inauthentic Appreciations? (An inauthentic Appreciation is less meaningful - it can be generic meaning you could say it about anyone, or insincere. "I want to recognize Tyrone for being nice." "I want to appreciate Maria for her Adidas hoodie." An authentic appreciation is specific and directly tied to the person receiving it, such as "I want to recognize Tyrone for carrying the heavy water cooler at practice today." Or "I would like to appreciate Maria for helping me understand yesterday's math assignment.")*
- *What do you notice when you receive an authentic Appreciation? (Answers may include that I feel noticed, proud, improves my relationship with the person who gave*

someone who has experienced trauma, and it can also be healing. Modeling this practice is a great way to introduce the practice of gratitude to all, including those who may find it foreign or challenging.

	<p>the Appreciation, makes me want to repeat that behavior, fills my tank, makes me want to be kinder to someone else.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What do Appreciations have to do with leadership and being your best self?</i> (When you get outside of your own head and notice the good things others are doing, that's one way to practice being your best self. It can feel really good to do that. And when you call out someone else's good actions, you are inspiring the best in others - so you are creating a chain reaction! Strong leaders recognize the strengths and gifts of the people around them and take time to recognize and appreciate them - both in one on one conversation and in front of other people. This fills peoples tanks and builds strong relationships.) <p><u>Leadership Toolbox</u> PPT: Leadership Toolbox</p> <p><i>Appreciations are another great leadership tool - leaders build relationships when they appreciate and recognize others for their contributions and ideas. Let's add Appreciations to our Leadership Toolbox!</i></p> <p>Tell students we are going to start doing regular Appreciations, so they can think about it throughout the day and come prepared to catch each other being awesome.</p>	
5 mins	<p>Try It On Challenge/Sticky Board PPT: Try It On Challenge Slide</p> <p><i>Try to fill someone's tank intentionally! What are some ways to do this?</i></p> <p>PPT: Sticky Board <i>What did you find "most sticky" in class today?</i></p>	<p>Reminder: The objective of the Sticky Board is that students reflect on what was most "sticky" for them in the day's lesson and then, by keeping these notes up throughout the course, students are reminded of key topics for weeks after lesson completion.</p>