



### Read Aloud, grade 2 & 3

**Activity:** Creating “Get Well” or “Thinking of You” cards to friends and family members after reading **Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good Very Bad Day** by Judith Viorst.

**Synopsis of Book:** Published in 1972 and a winner of many awards including an ALA Notable Book Award.

From the moment he wakes up with gum in his hair, things just do not go Alexander's way. At breakfast, Alexander's brothers Nick and Anthony reach into their cereal boxes and pull out amazing prizes, while all Alexander ends up with is . . . cereal. His teacher doesn't like his drawing of an invisible castle, there is no dessert in his lunch, the dentist tells him he has a cavity, there is kissing on TV, and he has to wear his railroad train pajamas (he hates his railroad train pajamas). No wonder Alexander wants to move to [Australia](#)! The book ends with his mother's assurance that everyone has bad days, even people who live in Australia.

**Description:** This read aloud and activity involves students experiencing the perspective of a particular boy who is having a bad day. Students will learn that every day can't always go the way you want it. There are disappointments and bad things that happen to people and throughout one's life. How do you help yourself and others feel better when their day might not be going so well?

**Goal(s):** Students will learn about expressing feelings and emotions. They will recognize that peers, family members, friends and even teachers sometimes have a bad day when things don't go according to plan. Students will discuss situations where they have had a difficult day and brainstorm on how, next time, they could make the situation or day more successful.

#### **Materials:**

**Book:** **Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good Day** by Judith Viorst.

**Art Supplies:** Colorful construction paper, markers, crayons, stickers, stamps and ink pads, thread/ribbon, glitter glue/paint

#### **Activity Plan:**

- 1) Lead a discussion about how a student's day usually starts. Use questions like:

- What do you do when you get up?
- What do you have for breakfast? Who makes you breakfast?
- What's the best part of the morning?
- What's the worst part of the morning?
- How do you get to school?

Ask students if they have a planner or scheduler that helps to organize their day? Are there specific rules or regulations they must follow at home and then at school? What do they do when they get home from school?

- 2) Discuss what could possibly go wrong on any particular day? I.E. I forgot to bring my lunch; my dog ate my homework; I didn't bring a hat and gloves and the class is going on a school trip; my friend got a DVD or video game over the weekend and I didn't get one.
- 3) Read aloud excerpts from *Alexander*. Perhaps use a funny or exaggerated tone to show children that a "bad day" could always be made light of...and the importance of humor in life.
- 4) Have students pick out one particular situation that happens to Alexander and ask them to see if they could solve it or make it better.
- 5) Go through two-three bad situations from the book with the students and solve them together.
- 6) Ask students to pick out one person they know who recently has had a bad day and may need some cheering up. I.E. The person could: have a cold; lost a job; got into a fight with their friend or lost their cat.
- 7) Give out materials to the students and ask each group to design and create their own thoughtful card to give away.
- 8) Have students present / share their cards and talk about whom they made them for and why.

**Closure / Follow Up:**

Ask students what they learned from this book, the discussion, and making their own cards.

Ask students to complete the evaluation form.