Have you ever had a really rotten day? Alexander has. He wakes up with gum in his hair, he trips on a skateboard, and then he accidentally drops his sweater in the sink — all before breakfast! Alexander can already tell it’s going to be a terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day. Laugh and sing along with Alexander’s misadventures in this hilarious musical, featuring dialogue and lyrics by Judith Viorst, author of the best-selling classic book. Discover along with Alexander that sometimes, everyone has a terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day that’s enough to make us all want to move to Australia!

Stay for our 15-minute Q & A session with the cast after the 12:15pm performance.

Tuesday, April 8, 2014
10:15am & 12:15pm
Grades: PreK — 3

Curriculum Connections:
English Language Arts, Fine Arts/Theatre & Music

STANDARDS ADDRESSED BY ATTENDING THIS PERFORMANCE

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS:
English Language Arts: Speaking and Listening (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL)
Comprehension and Collaboration: Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

NEW MEXICO CONTENT STANDARDS:
Fine Arts: Theatre & Music
Content Standard III: Integrate understanding of visual and performing arts by seeking connections and parallels among arts disciplines as well as all other content areas.
Content Standard V: Observe, discuss, analyze, and make critical judgments about artistic works.

New Mexico Content Standards and Common Core State Standards are provided for both attending the performance and each activity presented. For specific standards at your grade level, please consult the standards online for attending the show and all activities in this guide. For New Mexico State Standards: http://www.ped.state.nm.us/standards/index.html, www.ped.state.nm.us/standards/index.html

Selected Dreamcatchers materials provided by Two Beans Productions and other resources noted throughout the guide.

Dreamcatchers are produced by the Education Department of Popejoy Hall, Albuquerque, New Mexico pjoyedu@unm.edu, www.schooltimeseries.com, facebook.com/schooltimeseries

Alexander AND THE Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day

Presented by Two Beans Productions
INTRODUCTION/SYNOPSIS

Two Beans’ musical adaptation is very closely based on the classic book by Judith Viorst. In fact, Ms. Viorst adapted her own story, writing the lyrics (words to the songs) and book (dialogue and story structure) for this musical. She worked very closely with her collaborator, composer Shelly Markham, to create the songs.

When six-year-old Alexander wakes up with gum in his hair, then trips on a skateboard, and then accidentally dries his wet face on his sweater rather than his towel, he can tell: it’s going to be a terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day!

In the following scene, the day gets progressively worse as his teacher doesn’t like his drawing of an invisible castle, his lunchbox doesn’t have any dessert, and his best friend Paul declares that Alexander is only his third best friend. It’s enough to make Alexander wish he could move to Australia!

After school, the dentist finds a cavity in Alexander’s tooth, the shoe store is out of the shoes he wants, and he makes a big mess at his father’s office. It really has been a terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day, but Alexander learns that some days are like that. Even in Australia.

FUN FACTS

- Alexander and his two older brothers, Anthony and Nick, are based on the author, Judith Viorst’s, own three sons of the same names
- Lima beans are named after the city of Lima, Peru. They are also often called butter beans or chad beans.
- People have been eating lima beans for over 6,000 years.
- Native Americans grew lima beans before the English settlers landed.
- Koala bears are native to Australia but they aren’t really bears! They are marsupials, meaning the babies grow in a pouch (like a big pocket) on their mommy’s tummy like kangaroos do.
- Most of Australia’s exotic flora (plants) and fauna (animals) cannot be found anywhere else in the world.
- Australia has the world’s largest population of wild single-hump camels.
- There are more than 100 million sheep in Australia but only 20 million people. That’s five sheep for every person!
- There are an estimated 40 million kangaroos in Australia, or two kangaroos for each person!
- There are 1,500 species of Australian spiders.
- Australians from the area of Queensland are called “banana benders.”
- People from Western Australia are called “sand gropers.”
- People from New South Wales, another part of Australia, are called “cockroaches.”

VOCABULARY

ANGRY: feeling or showing anger
AUSTRALIA: an island continent and country
CAREER: profession followed as a permanent occupation
CHOICE: selection
CONSEQUENCE: result
MUSICAL: a film or play that tells a story and that includes both musical numbers and dialogue
OPPOSITE: as different as possible to something
POLITE: showing consideration and courtesy
SCARED: to be frightened
UPSET: to worry, anger, or cause unhappiness to

ABOUT THE BOOK AUTHOR

Judith Viorst is an author, journalist, and psychoanalysis researcher. She is best known for her children’s books, the most famous of which is Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day. Published in 1972, Alexander has since sold over 2 million copies. Ms. Viorst has also published numerous books and poetry for adults. She received a B.A. in history from Rutgers University and is currently a research affiliate at the Washington Psychoanalytical Institute, from which she also graduated. Ms. Viorst lives in Washington DC with her husband, Milton. Their three sons, Anthony, Nicholas, and Alexander, were inspiration for several of her books.
OBJECTIVES:

- Students will enhance their memories by remembering a long sequence of events.
- Students will pantomime actions to communicate what is happening in a scene.

MATERIALS:
- Open space for students to play

PROCEDURES:

1. Students will stand in a circle.
2. One student will begin by saying “I had a terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day. I stepped in gum.” (Or some other day-ruining event). The students will then act out stepping in gum (or whatever their event is).
3. The next student in the circle will say, “I had a terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day. I stepped in gum and (for example) tore my favorite shirt.” This student will repeat the previous player’s movement and then create their own for the added calamity.
4. The third player repeats the day-ruining events of the previous two players, making sure to perform the pantomimes and repeat, then name and pantomime yet another problem moment.
5. Each player around the circle will get an opportunity to add their own day-ruining event to the game, but must repeat the events and accompanying pantomimes of every player before them. The game ends when everyone has had a chance to play.
6. You may add the rule that if a player makes a mistake that they cannot add an event to the game and must sit out. If you do so, keep the game going until only one player is left.
7. You may play the game multiple times, but encourage students to think of new (and unusual) day-ruining events each time.

NOTE: Throughout the game, encourage students to create well thought-out pantomimes. “Make an image in your mind of what is happening to you. How can you use your body to recreate that image for the rest of us?”

EXTENSIONS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Play the game without words, using only pantomimes. Encourage students to really flesh out their pantomimes in order to successfully communicate what is happening to the rest of the group.
- After playing, make a list of all of the terrible, horrible, no good, very bad things that happened. Could all of these things really happen to one person in one day? As a class, or individually, create a short story about your own terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day.

ASSESSMENT:

- Quality of Participation

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OBJECTIVES:
 Students will work together to generate a list of positive things in contrast to negative things.
 Students will create an original story based on ideas generated.
 Students will engage in creative thinking and problem solving.

MATERIALS:
 Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day
 Chalkboard or white board
 Paper
 Crayons, markers, paints, etc.

PROCEDURES:
1. In the book and show *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day*, we follow Alexander through a series of unfortunate events that lead to a truly terrible day. As a class, review all of the things that go wrong in Alexander’s day.
2. Now ask students to imagine that the next day (next week, next month, etc.), Alexander has an incredible, wonderful, marvelous, very good day. What would that day entail? Write student responses on the board (the more ideas generated, the better!)
3. Once you have generated a good list of ideas for Alexander’s great day, tell the class that they will be creating their own story using many of the ideas they have just come up with. Older students may be asked to create their own story while younger students can work together as a class or in small groups to create the story.
4. As much as possible, given the ideas generated by the students, start with what happens to Alexander when he first wakes up and work your way through the day. Students can decide what they think should happen next based on the ideas written on the board.
5. When the class has agreed on a sequence of events, allow them time in class to put their stories together. Older students may either compose their stories using the agreed upon format or can be allowed to generate their own ideas. Younger students can each draw a picture of something wonderful happening to Alexander. If they are able, have them write a sentence or two describing what is happening in the picture.
6. Collect the students’ work and bind them to create a classroom book or collection of stories. Leave the stories where students can access them and read them. If possible, make photocopies for students to take home.

EXTENSIONS/MODIFICATIONS:
• Create a performance about Alexander’s incredible, wonderful, marvelous, very good day. Perform it for another class.
• Write a story (or draw a picture) about your own terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day. Then write a story about an incredible, wonderful, marvelous, very good day.

ASSESSMENT:
• Quality of participation

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

Reading Standards for Literature (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL)
Integration of Knowledge and Ideas: Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

Writing (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W)
Production and Distribution of Writing: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Speaking and Listening (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL)
Comprehension and Collaboration: Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.
BONUS EXPLORATIONS

As soon as possible after the performance, engage your class in discussion about the show. Who were their favorite characters and why? Which were their favorite moments and songs in the musical? Compare and contrast the book and the live performance. Did the show live up to their expectations after reading the story?

When the dentist checks Alexander’s teeth, he finds a cavity. Have your students ever had a cavity? What did the dentist do to fix it? What else do dentists do during a check-up? For example, fluoride treatment, scrape build-up from between teeth, take x-rays, etc. What could Alexander have done to avoid getting a cavity? Discuss the things people do to maintain good dental hygiene: brushing and flossing after meals, avoiding sugary snacks, etc. What might happen to your students’ teeth if they are neglected?

Alexander’s teeth are checked by the dentist. He finds a cavity and fixes it. Alexander is disappointed when he discovers that he doesn’t have a dessert for lunch. What he doesn’t realize, is that his mother packed him a healthy, well-balanced meal. Talk about the four basic food groups with your class: vegetable/fruit, bread/grain, meat/protein, and dairy. On the blackboard, create a 4-square grid, and brainstorm different specific foods and which food group they each belong to. From the four boxes, have your students pack a healthy, well-balanced lunch for Alexander, with one item from each of the different groups. If time permits, learn about the USDA’s food pyramid, and plan an entire day’s meals for Alexander accordingly.

Alexander often says during the course of his day, “I want to go to Australia.” Have your students locate Australia on a map or globe. In which hemisphere is it? When it is cold in North America, what is the weather like in Australia? Which months in Australia are cold? Depending on your students’ skill level, assign them different factoids to discover about Australia. What kinds of animals live there? What are Australia’s major cities? What language do they speak? How long would it take to fly to Australia from the Sunport? Have them share their discoveries with the class.

OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

THE ALBUQUERQUE BIOPARK

Learn all about conservation and the environment at any of the Biopark locations! The ABQ Biopark Zoo, the Aquarium, and the Botanical Garden all provide opportunities for hands on discovery and learning. [http://www.cabq.gov/culturalservices/biopark]

What would it be like if Alexander had gone to Australia? Find out what animals he would see in Australia that can be seen at our zoo. For example, he could see koalas, kangaroos, Tasmanian wombats, and more. He could even feed the lorikeets!

For feeding times, tours, and more visit: [http://www.cabq.gov/culturalservices/biopark/zoo/exhibits/australia]

You can be on stage, too! There are many different opportunities in our town. Here are only two of the many:

THE GROWING STAGE

505-288-1205, [www.thegrowingstage.com], contact: Kari Reese
The Growing Stage (TGS) is a children’s theater that began in 2003. It has collaborated with Musical Theater Southwest and now produces plays at the South Broadway Cultural Center and other venues. TGS offers Saturday drama classes over 8 weeks each fall and spring at a Northeast Heights location. Varying class levels serve children age 3-16 in performance skills and vocal techniques. Summer classes are also available.

UNM’S SATURDAY CHILDREN’S THEATER CLASSES

Popejoy Hall, UNM, 505-277-4332, theatre@unm.edu
[http://theatre.unm.edu/community/saturday_classes.php]

The University of New Mexico offers Saturday theater classes for children ages 4-15. During its fall and spring semesters, the 10-week classes in the Department of Theater Arts introduce children to basic acting, creativity, confidence building, and development of the imagination. Classes are taught by college theater students and culminate in a final showcase performance. Scholarships available.

Also visit [http://www.newmexico-kids.com/] for more opportunities for children.
RESOURCES & WEBSITES

WANT MORE ALEXANDER?


OTHER BOOKS BY JUDITH VIORST

WEBSITES
An essay by Judith Viorst about her experiences turning Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day into a musical, as well as a short biography. http://www.dramaticpublishing.com/viorst.html

An Australia-centric website, including games and links to more information. http://www.pocantichills.org/australia/australia.htm

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) site, explaining the food pyramid and good nutrition for kids. Also includes worksheets, posters, and games. http://www.choosemyplate.gov

ABOUT THE COMPANY
(http://www.twusa.org)

The mission of TheatreworksUSA is to create, produce, and provide access to professional theatre for young family audiences nationwide, including disadvantaged youth and under-served communities.

The company tours approximately 16 shows each season from their repertoire of 133 plays and musicals. In addition, they have an extensive multi-cultural roster of guest artists, including storytellers, puppeteers, poets, and magicians. The overarching goals of Theatreworks’ programs are to:

• Create literary- and historically-based shows that stimulate reading and discussion on the cultural, historical, and/or social issues and themes represented in each show.

• Foster and nurture the wealth of talent that exists in young writers.

• Encourage young people to tap into their own reservoirs of creativity and talent.

• Present role models and encourage positive values through the shows’ content.

• Enhance the theatre experience which children share with their friends and classmates, teachers, and families. Develop a life-long appreciation for the arts.

• Build the audiences of the future.
Theatre Etiquette

Music, theater, dance, and opera are collaborative arts. This means they require the cooperation of many people: the directors, the performers, and the audience. Live performances can transport you to other times and places, but to do so, they require you, the audience to listen, observe, discover, and imagine.

A poster of Theater Etiquette is included on the website. Please post it and discuss it with your students before coming to the performance.

- Seeing a live performance is a special experience. Although it is not required, many people enjoy dressing up when they attend the theater.
- Gentlemen should remove hats or caps when inside the building.
- Please enjoy your food, drink, and gum in the lobby.
- Please allow ushers to seat your entire group before rearranging students and/or taking groups to the restroom.
- Photography and recordings of the shows, as well as cell phones, texting, or gaming are all strictly prohibited during the performances.
- Crying babies, unhappy siblings, and other loud noises disturb the actors and the other patrons. Please be considerate and leave the hall during these periods. You may still enjoy the show in the lobby via our large screen monitors.
- Some shows are interactive, and involve audience participation; some are not. Discuss with your class how to know the difference, as well as what is appropriate conduct in a theater, versus a sports arena or outdoor concert.
- During a musical, it is appropriate to clap at the end of a song. During a ballet or dance performance, it is appropriate to clap at the end of the number.
- Curtain calls occur when the show has ended and the cast comes forward to take their bows. The best way to show the performers how much you appreciate their hard work is to stay at your seats and clap until the actors leave the stage, or until the curtain comes down and the house lights come on.
- At the end of the show, after the applause, remain in your seats until you are dismissed from the theater.
- If you are staying for the Question & Answer session, remain in your seats until the house clears and then move down front toward the stage.

WANDERING CHILDREN

For the safety of our precious little ones, UNM requests school identifiers. When students are too scared to tell us their school name or teacher, school identifiers give us a quick and easy way to reunite them with their class groups. Examples of suitable identifiers include matching T-shirts, homemade headbands, hats, scarves, lanyards, and school badges. Be creative!

The kiosk in the lobby is our rendezvous point. Please immediately report a separated child to the usher at the kiosk. Staff will search for and bring lost children there first.

Please visit our website at http://schooltimeseries.com/house-policies for detailed information about Etiquette, Safety, and House Policies.

The Schooltime Series is a proud member of International Performing Arts for Youth

PRODUCE • PROMOTE • PRESENT

“Happiness is not something ready made. It comes from your own actions.” - Dalai Lama