

# Having a Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day



View the full activity collection at [cliengage.org](http://cliengage.org).

## Objective

Children will learn that everyone has terrible, horrible, no good, very bad days sometimes, and it is okay to talk about it.

## Setting

- whole group
- small group

## Materials

- *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day* by Judith Viorst
- Draw and Write sheets for each child
- chart paper or whiteboard with marker
- drawing/writing materials

## Preparation

- Read through *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day* and decide where you might stop to have students talk about the book or their personal experiences.
- Think about what you would draw and write as a response to “What happened when you had a terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day?”
- Have the Draw and Write sheets and materials ready.

## INSTRUCTIONAL PLANNING

### PRE-K GUIDELINES ALIGNMENT

I.B.2.b. Child can communicate basic emotions/feelings.

III.D.3. Child asks and responds to questions relevant to the text read aloud.

### KINDERGARTEN TEKS

§110.11.ELAR8A Child retells a main event from a story read aloud

§110.11.ELAR8B Child describes characters in a story and the reasons for their actions.

### HEAD START ALIGNMENT

Goal P-SE 6. Child expresses a broad range of emotions and recognizes these emotions in self and others.

Goal P-LIT 5. Child asks and answers questions about a book that was read aloud.

## 1 Introduce Activity

Today we're going to read a story about a boy named Alexander who has a terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day. When something is terrible, it makes you feel very bad, upset, or even sick. When something is horrible, it is very bad - you do not like it at all! Sometimes, it seems everything that can go badly does go badly and you have a terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day. Everyone has those days sometimes and it's okay. Not all days are like that.

The title of the book is *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day*. The author is Judith Viorst. She writes the words. And the illustrator is Ray Cruz. He draws the pictures.

While we read, I want you to think about this question: What problems does Alexander have during his very bad day?

Read the story. Stop during reading to ask questions and respond to students' idea.

Consider these possible stopping points and discussion questions:

Pg. 4: **When you ignore someone, you act like they're not even there. Alexander feels ignored because no one answers him when he says he's smushed. How would you feel if someone ignored you?**

Pg. 10: **What doesn't Alexander have and how do you think that makes him feel?**

(He might feel left out or different because he's the only one without dessert.)

Pg. 13: **Let's predict what's going to happen next. Do you think Alexander's day is going to get better or worse?**

Pg. 17: **When you scold someone, you speak to them with a mad voice and tell them what they have done is wrong. Alexander's mom is scolding him because he was muddy and fighting with his brothers. What could he have done instead of punching his brothers?** (He could have used his words or walked away and cleaned himself up.)

Pg. 28: **Alexander says he thinks he'll move to Australia. Australia is a far away country. Kangaroos come from Australia.** [Point to Australia on a map or globe if there is one available.] **Do you think people in Australia can have bad days, too?**

## 2 Model and Explain

Discuss book: **Remember our question: What problems does Alexander have during his very bad day?**

Consider asking these additional questions:

**What could you do to help someone who is having a terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day?**

**What could Alexander have done differently that would change how his day went?** (Sometimes during terrible, horrible, no good, very bad days, there are things we can do that can make the day better, but sometimes there are things we can't do. When we can do something and have choices, like Alexander sometimes does, try to make the best choice that helps you and others and not hurt anyone.)

**Have you had one of those terrible, horrible, no good, very bad days? What happened?**

Explain Draw & Write: **Now we're going to draw and write about a time we had a terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day.**

Model: **I will show you first.** On chart paper or the whiteboard, draw what happened when you had a terrible horrible, no good, very bad day. Think aloud as you draw:

- **I'm going to think about what happened on that terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day and how I was feeling. I'm going to draw myself and show how I felt on my face. And I'm going to add details about what happened that day.** Tell students what's happening as you draw it.
- **Now I'm going to write a sentence at the bottom to describe that day. "I had a terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day when..."** When it's your turn to draw, I can help you write your message at the bottom of your page.

## 3 Guided Practice

**Now it is your turn.** Transition to tables and pass out materials and the Draw and Write sheets to the students. Read prompt: **What happened when you had a terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day?**

As you walk around supporting students, help each student write a summary sentence in the space provided at the bottom of the page.

### SCAFFOLDING SUPPORT

Less Support:

- Restate the original question.
- Ask the student to label him/herself.
- Ask the student what's happening in the picture so far.
- Give encouragement: You can draw it.

More Support:

- Ask questions:
  - What day are you thinking about?
  - What else happened that day?
  - Who was with you?
  - Where were you?

## 4 Summarize

**Everyone has terrible, horrible, no good, very bad days sometimes, even in Australia, or like Alexander. As Alexander's mom says, some days are like that. It may help to talk to someone about it, or draw and write about it, and sometimes it just takes time. Know that you are not alone.**

### Teacher Tips

- Be sensitive to what students and their families have experienced. If students feel uncomfortable drawing their own bad day, perhaps have them draw something that happened to someone else they know.
- Students may have varying experiences with Hurricane Harvey and flooding, or other traumatic events. Refer students to a professional social worker or psychologist if needed.
- Consider reading another book related to feelings and caring for others:
  - *The Way I Feel* by Janan Cain
  - *Caring* by Isabel Thomas
  - *Owen* by Kevin Henkes
  - *The Kissing Hand* by Audrey Penn
  - *The Rainbow Fish* by Marcus Pfister

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



**What happened when you had a terrible,  
horrible, no good, very bad day?**

Take dictation: