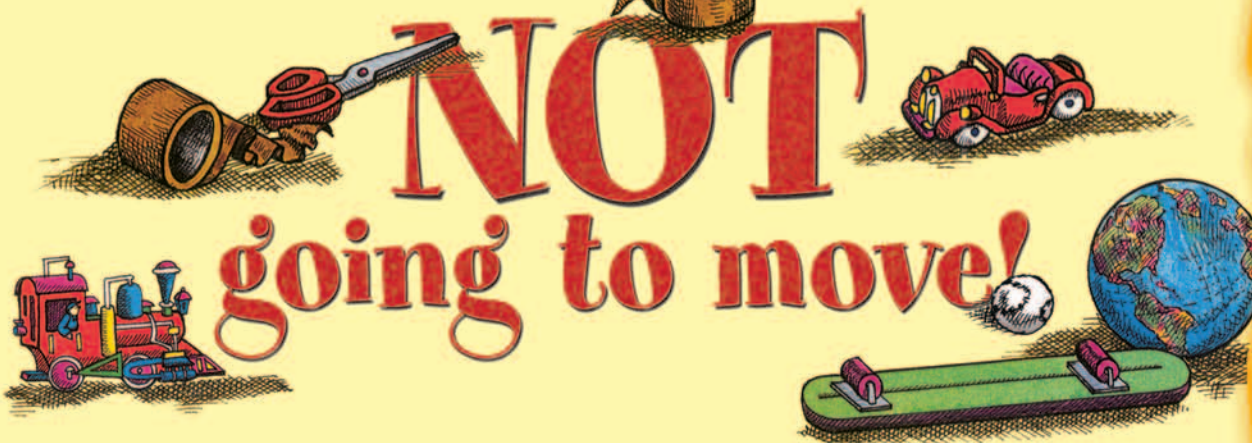
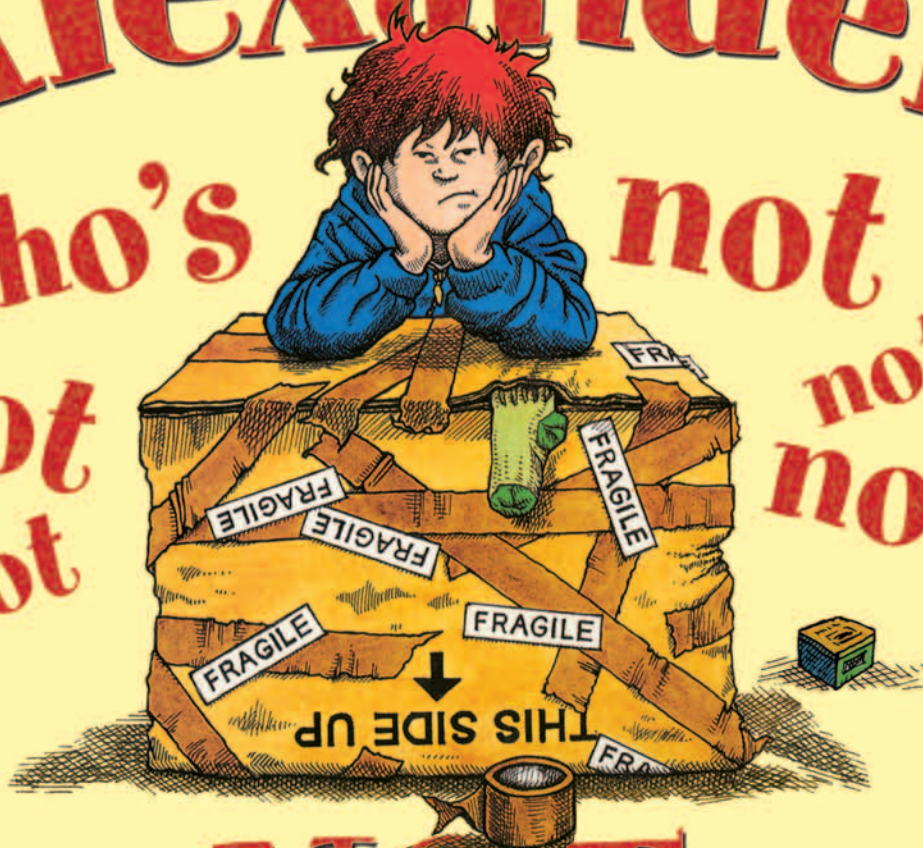


Alexander, who's not not not not not



NOT going to move!

A Musical

**Book and Lyrics by
Judith Viorst**

**Music by
Shelly Markham**

Welcome to *Cuesheet*, a performance guide published by the Education Department of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Washington, D.C. This *Cuesheet* is designed to help teachers prepare students to see the performance of *Alexander, Who's Not Not Not Not Not Going to Move*.

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Illustrations by
Robin Preiss Glasser

What is the Musical About?

Listening, Analyzing

Synopsis

Explain to students that Alexander is a musical – a story told with words, songs, and action.

Read the following synopsis of the musical twice to students.

First read it without interruption. Ask students to identify Alexander’s problem and how he tries to solve that problem.

On the second reading, at places marked with an asterisk (*), invite students to say the line, “Alexander is not, not, not, do you hear him, NOT going to move!”

“Alexander has a big problem. His father has a new job in another city 1,000 miles away and the family must move. Alexander feels both sad and angry. Alexander’s parents plead with him and his two brothers tease him, but Alexander refuses to move. *

“Alexander does not want to leave all the people and places he knows so well. So, he comes up with plans to avoid moving away. * His first plan is to move in with one of his three neighbors. But, this plan doesn’t work. Next he decides to live by himself in a tent. But this plan does not work either. Finally, Alexander tries to hide so that his parents will not be able to find him. But this plan, like the others, does not work. *

“With the movers waiting right outside Alexander’s bedroom door, * Alexander’s parents offer him some special things that will make it easier to leave. Even Alexander’s brother offers some help. Most importantly, mother helps Alexander understand that he is not really leaving home – that ‘home’ is where his family is.

“In the end, Alexander packs his things, but, he tells everyone that he will ‘not, not, not, not, do you hear me, ever move AGAIN!’”

How can I fix it so I don’t have to move?
– Alexander



Recalling, Analyzing

Character List

A six-year-old boy	Alexander
Alexander’s older brothers	Nick Anthony
Alexander’s parents	Mom Dad
Alexander’s friends	Paul Audrey Albert
Neighbors	Mr. and Mrs. Baldwin and their dog Swoozie Mr. Rooney and his six daughters Mr. and Mrs. Oberdorfer
Storekeepers	Seymour, the cleaner Mr. Friendly, the grocer
Alexander’s babysitter	Rachel

After the performance, ask students to recall the characters and talk about what role each played in helping or hindering Alexander’s efforts to solve his problem.

Actors Pretend

Communication, Oral Language

Becoming a Character

Explain that in the musical, actors pretend to be characters. Tell students that in this activity, they, too, will pretend to be a character and speak lines from the musical.

Group students in pairs and assign them lines from the list below to perform for each other. To show how the character feels, students may change their voice (e.g., speaking loudly, softly, gruffly) and use facial expression and gestures.

After rehearsing, invite students to share their interpretations. Discuss how well lines were communicated and why.

Alexander: My dad is packing. My mom is packing. My brothers Nick and Anthony are packing. I'm not packing. I'm not going to move.

Alexander: My big brothers...making fun of me. Bossing me around. I hate big brothers.

Alexander: Maybe I could stay here and live by myself, BY MYSELF, in maybe a tree house, or maybe a cave or maybe a tent. That's it! A tent!

Mother: Home is where your family is, Alexander... where you're with the people who love you best of all.

Creativity, Flexibility

Costume Changes Help Actors Pretend

Materials required: simple costume pieces such as hats, scarves, wigs, vests, and eyeglasses

Explain to students that many actors in the musical “double.” This means the same actor pretends to be more than one character. Also explain that each time an actor becomes another character, the actor puts on a different costume piece.

Demonstrate a simple costume change as you speak these lines from the musical:

Father: I have big news. I'm starting a new job in a new city.

Alexander: That's not big news. That's bad news!

Invite students to choose one costume piece for Alexander and one for his father. Then ask students to say these or other improvised lines, changing costume pieces as they change characters.

Before the performance, remind students to watch for how the actors use simple costume changes to signal that they have become different characters.

After the performance, ask students to recall how the costume changes helped them identify each character.

Brainstorming, Characterization

Woof, Woof

Explain to students that in the musical, one actor pretends to be Swoozie, the dog. Brainstorm a list of things dogs do (e.g., dogs play catch, they jump up on people). Invite students to take turns pretending to be a dog. After, ask students to analyze which actions were most “dog-like.”

Before the performance, remind students to watch for how an actor pretends to be a dog.

After the performance, invite students to share their observations.



Actors Sing

Listening, Recalling, Comprehending

Songs

Tell students that the musical *Alexander* is told with the help of seven songs. Each song title below is followed by the name of the character(s) who sings the song. After the performance, invite students to recall the songs and talk about which were their favorites and why.

Song	Sung by
Not Going to Move	Alexander and Ensemble Actors
Girls Can Do Anything	Mr. Rooney
What Will They Say?	Nick and Anthony
When I'm Big and They're Small	Alexander
They'll Make You	Audrey, Alexander's friend
A Dog's Best Friend Is Her Boy	Swoozie, the dog
And We Call it Home	Mother
Not Going to Move (reprise)	Alexander, Parents, Ensemble



Writing, Oral Language

Not Going to Move

Read aloud a verse (below) from Alexander's song "Not Going to Move." Ask students to listen for the things Alexander says you could do to try to make him move.

Not Going to Move (sung by a defiant Alexander)

I'm not going anywhere.
You could tickle me to pieces.
You could pull out all my hair.
You could throw me in the water
With a sharp-toothed shark.

You could turn off all the lights and
Leave me in the scary dark.
You could drop a spider down my underwear (Oh, yuck!)
But I'm not — Do you hear me? I mean it! Going to move.

Reread the song lyrics and point out the repetition of the words, "you could."

Lead the class in filling in the blanks for another verse:

Not Going to Move (sung by a defiant Alexander)

I'm not going anywhere.
You could _____.
You could _____.
You could _____.
With a _____.

You could _____ and
Leave me in the _____.
You could drop a _____ down my _____ (Oh, yuck!)
But I'm not — Do you hear me? I mean it! Going to move.

Invite students to recite both sets of lyrics. Students may also plan gestures for each line.

Before the performance, remind students to listen for the other verses in Alexander's song.

After the performance, invite students to talk about their reactions to Alexander's song.

From Book to Musical



Predicting, Brainstorming

Expanding the Story

Tell students that the musical is based on the book by Judith Viorst.

Explain:

- “Based on” means that the musical is not exactly like the book.
- In the musical, Viorst expanded the events described on each page of the book by imagining what might happen next.

Tell students they will work like Viorst and imagine how some events from her book might be expanded for the musical. Read three quotations from Viorst’s book:

Alexander: I maybe could stay here and live with the Baldwins. They’ve got a dog. I always wanted a dog.

Alexander: I maybe could stay here and live with the Rooneys. They’ve got six girls. They always wanted one boy.

Alexander: I maybe could stay here and live with Mr. and Mrs. Oberdorfer. They always give great treats on Halloween.

Tell students that something happens at each house that causes Alexander to decide NOT to move in with them. Brainstorm with students what might have happened to make Alexander change his mind about staying with each neighbor. Re-read the quotations for clues.

After the brainstorming, ask students to discuss which ideas they like best and why. Invite students to write about or draw some of their invented scenes.

Before the performance, remind students to watch for how their ideas compare with Viorst’s.

Compare and Contrast

From Page to Stage

After the performance, read to students Viorst’s book, *Alexander Who’s Not (Do you hear me? I mean it!) Going to Move*. Lead a discussion to compare and contrast the book and the musical.

FYI for Teachers: Adaptation

In an interview, author Judith Viorst explains the process she used in adapting her book into the musical: “Working my way line by line through my picture book, I took scenes described in a single sentence and fleshed them out with dialogue and action, pausing at appropriate moments for one or more people to burst into a song that elaborated upon what was going on.”

Learning from Alexander

When Judith Viorst expanded the book's events for the musical, she took the opportunity to explore a variety of significant themes for young children.

Recall, Analyze

How Will You Be Remembered?

Explain to students that in the musical Alexander worries about how his friends and neighbors will remember him after he has gone. He recalls some of the not-so-good things he did—like breaking a window at the store. And, with his mother's help, he also recalls the good things he did—like winning a sack race.

Invite students to draw or write about both the not-so-good and good things they have done that might be remembered by friends and neighbors.

Fantasy/Reality

Big Brothers Tease

Tell students that in the musical, Alexander's older brothers, Nick and Anthony, are mean and tease him.

Tell students that Alexander sings about how things would be different if he were bigger than his two older brothers. Explain that this is a fantasy, because it really won't happen.

Invite students to imagine changing places with a bigger brother or sister. If they were bigger, how would they treat their brother or sister? Invite students to draw or talk about their ideas.

Before the performance, remind students to listen for Alexander's song, "When I'm Big and They're Small." After the performance, discuss Alexander's fantasy.

Analyzing, Writing, Oral Language

Home is Where...

Before the performance, lead a discussion about the meaning of "home." Help students distinguish "home," where you feel you belong, from "house" or "apartment," the place where you live. Tell students that Alexander's mother teaches him "home is where your family is...where you're with the people who love you best of all."

Invite students to complete the sentence, "Home is where..." If appropriate, offer the following examples from Alexander's Mother's song, "And They Call It Home":

Home is where... they'll listen to your story.
Home is where... they'll always take you in.
Home is where... supper is waiting.

Combine students' completed sentences into a poem and lead students in its recitation.

Symbols, Evaluation

Alexander Needs a Good Audience

A reproducible page (page 7) is provided to help students understand their role as audience members. Copy and distribute the page to students. If necessary, explain how to use the rebus key. Invite students to decipher the message and read it aloud to another student.

Explain to students that although they are expected to be quiet and attentive during the performance, there are times they will be invited to participate by saying some lines. Remind students to watch and listen carefully to know when to participate.

After the performance, invite students to evaluate the extent they, and other classes attending, were a good audience.

Alexander Needs a Good Audience

Key



actors



audience



clap



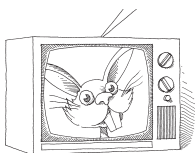
laugh




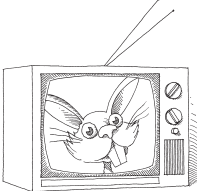

listen

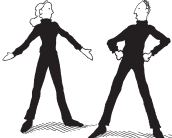










look


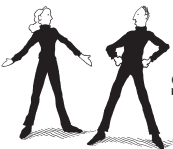



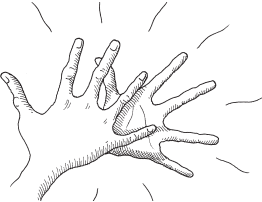
television

When you  at a performance, it is different from watching a  show. At a performance, you are in the same room as the .

The  are aware of what you, the  do.  can do their best when the

people in the   and  quietly.  at the .  for their costume

changes.  for what the  say and the songs they sing. At funny moments, it is okay to

. If you enjoy the performance,  when it ends.

More about Alexander



Science: Observation

I'm in a Pickle

Materials: whole and sliced pickles and cucumbers, one slice of each, per student.

Tell students that in the musical, there is a large barrel in Mr. Friendly's grocery store. The barrel is filled with pickles. Explain that many pickles are made from thin cucumbers stored in salt water (brine) or vinegar. Explain, too, that putting food in brine is a method of preservation called pickling. Pickling keeps food from spoiling by preventing bacteria growth.

Using your food samples, invite students to compare a cucumber and a pickle – how they look and how they taste. Students may also draw or list the pickle and cucumber's attributes.

Comprehension and Analysis

Remembering Alexander

After the performance, discuss the following:

- What did each character want? (refer to list of characters, page 2)
- Which songs were your favorites? Why? (refer to list of songs, page 4)
- Although Alexander's problem is a serious one, there are many funny moments in the musical. What moments were funny? Why did Judith Viorst use humor?
- What was it like to be part of the audience at a theater performance? Compare/contrast the experience to watching television.

FYI for Teachers: Judith Viorst

Judith Viorst (1931–) is author of several works of fiction and nonfiction for adults as well as children. A graduate of Rutgers University and the Washington Psychoanalytic Institute, she is the recipient of various awards for her journalism and psychological writings. Viorst has collaborated with Shelly Markham on a musical for adults and, through a Kennedy Center commission, has continued the collaboration to create two musicals for children based on her Alexander books. Viorst has three grown sons – Nick, Anthony, and Alexander – for whom she named the brothers in her Alexander books. Viorst lives in Washington, D.C.

Resources

You and your students may want to...

read:

Viorst, Judith. *Alexander, Who's Not (Do you hear me? I mean it!) Going to Move*. NY: Aladdin Paperbacks, 1995.

Other children's books by Viorst:

The Tenth Good Thing About Barney (1971); *The Alphabet from Z to A* (1994); *Alexander, Who Used to Be Rich Last Sunday* (1978); *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day* (1972); *If I Were in Charge of the World and Other Worries* (1984); *Sad Underwear and Other Complications* (2000).



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Alexander, Who's Not Not Not Not Not Going to Move

A Musical
Book and Lyrics by Judith Viorst
Music by Shelly Markham
Directed by Nick Olcott

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Cuesheet

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