



Alexander's Amazing Adventures

Classroom Discussion Guide

Unselfishness and Sensitivity

Part 1

- What was Alexander doing in PE class? (*an obstacle course*)
- If Alexander improved his time, what would happen? (*he would receive an A in class and set a new school record*)
- How does Fred feel about doing the obstacle course? (*scared and doesn't think he can get over the wall*)
- What is "empathy"?
- Why is it important to think about how others feel?
- Let's say you are on the bus with some girls from your class on the way home from school. Emma started talking about her birthday party on Saturday. Jada said she loved magic and was so excited to see the magician that was coming. Mei said she liked the cute invitation Emma had given her. As the other girls talked, it seems like you were the only girl in her class who had not received an invitation to Emma's party. How would you feel? Let's say Emma's mom had told her she could only invite eight girls and since she didn't know you very well, she hadn't chosen to invite you. How could Emma have been more sensitive?

Part 2

- When Fred and Alexander get to the wall of the obstacle course, what does Fred ask Alexander? (*to help him get over the wall*)
- How does Alexander respond to Fred? (*tells him to stop whining*)
- A large army of Erodians were marching. Where were the Erodians going? (*to move in with the Inlanders and take their food*)
- What was Ellinore doing? (*warning the Inlanders*)
- What does it mean to be unselfish?
- What is the opposite of unselfish?
- Let's say you came home from a birthday party with a bag of candy. Before the party, you heard your little brother and sister telling your mom that they were sad they didn't get to go to a party. What's an example of something you could do that would not be sensitive? What could you do that would be sensitive and unselfish?

Part 3

- Who is Speck? (*an Inlander boy*)
- Who did Alexander and Ellinore think Speck was? (*a traitor that was helping the Erodians*)
- How were the Erodians able to capture Ellinore? (*Alexander and Ellinore were fighting over berries*)
- What does it mean to be sensitive? What is sensitivity?
- What is the opposite of sensitive? (*insensitive, tactless, blunt, unfeeling, uncaring, rude, selfish...*)
- Let's say your little sister worked hard on drawing a picture that she was very proud of. When you got home from basketball practice, your sister ran to the door to show you her picture saying, "Look at this cool picture I drew!" You were tired and in a hurry and really didn't think the picture was anything special so you pushed the picture out of the way and said, "I'm not sure what you were

trying to draw there. I need a little space, OK?” How do you think your sister would feel? How could you have been more sensitive?

Part 4

- What was Ellinore’s quest? (*to warn the people of Garden Glen about the Erodians*)
- What was Alexander’s quest? (*to awaken in the Inlanders’ hearts the value of unselfishness and sensitivity*)
- What did the Lightkeeper tell Alexander to do with the berries? (*rub them in his hair*)
- What was Alexander supposed to do after that? (*find the Erodian advance party*)
- How do you feel when you are selfish or insensitive?
- How do you feel when you are unselfish or sensitive?
- Is it hard to be unselfish and sensitive? Why?
- Let’s say you love playing trucks. When your friend comes over to your house, you play with trucks for a long time. Then your friend says they want to play superheroes. Your friend wants to be the superhero and wants you to be the villain. You don’t feel like playing superheroes and do NOT want to be the villain. You say, “That’s a stupid idea! I’m not going to play superheroes.” How could you have been more unselfish and sensitive?

Part 5

- What is the one thing that Erodians can’t stand? (*garlic*)
- Who warned the people of Garden Glen about the Erodians? (*Speck*)
- What did the people of Garden Glen do? (*welcomed the Erodians with garlic*)
- Why did the Erodians leave the city of Garden Glen? (*They didn’t like garlic*)
- What are some unselfish and sensitive things you see your teachers do for you? Your parents? Your siblings? Your friends?
- Let’s say you had your heart set on being in the school play but you didn’t make it. You came home from school looking pretty sad. What sensitive things could your parents or friends say to you? What could people say to you that wouldn’t be sensitive?

Part 6

- What does Alexander decide to do about Fred? (*helps Fred get over the wall*)
- What are some examples of people being insensitive or selfish in Alexander’s adventure?
- What were some examples of people being sensitive or unselfish?
- Let’s say you get a doll house for Christmas. You take very good care of it and all the little furniture pieces and dolls that came with it. Your little sister sometimes goes into your room when you’re at school and messes around with the doll house, which makes you worried. You don’t want any of the pieces to be lost or broken. How could you protect your doll house while being unselfish and sensitive to your sister? How could your sister be sensitive to you?

Unselfishness and Sensitivity Activities and Discussion

Try these activities and discuss the values of unselfishness and sensitivity. Think about and discuss what makes a person unselfish and sensitive.

Empathy Game

Go through a book or magazine with your class and work together to try to describe how various people in various pictures might be feeling. This can start on a physical level as you try to imagine what she sees and hears, whether he is cold or warm, and so forth. Then try to go beyond the physical and speculate how she or he might feel emotionally. For older students, you could give each student a picture to look at for one minute, writing down notes about how the person in the picture might be feeling physically and emotionally. Then have each child give a one-minute speech about their observations and what they might do if they encountered a person in the situation depicted.