



Alexander and the Wind-Up Mouse

Leo Lionni

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Everyone loves Willy the wind-up mouse, while Alexander the real mouse is chased away with brooms and mousetraps. Wouldn't it be wonderful to be loved and cuddled, thinks Alexander, and he wishes he could be a wind-up mouse too. In this gentle fable about a real mouse and a mechanical mouse, Leo Lionni explores the magic of friendship.

Originally published in 1969, the Caldecott Honor-winning *Alexander and the Wind-up Mouse* is sure to enchant a whole new generation of readers.

Alexander and the Wind-Up Mouse Details

Date : Published November 12th 1969 by Knopf Books for Young Readers

ISBN : 9780394809144

Author : Leo Lionni

Format : Hardcover 40 pages

Genre : Childrens, Picture Books, Animals

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From Reader Review Alexander and the Wind-Up Mouse for online ebook

Luisa Knight says

A good lesson that shows the grass is not always greener on the other side.

Ages: 4 - 8

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Emily says

Alexander and the Wind-Up Mouse is told from the point of view of the day in the life of a mouse. Throughout the entire story images are displayed in proportion to the typical size of a mouse which provides the reader with a reasonable understanding for how a mouse views life. The pictures in this story vary in how they were displayed. At times there may have been only two or three items on a page which then left a lot of empty white space and seemed somewhat boring. Other times, however, the illustrator took advantage of the space and used it to the fullest covering every spot possible. The color patterns that were used in this book were also quite interesting. In the beginning many of the colors that were being used were different tones of browns, reds, and yellows. As the story continued colors then started to change into cooler blues, blacks, and greens until eventually there was a burst of bright colors which definitely caught my attention. It was also noticeable that the Lionni never fully colored a page completely. He always had a white bubble around his text which made it easy to find and to focus on.

Reggie Virus says

A cute little story about friendship. Why am I only now reading this <3

Nadya says

Review: This is a great book about friendship. Alexander being a real mouse becomes friends with Willy the wind-up mouse even though they are different. This book has a great meaning and at the end both mice are happy, which makes it a good ending. Alexander and the Wind-Up Mouse book can show children what others will do for friends.

Learning Experience: After reading *Alexander and the Wind-Up Mouse*, talk about what the moral of this book was, wishing. Have the students write down three things that they would wish for. The students would get into groups of four and talk about their wishes to the group. This will give them an opportunity to make friends and talk about their wishes and how they could help make their classmates' wishes come true.

Jon Gustafson says

This book tells the story of Alexander the mouse and his desire to be transformed into a wind-up mouse by the magical lizard in the bush. Alexander wants to be loved as a wind-up toy rather than hunted with mouse traps and chased with brooms. The illustration is full of powerful textures and shows readers what the world looks like from a mouse's perspective. Alexander changes his mind and decides to ask the lizard to transform his friend Willy the wind-up mouse into a real mouse instead because Willy is about to be thrown out with old toys. The book resolves with Alexander and Willy (now a real mouse) dancing as best friends. The message: don't try to be something else just to be loved - be yourself.

Phil Jensen says

Neat! A fun little story about a mouse that befriends a toy windup mouse, containing a nice message cautioning against envy. My favorite part was the lizard.

Sarah Sammis says

Leo Lionni was a Dutch artist who grew up in Italy but fled to the United States at the outbreak of WWII. There he worked as a graphic artist and illustrator for *Fortune Magazine*. He returned to Italy in the 1960s where he began a new career as the writer and illustrator of children's literature. One of his earliest books is *Alexander and the Wind-Up Mouse*.

Alexander and the Wind-Up Mouse is an old childhood favorite of mine. Alexander is a mouse who lives in the wall of a home that has a little girl. One of her favorite toys is a wind up mouse named Willy. Alexander and Willy strike up a friendship that is slowly tainted by Alexander's jealousy over Willy's popularity. In the end though Alexander comes to rescue of Willy.

For the choice of a wind-up mouse and for the theme of the transformational powers of love, I am reminded of Russell Hoban's novel *The Mouse and His Child*. Lionni's book is a nice introduction to the much longer children's novel.

Leo Lionni's illustrations are similar to Eric Carl's. My children also have *A Color of His Own*, a book I'm surprised I haven't reviewed on this blog.

Alexis Caudill says

1. Book summary, in your own words (3 pts)

Alexander and the Wind-Up Mouse is a Caldecott Honor Book. It is about a mouse named Alexander who is really quite lonely and does not understand why the humans are so mean towards him. He meets a wind-up mouse named Willy who is the child's toy. He is treated the exact opposite from Alexander. Alexander wants to be just like his friend, Willy. He is informed of a way to do so, but will Alexander do it?

2. Grade level, interest level, lexile (1 pt)

This would be a cute little book for grades Kindergarten to 2nd. It is very interesting and has a great moral behind it. The words are easy to read, but there are also quite a few words on each page.

3. Appropriate classroom use (subject area) (1 pt)

I would read this book aloud to my class as a part of reading and/or story time. It would also be good to use it as a way to get the students to think about the meaning behind the story.

4. Individual students who might benefit from reading (1 pt)

Students who love animals and friendship would love this book.

5. Small group use (literature circles) (1 pt)

I could use this book in literature circles to see where my students are at with words (more for 2nd grade).

6. Whole class use (read aloud) (1 pt)

For my Kindergarten and 1st graders, I would definitely read this book to them as a class and come up with an activity to go with it.

7. Related books in genre/subject or content area (1 pt)

Frederick by Leo Lionni

A Color of His Own by Leo Lionni

Fish is Fish by Leo Lionni

8. Multimedia connections (audio books, movie) available (1 pt)

I found an ebook, audiobook, and lots of different Youtube videos of people reading this story.

Jennifer B. says

I love rodent heroes and I enjoyed this story.

Jacklyn says

Alexander and the Wind-Up Mouse by Leo Lionni is a book about how Alexander the mouse made his first friend. Alexander was driven off and disliked by everyone at first. Then he met a wind-up mouse who, unlike him, was the favorite of everyone. He searched for a purple pebble so the magic lizard could turn him into a likable wind-up toy. On his way searching, he discovered that the wind-up mouse was abandoned by its owner. In the end, he decided not to turn himself into a toy; instead, he asked the lizard to turn the wind-up mouse into a real mouse. And that was how the two mice lived happily together.

The story contains good morals. It tells children that we should not try to change ourselves to please others. Even though one may be alone for some time, eventually, he or she will find a company if they never give up. The story was sometimes completed by the pictures. For example, when Alexander finally found the purple pebble the lizard asked for, he also saw the wind-up mouse was left in the box where the old toys were put in. The word only tells that Alexander found the pebble but doesn't tell anything about the wind-up mouse. The readers can only see that in the picture beside. The pictures are very cute and like paper-tear.

With some magical elements in it, the book is really good for early readers.

Asa Jacobs says

This book is a great story of friendship between a real mouse and a toy mouse. Alexander was a mouse who wanted a few crumbs from the kitchen, but was always chased away. One day he meets another mouse that was a little different. The other mouse was named Willy, he was a wind-up toy mouse. Willy was loved by the family and even got to sleep in bed with other toys. Alexander wanted to be loved by the family too, so he found a lizard who can turn him into a toy mouse. The boy in the family was having a birthday and this meant that old toys would be thrown out. So Alexander had the lizard turn Willy into a real mouse and they lived happily ever after.

This book is wonderfully illustrated with collages which really add to the story. Alexander encounters many challenges throughout the story but the real solution was under his nose the whole time. This is a triumphant story of friendship which provides children with great examples of what true friends are.

Deena Lerner says

Alexander is a mouse who is full of adventure. He isn't like your ordinary mouse. He is a mouse that wants love and affection. He becomes a resident in a young girl's house and befriends another mouse named Willy. Willy isn't just any ordinary mouse; he is a wind-up mouse. Throughout the story Willy and Alexander talk to each other and tell each other the amazing stories about their days. While Willy and Alexander become friends, Alexander wants to become a wind-up mouse like Willy. Alexander finds out about the Magic Lizard who can change animals into another animal. Alexander goes on the journey to find the special item the Magic Lizard asks for. While Alexander embarks on this journey he finds Willy in a box with other toys to be thrown away. When time comes for Alexander to turn in his special item he realizes that he didn't want to be a wind-up mouse anymore, yet he wants to help save his friend Willy.

Alexander reminds me of how I am today. I am very compassionate toward my peers and any person that is apart of my life. He made me realize that it is okay to be selfish at times but in the end it's the big heart that matters. Alexander may be a small mouse, but he is a mouse with a mighty voice.

Alexander is a mouse that is not only full of imagination but has a kind heart. He shows compassion throughout the story and with the help of his friend Willy he is able to not only help himself but also help his friend. The illustrations on the pages captured my eye because they helped tell the story but also helped change the mood of every page. The vibrant colors on some pages drew my attention to what else was on the page except the text. The theme for this book is easily portrayed by Alexander's actions. The theme for this story is compassion and friendship. Alexander helps teach life lessons that may not always be clear. He shows that having a big heart for others can be beneficial not only to you as a person but as well as the people that surround you.

joanna Sondheim says

A slightly off beat fable, featuring Leo Lionni's grey and white collaged mice. The book is made entirely by collage, with gorgeous printed cutouts interspersing and his frequently used wide-eyed mice. Alexander is a mouse who is tired of constantly dealing with the shrieks and broom swats from the humans who's house he resides in. When he notices how beloved a wind-up toy mouse is to the young girl who lives there, he decides he wants to find a way to turn himself into a toy. A magic lizard in the forest tells him that if he brings him a purple pebble, he can transform him into a wind-up mouse. Alexander sets out and finds the pebble nestled near a box of discarded toys. One of those toys is the same wind-up mouse that had previously been so loved. Struck by this, Alexander decides to use the lizard's magic to transform the wind-up mouse into a real one like himself, and the result is that upon his return home, he finds a new friend, Willy, waiting for him.

Rebecca McNutt says

I think it's funny how this book could be taken as a metaphor for real life these days. People are more interested in mechanical friendships than real ones. Depressing, but increasingly true. First released in 1969, *Alexander and the Wind-Up Mouse* is a short but very effective and lovable picture book about the deep value of friendship - and a not-so-nice portrait of the human world of materialism.

Alexander longs to be a wind-up toy mouse like Willy, the mechanical rodent whom everyone adores and loves to play with. After all, Alexander is a real mouse, and his life is riddled with hatred from people who see him as a pest. But does Willy the wind-up mouse really have a perfect life? That's where things get very sad. Alexander learns that a life controlled by people only to eventually be tossed away and left behind like garbage is no life at all. But can he help Willy and make a true friend in the process?

With beautiful collage illustrations and a powerful lesson akin to *The Velveteen Rabbit* about the way we treat our inanimate objects and the way we treat our friends, *Alexander and the Wind-Up Mouse* is just as timely today as ever and can still be enjoyed by today's generation of readers, both young and old alike. At times it's incredibly sad but there's a wonderful outcome at the end that's completely worth it.

Judy says

The magic of friendship? I see this more as a story about being satisfied with who/what you are. The real mouse wants to be like the wind-up toy, but then has a last minute change of heart. ([The Wizard of Willoughby Wallow](#) is better, but it targets a slightly older audience.)

Annie gets rid of many of her old toys, including the wind-up mouse, when she gets new ones for her birthday. That left me with the impression that old is bad and new is better. The wind-up mouse went from being a favorite toy that slept on her pillow to being a discard. Not an idea that I endorse.

The art is cluttered -- too many patterns. Patterns on dishes, wallpaper, blankets, bottles ... and what's with the bottles? Are they supposed to be wine bottles? I think they represent the kitchen but why wine bottles? The labels on the bottles aren't legible, which is fine, but the letters almost look Russian, which also connects with the matryoshka. Is there supposed to be a Soviet connection?

At first I gave this 3 stars, but the more I think about the story, the less I like it; hence the 2 star rating.
