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**Suggested Ages 4-8**

**Time: 45 min**

**Lesson:**

* Needs vs Wants
* Prioritizing spending decisions

Read the book aloud to the students. Pause at various points in the book to talk about the choices that Alexander makes.

**Questions to encourage discussion:**

How did Alexander get his money? What are some ways that you can earn money?

Do you think Alexander made a good or bad choice (for each one)? What was good about it? What was bad?

Do you think Alexander should have saved his money?

Do you think Alexander is an impulse buyer? (explain what impulse buying is…example- the gum and candy near the register at the grocery store)

What are the advantages of saving money rather than spending it?

When you are saving money, where is a safe place to keep it? (Talk about savings accounts and the basic differences between a bank and a credit union)

What are the advantages to having your money in an account rather than keeping it under your mattress or in your sock drawer? (it earns interest, less temptation to spend on “wants”, safety)

**Suggested Activity:**

1. Create a two-column table or use two different sheets of paper or poster board. You can have each student make their own or you can have large poster boards for the entire class to use together. Doing the activity together promotes more discussion. Label one “Needs” and the other “Wants”. As you read the book aloud, have the students decide if Alexander’s purchases are needs or wants and ask for volunteers to draw them on the appropriate chart. After the book, flip through a magazine. Browse the ads in the magazine and have them talk about some needs they might see people using and some wants. Have the students cut out various items and glue them on the appropriate pages (needs or wants) at the front of the class. Each time an item is presented, ask the class to vote on whether they think it is a need or a want, then discuss.

Materials needed:   
Magazines, scissors, glue, 2 large poster boards, marker

1. Have the students make their own piggy banks and challenge them to start saving all the change they find. Did you know that a study from a University found that people (on average) find about $40,000 in change, laying on the ground?? It may be a penny at a time but it adds up. Some people get a big water jug and save all of their change and then use it to buy Christmas gifts or to go on vacation!

Materials needed:

Various containers to use as piggy banks (Kleenex boxes, small milk jugs, plastic butter containers, etc.), scissors, markers

**Alexander Who Used to be Rich Last Sunday**

**Author: Judith Viorst**