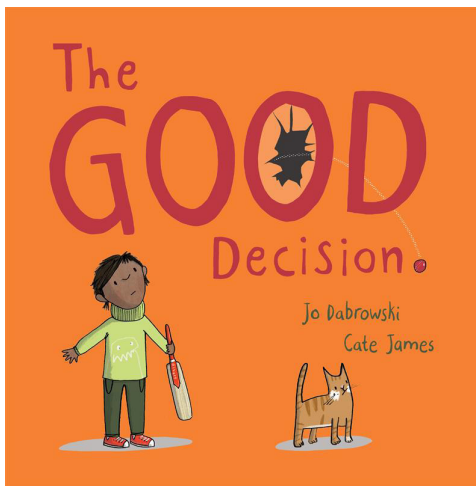


Teacher Notes

The Good Decision

Written by Jo Dabrowski and Illustrated by Cate James

Teacher notes prepared by Emma Egan (Pages to Classroom)



Publication details

Publisher: Affirm Press

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Reader ages: 3-7 years

colourful house filled with books.

About the Illustrator

Cate James is an illustrator, artist and author based in the beautiful Northern Beaches of Sydney, Australia. She moved here from Edinburgh, Scotland in 2015 and loves the sunshine. She has been working as a full-time freelance illustrator since 2010 and has a background in printmaking.

About the Book

Making good decisions is harder than it looks. Just ask Albert.

From the moment Albert wakes up, it's clear that today is not his day. Every decision he makes turns into yet another bad one. After a day jam-packed with disasters, Albert somehow manages to make one brilliant decision, and no one is more surprised than Albert himself. Nothing can possibly go wrong now ... can it?

A riotously funny picture book about the hilarious truth that we don't always get things right. And some days we never do.

About the Author

Jo Dabrowski is a children's author and bookseller who is passionate about children's literacy. Her titles include the middle-grade novel *Get Your Act Together*, Doris Kozlowski, (shortlisted for the 2024 Readings Prize) and *The Making of Martha Mayfield* (CBCA Notable 2026), as well as the hugely popular picture book, *Dear Broccoli* (CBCA Shortlist 2026). Jo lives in Melbourne with her husband and two boys in a very

Curriculum Connections

Early Years Learning Framework V2.0 & Australian Curriculum V9.0

EYLF V2.0

- Outcome 1
- Outcome 3
- Outcome 5

Foundation

- AC9EFLE01
- AC9EFLE02
- AC9EFLE05
- AC9EFLY02
- AC9EFLY05

Year 1

- AC9E1LE01
- AC9E1LE02
- AC9E1LE05
- AC9E1LY02
- AC9E1LY05

Year 2

- AC9E2LE01
- AC9E2LE02
- AC9E2LE05
- AC9E2LY02
- AC9E2LY05

Why Teach This Book?

Every child has made a decision they wish they could take back. Whether it's acting before thinking, trying to solve a problem in an unusual way or simply being curious, children will see a little of themselves in Albert.

This story opens up great conversations about the choices we make every day and what can happen because of them. While Albert's decisions often lead to humorous mishaps, the story gently reminds readers that mistakes are a normal part of learning. It encourages children to think about what they could do differently next time, without making them feel that getting things wrong is a failure.

The repetitive pattern throughout the book invites children to predict what might happen next, join in with the familiar phrase and use clues from the illustrations to make meaning. It also creates rich opportunities for discussion about problem-solving, responsibility and seeing situations from another person's perspective.

More than anything, this is a story that celebrates growth. It shows children that making good decisions isn't about getting everything right the first time – it's something we learn through experience. With plenty of humour and relatable moments, this book encourages thoughtful conversations while reminding children that every day brings another chance to make a good decision.

Teacher Tip

Read the story a second time without stopping. The first read is full of laughs, but the second read is where children begin to notice that Albert isn't trying to make bad decisions at all—he's trying to solve problems.

Themes

- Decision making – The choices we make every day.
- Learning from Mistakes – Growing through trial, error and reflection.
- Responsibility – Owning our actions and their outcomes.
- Family – The important role family plays in guiding

and supporting us.

- Humour – Using laughter to explore important life lessons.

Concepts

- Choices Have Consequences – Every decision leads to an outcome, whether expected or unexpected.
- Mistakes Help Us Learn – Making mistakes is a normal and valuable part of learning.
- Intentions Matter – A choice made with good intentions doesn't always have the expected result.
- Problem Solving – There are often many ways to approach the same problem.
- Reflection – Thinking about our choices helps us make better decisions in the future.
- Growth – Good decision-making develops with practice and experience.
- Perspective – Different people can see the same situation in different ways.

Rich Vocabulary

Word / Child-friendly meaning / Talk About It

Fiddly

- Tricky or awkward because it needs careful hands.
- Can you think of something that is fiddly to do?

Lonely

- Feeling sad because you are by yourself or don't have anyone to be with.
- Tell about a time that you felt lonely. What helped you feel better?

Blindfolded

- Having your eyes covered so you can't see.
- What activities would be much harder if you were blindfolded?

Brilliant

- Extremely good, clever or wonderful.
- Who has done something brilliant recently? What made it so brilliant?

Astounding

- So surprising or amazing that it's hard to believe.
- What is something you think is astounding? Why?

Obstacle

- Something that gets in the way or makes it harder to do something.
- Can you design an obstacle course in the playground or classroom?

Exhausting

- Making you feel very, very tired.
- What makes you so tired you just want to flop on the couch?

Decision

- A choice you make about what to do.
- What is one good decision you made today?

Story Stops

Pause at these points to encourage children to observe, predict, discuss and wonder as they read.

Story Stop 1 – Look Closely

When: After Albert wakes Bob and Mum says it was a bad decision.

Ask:

- What do you notice about Bob and Mum's faces? What do those little details tell you?

Teacher Tip

Give children plenty of time to look before they answer. They'll often spot the details that others have missed.

Story Stop 2 – Talk Together

When: After Albert tries to pour the milk.

Ask:

- Albert was trying to fix a problem. What else could he

have done?

Teacher Tip

You will probably hear lots of different ideas. Ask children to explain why they think their solution would work.

Story Stop 3 – Pause & Predict

When: After Albert wears the clothes that match Mum's shoes.

Ask:

- What do you think Albert will do next? Do you think he'll start making different choices?

Teacher Tip

There are no right or wrong predictions. The fun is hearing how children are using the clues from the story to make their guesses.

Story Stop 4 – Think Like the Author

When: After several family members repeat, "That was a bad decision."

Ask:

- Why do you think the author keeps repeating the same words throughout the story? How does it make the story funnier or more interesting?

Teacher Tip

Pause before reading the repeated line and see if the children join in. Afterwards, ask why they think the author chose to write it that way.

Story Stop 5 – Connect

When: After Albert isn't allowed to play with Cornelia.

Ask:

- Have you ever missed out on something because of a choice you made?

Teacher Tip

Model your own example first. It often gives children the confidence to share their own experiences.

Story Stop 6 – Wonder

When: After Albert decides to go to bed early and everyone agrees it was his best decision.

Ask:

- I wonder... has Albert changed, or has he always been trying to make good decisions?

Teacher Tip

Don't rush this conversation. Children often change their minds after listening to someone else's thinking.

Dialogic Questions – Before Reading

Picture Walk

- As we look through the illustrations, what do you notice about Albert? What kind of person do you think he is?
- What details do you notice about Albert's family and home? What do these tell you about his everyday life?

Wonderings

- I wonder why the book is called Albert's Bad Decisions. What do you think makes a decision 'bad'?
- I wonder if Albert really makes bad decisions, or if things just don't go the way he expects. What do you think?

Prediction

- Looking at the cover and title, what do you think might happen in this story? What makes you think that?
- Do you think Albert will learn something by the end of the story? What might it be?

Vocabulary

- What is a decision? Can you think of some decisions you've already made today?
- We often hear the words good choice and bad choice. Do you think every decision is one or the other, or can some choices be a little bit of both? Why do you think that?

Prior Experiences

- Tell us about a time that you made a decision that

didn't quite go to plan. What happened?

- Have you ever tried to help or solve a problem, but it didn't work out the way you expected? What did you learn from that experience?

Dialogic Questions – During Reading

Inference

- Albert keeps trying to solve problems in his own way. What do you think he is hoping will happen each time?
- Do you think Albert thinks these are good ideas? What makes you think that?

Illustrations

- Look closely at the illustrations. What extra details do they show that the words don't tell us?
- How do the characters' faces and body language help you understand what they are thinking or feeling?

Connections

- Has Albert reminded you of yourself or someone you know? What happened that was similar?
- Have you ever had an idea that seemed like a really good one at the time but didn't quite work out?

Prediction

- Albert has been told, "That was a bad decision," many times. What do you think he might do next?
- Do you think Albert will keep making the same kind of choices, or will something change? What makes you think that?

Wonderings

- I wonder why the grown-ups keep saying Albert has made a bad decision. Do you think they are always right?
- I wonder what Albert is learning about making decisions as the day goes on.

Dialogic Questions – After Reading

Reflection

- What do you think Albert learnt by the end of the story?
- If you could give Albert one piece of advice, what would you tell him?

Evaluation

- Do you think Albert's decisions were really 'bad', or was he just learning? Why do you think that?
- Did this story make you laugh or remind you of something? Tell us why.

Author's Purpose

- Why do you think the authors Jo Dabrowski and Cate James wrote this story? What do you think the authors wanted us to remember after reading the book?
- Why do you think the authors used so much humour to tell Albert's story?

Favourite Moment

- Which part of the story was your favourite? What made it stand out to you?
- Which decision do you think Albert learnt the most from? Why?

Extension Thinking

- If you could add one more page to the story, what decision would Albert make next?
- Do you think Albert will make better decisions tomorrow? Why or why not?

Learning Experiences

Take the story beyond the pages with these hands-on learning experiences.

Decision Makeover (Create)

Albert made lots of decisions that didn't quite go to plan. Choose one and give it a makeover! Draw or write about

a different decision Albert could have made and what might have happened next.

Challenge:

Would your new decision create a whole new page for the story?

Freeze Frame Decisions (Perform)

In pairs or small groups, act out one of Albert's decisions. Freeze just before the problem happens and let the audience become the decision makers. What should Albert do next?

Challenge:

Can your group act out two different endings to the same situation?

Decision Detectives (Investigate)

Become a decision detective! As you revisit the story, investigate each of Albert's choices.

- What was Albert trying to do?
- What happened?
- Was the outcome what he expected?

Decide whether each choice was helpful, risky, kind, creative or unexpected.

Challenge:

Can you find a decision that would fit into more than one category?

Decision Debate (Respond)

Was Albert really making bad decisions, or was he simply trying to solve problems?

Choose one decision and share your opinion. Listen to other ideas – you might even change your mind!

Challenge:

Can you use something from the story or illustrations to support your thinking?

Choices All Around Us (Explore)

Become a Decision Detective in your own classroom!

Look for good decisions people make during the day.

Talk about:

- Which choices help others?
- Which choices keep us safe?
- Which choices help us learn?

Create a class display called “Good Decisions Grow Here”

Challenge:

Can you think of a choice that fits into more than one group?

Book Check

Before You Close the Book...

- One idea I'll keep thinking about...
- One connection I made...
- One thing that surprised me...
- One question I still have...