

Case Study: **Alex**

Alex rolled over in bed and looked at his watch. It was 7:20am! He needed to leave the house by 7:35am to make the bus! He jumped up and ran downstairs.

"MOM! You didn't wake me up!" he yelled.

His mom was packing his lunch box. *"I did,"* she replied, *"but you must have gone back to sleep. Were you up late last night on your phone?"*

Alex had been. He had finally gotten off Youtube at midnight when he started falling asleep while watching videos. *"No!"*

"Well, here, I've already packed your lunch and made some toast for you to take to the bus stop with you." But Alex could barely hear her, because he was in the laundry room looking for a clean shirt. *"Doesn't anyone do laundry around here!?"*

"Here's a shirt, Alex," said Lucy. She was only four but holding up a shirt that was obviously dirty. *"Yeah, thanks a lot, Lucy,"* Alex said sarcastically.

Alex's Mom heard this and lost her patience. *"Listen, Alex,"* she said, more loudly and forcefully than she'd been speaking before, *"we've all got places to be! Just because you stayed up too late last night doesn't give you the right to make the house a war zone this morning, okay?"*

"Whatever," muttered Alex, grabbing his lunch and his toast from the counter.

At school, Alex made it to class on time. On the board, his teacher had written: *"Assignments due today."* Alex slumped into his seat. He had totally forgotten.

"I hate this class," he muttered out loud.

"Yeah, because you suck at it," said Ben, a popular boy who always annoyed Alex. Usually he could handle him, but today he felt heat building up inside his chest.

"Shut up, Ben." Alex replied.

"Did you even brush your teeth this morning? Your breath smells like stale cheetos." Ben and his buddies laughed louder this time.

Alex felt his cheeks burning. In his hurry to get to school, he had forgotten to brush his teeth. As his cheeks got more red, more people noticed and commented on how red he was getting, including a few of the girls. The heat in Alex's chest turned into a roaring fire. All of a sudden, his hand flew up and he smacked Ben

across the head.

"ALEX!" yelled Mr. Collins. Alex turned around and faced his teacher. *"Go to the office. Now!"*

Discussion Questions:

1. Describe the conflict(s) in this case study.
2. How are the characters handling the conflict? *Describe the facts.*
3. What are some of the stressors that lead up to the conflict?
4. What are some things that Alex could do differently going forward to manage stress and deal with conflict?