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# Activity Guide

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## That's Good! That's Bad!

### ABOUT THE STORY

A little boy's trip to the zoo with his parents turns into an adventure when his balloon lifts him into the air and then gets popped by a tree deep in the jungle. After falling into the river, the boy begins a series of "bad" and "good" encounters with several different animals, until finally a stork delivers him safely back to his parents.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Margery Cuyler's love of children and stories has inspired her to write over twenty children's books. She has worked as both an author and an editor for several publishing houses including a 21-year position as Editor-in-Chief of Holiday House, Inc. in New York City. Cuyler currently works at Marshall Cavendish and lives in Princeton, New Jersey with her husband, two sons, and two cats.

### ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

David Catrow's wacky artwork has been featured in over thirty children's books, and his editorial cartoons are syndicated in over 900 newspapers in the United States and Canada. Catrow majored in pre-med at Kent State and later worked as a paramedic for ten years, during which time he worked as a freelance artist. He lives in Ohio with his wife and children.

### INTRODUCING THE STORY

Ask the children if they've ever had an experience where something they thought would be a bad thing turned out to be a good thing, or vice versa. Explain that this story is full of unexpected twists and turns, as good things turn out to be bad, and bad things good.

### READING ACTIVITIES

#### Comprehension/Thinking Skills

- Where was the little boy when his parents bought him the red balloon? (zoo)
- What caused the boy's balloon to pop? (tree)
- What was the first animal he encountered? (hippo)
- What kind of animal returned him to his parents? (stork)
- Why was it a bad thing that the boy landed on the giraffe when he fell from the snake? (slid from giraffe and fell into quicksand)
- Who rescued him from the quicksand? (elephant)
- What six words follow each incident? ("Oh, that's bad. No, that's good!" Or the reverse)

#### Vocabulary

Review the meaning of each of these words with the group. Then ask volunteers to use the words in sentences.

prickly	giddyap	roly-poly	hippopotamus
squabbling	swampy	quicksand	

### CROSS-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

#### Language Arts/Science/Library Skills: Who's Who?

Divide the class into smaller groups – one for each animal featured in the story. Using the resources in the library, have each group research an animal from the book. Share 3-5 facts with the class, or write short reports using the information.

#### Social Studies/Geography: Where in the World?

Have students look up the countries where each of the animals featured in the book would be found in the wild. Give them a coloring sheet of the world's continents, and have them label the map to show where the animals would live.

#### Music and Movement: Walk Like the Animals

Discuss how the animals in the story move and communicate. Have children stand and form a circle. As you call out the names of the animals in the book one at a time, have the students move through the circle making the sound of the animal as they move the way the animal would move.

#### Science/Research Skills: Zoo News part 1

Have children research various real zoos (such as the Bronx Zoo or the San Diego Zoo). Where do the zoos get the animals? What humane measures are taken to keep the animals happy and healthy? Who takes care of the animals?

#### For Discussion/Critical Thinking: Zoo News part 2

Based on what they learn in the activity above, discuss whether keeping wild animals in zoos is a good thing or a bad thing. Tie in the "That's Good! That's Bad" idea with the book.

#### Language Arts/Creative Thinking: Good and Bad!

Play a word game with the children. Arrange them in a circle and have them go around taking turns making up examples of things that could be bad and good at the same time. For example, the first child would think of something bad (No television tonight) and the next child would need to think of a reason why that is good (I have time to play a game with my friend). Continue around the circle making up different examples.

#### Language Arts: Read Along With Me

Have students listen to the story again, only this time divide the group and have half chant "That's Good!" with the narrator, and the other half chant, "No, that's bad!" when appropriate. You may want a third group that can make the sound effects along with the narrator as well.

#### Art: The Places You Can Go

Remind students that a red balloon started the whole adventure for the boy in the book. Ask them to imagine a place they'd like a red balloon to fly them to and illustrate it. Be sure they include the red balloon in their pictures. Display on class bulletin board with the heading "The Places We Could Go!" or something similar.

### INTERNET ACTIVITY

Before you send children to do research using any of the keywords listed below, you may wish to try them yourself to be sure the sites are suitable.

#### Margery Cuyler

Children can use the author's name to learn more about this prolific author.

#### Animals

Students can use the names of any of the animals featured in the book to look up additional information about the particular animal.