

The Complete Adventures of Curious George

Curious George

Lower-Grade Activities

Balloon Flight: Where Will You Travel?

George gets to see his city from above as he accidentally grabs on to all the helium balloons. Teachers can encourage students to imagine a balloon journey for themselves and write or draw a description of their travels. You may want to combine this project with a map study and ask children to show on a map where they might travel on their balloon flight—either a map of your city or town or a map of the country. Children should be familiar with the map you use before doing this activity. You may even want to have children make their own maps of their travels! Display children's drawings and written description of their balloon journey along with the map they have created.

George's Balloons: Ten Balloons for Ten Favorites

Create a Curious George mural in a hallway or on a bulletin board that shows Curious George holding ten of his famous balloons. Each month, have children vote on their ten favorites in various categories (books, foods, places to visit, games, etc.) and post the results on your mural—one balloon per favorite thing.

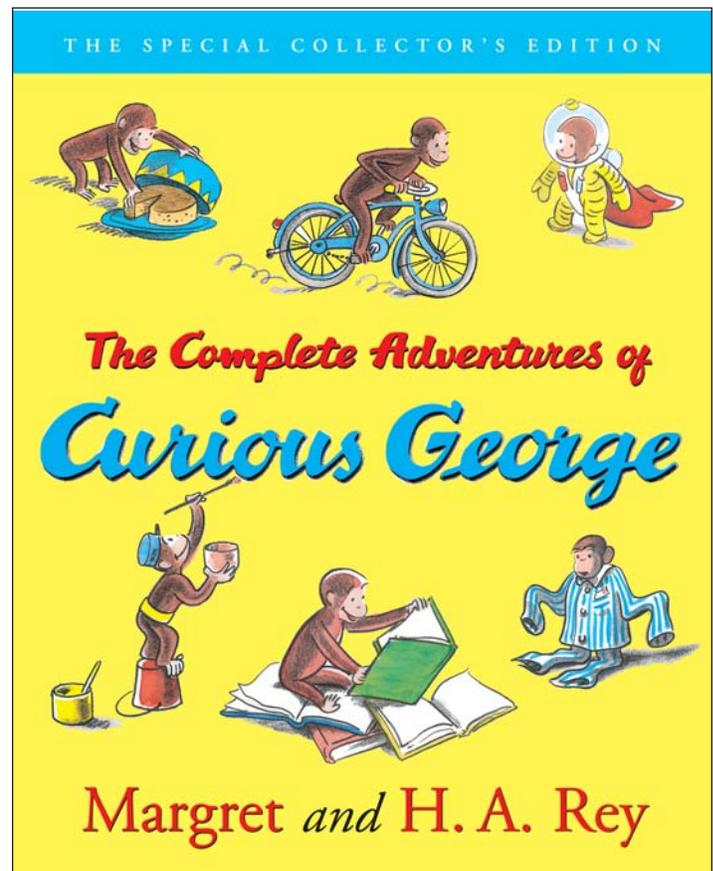
Zoo Favorites

Visit a local zoo with your class. You may choose to bring a copy of *Curious George* with you and see how many of the animals in George's zoo your students can find in your zoo! Tell your students to think hard about which animal exhibit is their favorite one. When you return to your classroom, have your students draw and write about this animal and why they have chosen it as their favorite.

Upper-Grade Activity

Zoo Study: Where Do We Come From?

When you visit animals in a zoo, one of the most interesting things to find out about them is where they lived before they lived in the zoo. George, for example, came from a jungle far away in Africa. Visit the zoo with your class. Ask each child to choose an animal and research its natural habitat. Then have each child write a story about their animal's journey to the zoo from their home. This can provide a wonderful opportunity for children to write creatively using real facts about their chosen animal.



Curious George Takes a Job

Lower-Grade Activities

Window Collage

When George has a job washing windows he gets to peek at lots of very different things—a little boy crying, a man sleeping, and so on. Using collage materials (with pre-cut window shapes) create a building collage. Then draw different scenes you might see if you were able to peek into those windows. A follow-up writing exercise might be to actually write little stories for each of the windows. This project can make a beautiful bulletin board display!

Your Dream Job

In this book, George gets to try out lots of different jobs. Young children will enjoy researching different jobs in your community. You may choose to invite parents into your class to talk about their jobs, and you may even choose to take neighborhood field trips in order to observe and interview community workers doing their jobs. Police and fire stations, post offices, bookstores, restaurants, and law firms are all good places to go. Then, ask students to imagine their own jobs. Have them write and draw about what they imagine themselves doing as adults.

Mapping Activity

When George escapes from the zoo, the people might have been able to look for him more efficiently if they had made a map of the zoo. Using what you know of zoos and what you see in the picture of the zoo in *Curious George's* world, make an illustrated map of his zoo to help follow George's tracks.

George in the Restaurant

Restaurant Study: George spends some time working in a restaurant. Visit a restaurant in your neighborhood with your class to research how restaurants work. You may want to set up a "restaurant center" in your class pretend center, if you work with young children. Discuss the different jobs that people have in restaurants. As a culminating activity, transform your class into a restaurant, invite the families, and have each child participate in serving, cooking, bussing, and so on. You may want to serve spaghetti, which causes George so much trouble in the book!

"Oh, No! I've Fallen In!": When George visits the restaurant, he accidentally gets himself all tangled up in the spaghetti he so enjoys eating. Imagine *you* fall into a pot of *your* favorite food. What would happen? What would you look like? How would it feel to eat your favorite food from right inside the bowl? Draw and write about your experience.

Curious George Rides a Bike

Lower-Grade Activity

Transportation Survey

George can get around much easier when he has his bike to help him. Do a survey of the children in your class—what kinds of transportation do they use to get to school? Make a graph collecting this information.

Upper- or Lower-Grade Activities

Origami Boats

Using the directions in the book, make your own fleet of boats out of newspaper. Make your boat unique by adding color and giving it a name. Write about your boat and its destination. Using mural paper, paint a river and attach the boats and the writing about them—this could be a nice bulletin board.

Water Table Activity

What floats and what sinks? George found out that he had to fold the newspaper into a boat shape to make it able to float down the river. Using various objects from the classroom, make predictions about what will float and what will sink. Are there materials that sink if they are in a certain shape but float if they are in another? Did anything surprise you? Do all heavy objects sink? Do all light objects float? Collect your observations as a class or individually. (This activity dovetails beautifully with the science unit on floating and sinking that is a part of many elementary science curricula. It can be adapted to fit the various levels of sophistication of lower- and upper-grade learners.)

Bike Safety

Invite a traffic officer or someone from the transportation department to come to your class and talk to your students about bike safety. Have your students create posters reminding other students to wear helmets, use their turn signals, and so on. Post them around the school!

A Job in the Circus

Curious George spends some time working in the circus. If *you* were to join the circus, what job would you like to have? Draw and write about your plans! Teachers may want to collect a basket of circus-themed books for your classroom library. Reading various circus books aloud and discussing/charting various circus jobs can be a wonderful way to prepare for this activity. If there is an opportunity for your class to take an actual field trip to a local circus as part of a circus study, children will be able to see performers doing their jobs in person!

Curious George Gets a Medal

Lower-Grade Activity

Letter Writing

Lots of people write notes and lists and letters in this book. We use letters to communicate with each other, just like George and Professor Wiseman did in *Curious George Gets a Medal*. This story can be a wonderful launching point for a study on various aspects of letter, list, and note writing. Writers write for many different reasons—young children especially love to see how their own writing is useful in the world. Practicing writing lists, letters, and notes is an excellent way for them to see that their writing has an effect on the world and produces real results (sometimes people even write back to you!).

Upper- or Lower-Grade Activities

Making Medals

Curious George gets a medal for being such a brave monkey. Discuss with your class why people are given medals (bravery, success in sporting events, academic success, humanitarian causes, etc.) and then do one or both of the following activities.

A Medal for You: Sometimes it is harder to think of things we think we deserve a medal for than it is to think about the good deeds of others. Have your students think of either an action or a quality for which they would like to honor themselves. You may want to model this for children to help them understand what you mean—for example, "I want to give myself a medal for always remembering to water my plants at home, and to put them out on the fire escape so they can catch some sun." It is helpful if you model relatively simple kindnesses or responsibilities so that children will see value in the small things they do, as well. Teachers provide students with cardboard circles with holes punched in them, along with string or ribbon so the medal can be worn by its recipient.

Give a Medal: In this book, George is given a medal for being very brave in the spaceship. Choose someone you know to whom you'd like to give a medal. Teachers provide students with cardboard circles with holes punched in them, along with string or ribbon so the medal can be worn by its recipient.

Visiting the Museum

Curious George has a very eventful trip to the museum. He is so curious about everything he sees, he just can't keep himself from touching the exhibits! George gets himself in a scrape during his museum visit, but he also learns a lot. Before you visit a local museum with your class, tell them that although they will certainly not be getting in scrapes like George's, they will have a chance to follow their curiosity like George did. George seems to enjoy the dinosaur exhibit best. When you return from your museum visit, ask your students to draw and write about their favorite exhibit. Why did they choose that particular exhibit? What did they learn that they did not know before they visited the museum?

Curious George Flies a Kite

Upper- or Lower-Grade Activities

The View from My Window

Curious George spends a lot of time gazing out his window while the man with the yellow hat is away. He loves to notice all the details about what he sees, and he loves to think about what the people and animals he sees are doing. Teachers can ask students to describe the view from their own favorite windows—this could be a window at home or a window at school or a window in a favorite relative's home. This activity can provide teachers with a wonderful opportunity to teach the idea of using detail in our descriptions of places. When they have finished writing, children can draw the view they have described in words!

Making a Kite

This activity could be as simple or elaborate as a teacher wishes. It could involve studying what makes kites fly and launching a kite-building project in which students are encouraged to design kites with the idea that they will actually fly them. It could also be more symbolic—a drawing of a kite to be posted on the bulletin board with a story about where you would fly with it if you could fly like George does in this book.

Taking Care of Class Pets

At the beginning of the book, George is still learning about how to take care of pets—he lets the little bunny escape. By the end of the book, he has figured out that pets need a lot of attention. How can your class take care of your classroom pets together? What does it mean to be responsible for another living thing? This could be a discussion or a written pledge to take care of your pets that could be posted near the pets' tank.

Making Something Out of Nothing

George doesn't have a fishing pole, but he really wants to go fishing, so he uses things he finds around the house to try and make it work. Collect old cans, boxes, paper towel tubes, egg cartons, and so on, and then have your students make art pieces out of them. They could try to make their inventions resemble something in particular, or they could just make designs.

Curious George Learns the Alphabet

Lower-Grade Activities

Name ABC Books

The letters in this alphabet book actually turn into a creature or object that is shaped like that letter. Using the letters of your name, see if you can make a name book with one page per letter of your name in which each letter becomes part of a drawing of something that starts with that letter.

A, My Name Is Annie, and I Like . . .

Using the first letter of their name, children will go around the circle and play this well-loved memory game in which they say the letter, their name, and something they like. As each child adds his or her letter, the next child is responsible for remembering what everyone before has said and then adding on his or her own letter. This can also be played so that children use the letters in alphabetical order, not necessarily corresponding to or using their real names. After playing the game, have paper available for each child to write and illustrate a page representing his or her letter. For example, a child might write, "B, my name is Barney, and I like bugs." He would then draw a picture of a boy and some bugs to accompany his text. These pages can be put together into a book for the class library, or can be displayed on a bulletin board.

Collaborative ABC Book

Each child is responsible for a page in the class ABC book—you may choose to design the book in several different ways, but the main idea is to put all of the kids' pages together to make one ABC book to be kept in the class library.

Making Words

George tries out making words with the letters he knows. But George thinks, at first, that just any letters can be put together to make words. Teach your children that some words follow patterns. Starting with a simple word pattern such as *at*, teach your children that if they know how to spell *at*, they also know how to spell *cat* and *rat* and *bat*, and so on. You can do this work with children on white boards or on paper. White boards work well because children can simply erase the first letter and put a new one in to see how the meaning of the word changes when the first letter changes but the last part of the word remains the same.

Upper-Grade Activity

Alliteration

This book is an excellent launching place for a study on alliteration. You may choose to ask children to practice alliterative sentences using the letters in their first names, for example.

Curious George Goes to the Hospital

Lower-Grade Activities

Making a Puzzle

George found that when a puzzle is missing even one piece, it doesn't feel complete. Teachers can buy large blank puzzles that children can draw on together to make a class puzzle with each person's name or a drawing. Discussion can focus around how separate parts make up a whole.

Making a Sock Puppet

Curious George amuses his new friends in the hospital by putting on a puppet show. Teachers can have children collect old socks and make sock puppets in the classroom. Teachers may choose to have children all create puppets based around a particular theme (they could make puppets of themselves, for example, if they are doing an "All About Me" study during social studies), or they may choose to have children make whatever sort of puppet they choose. Children may even wish to create and perform puppet shows using the puppets they have made, to be performed for their peers. This can be an excellent choice time activity for kindergartners!

Upper- or Lower-Grade Activity

Facing Your Fears

George and Betsy both are uneasy at the hospital. They overcome their fears through laughter and by taking them on. Write about a time when you felt very scared but you did the thing you had to do anyway. How did you feel after you'd done it?