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Poached (FunJungle)



Synopsis

Teddy Fitzroy's back for another zoo mystery "this time it's a koala caper" in this action-packed follow-up to *Belly Up* that SLJ called a "œwhopper of a whodunit that delivers plenty of suspects, action, slapstick, gross bodily functions, red herrings, and animal trivia." School troublemaker Vance Jessup thinks Teddy Fitzroy's home at FunJungle, a state-of-the-art zoo and theme park, is the perfect place for a cruel prank. Vance bullies Teddy into his scheme, but the plan goes terribly awry. Teddy sneaks into the koala exhibit to hide out until the chaos dies down. But when the koala goes missing, Teddy is the only person caught on camera entering and exiting the exhibit. Teddy didn't commit the crime "but if he can't find the real culprit, he'll be sent to juvie as a convicted koala-napper.

Book Information

Lexile Measure: 750 (What's this?)

Series: FunJungle

Paperback: 352 pages

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Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (79 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #9,384 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #14 in Books > Children's Books > Animals > Zoos #105 in Books > Children's Books > Mysteries & Detectives #667 in Books > Children's Books > Action & Adventure

Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

Customer Reviews

A teenager gets accused of stealing a koala from a zoo and must use his wits and his knowledge to help him out of the mess. When a class bully and a zoo security officer make life more difficult for him and hamper his efforts, he realizes he doesn't have much time to find the real thief and prove his innocence. Stuart Gibbs offers middle grade readers this premise in the somewhat enjoyable but often painfully didactic book *Poached*. Teddy Fitzroy lives at the zoo. Well, not exactly

at the zoo, called FunJungle, but close enough. Both of his parents work there, and he gets access to areas of the zoo that most of his friends don't. So when the class bully orders him to pull a prank by dropping fake arms and feet into the shark tank, Teddy can't exactly find a good reason to say no. Despite an elaborate plan to pull off the prank (and satisfy the bully and his cronies) but not get caught, things don't work out the way Teddy envisioned. He finds himself fleeing the scene of the crime and looking for a place to hide. When he slips into the koala exhibit, he thinks his troubles have abated. But he doesn't know that the real trouble hasn't even started yet. Kazoo the Koala, on loan from the Australian government, goes missing the next day, and Teddy becomes the prime suspect. For some people at the zoo, he's the only suspect. Teddy realizes that he'll have to work fast to solve the crime on his own if he wants to avoid juvenile detention. Author Stuart Gibbs brings back characters from his first book, *Belly Up*, to share with readers a new zoo mystery adventure and to introduce new adventures for Teddy and his friends and family. Readers who didn't read *Belly Up* don't need to worry; Gibbs gives enough details about the mystery in that book to keep readers in the loop. Because readers get to know Teddy through the first person point of view, it's easy to see what facts from the previous adventure inform his decisions in this book. The trouble comes in sharing all those details. Readers get several info dumps, and the info dumps become slightly tedious after a while. Also, Gibbs uses the book as a platform to reinforce positive traits among them, be honest with your parents when you're in trouble, and don't give up when you know the truth. The reinforcement starts to sound like a broken record, however. Gibbs tells, not shows, many of these concepts and does it often. Smart readers may roll their eyes more than once at the friendly lecturing. He does build a solid mystery, however, and he keeps readers guessing to the end. I recommend *Poached* for its target audience and for adult readers who don't mind being patient with redundant prose.

I wish Stuart Gibbs books had been around when I was growing up. *Teddy Fitzroy* lives with his parents in FunJungle, a commercial zoo and amusement park. His mother is a biologist who works with primates and his father is a wild animal photographer. Teddy's in the local public middle school and often finds himself bullied. One awful day, he's forced to prank FunJungle and drop body parts in the shark tank. He later finds himself accused of the larger crime of having made away with the zoo's single koala bear. The animal is on a 6 month loan to FunJungle and its disappearance is dangerous both for Teddy and the koala. FunJungle's head of security, Madge, has fixated on Teddy as the main culprit. The only way that he'll be able to clear his name is if he finds the actual thief. Set

amidst wild animals in a zoo and told from 12-year old Teddy's point of view, Poached is a fun, mad caper.

When Kazoo, the koala that is on loan to FunJungle, is stolen, Large Marge, the head of park's security, only has one suspect - Teddy Fitzroy. After all, the only person they have on the security cameras going into the koala habitat the night Kazoo went missing is Teddy. Couple that with her vendetta against Teddy, and she doesn't want to search much further. However, Teddy knows he didn't do it. While he has done his share of pranks in the park, they were never this mean or vindictive. Now he has to stay free long enough to prove his innocence. Suddenly, facing Vance, the bully at his new school, sounds easy. As much as I have enjoyed all of Stuart's books (and I've loved them), I'm thrilled to be back in FunJungle for a sequel to his debut. The characters and setting are just as much fun as I remembered them being. And the case? It twists around a couple of time before we reach the ending. There is plenty of danger and several pretty funny scenes as well. I always had a hard time putting it down when I had to go do something else. Kids will love this book, and adults who want a fun story will enjoy it as well. Fortunately, I know he's already hard at work on a third mystery, so we won't have as long to wait for a return trip to FunJungle.

A stellar sequel to the equally fun and well written "Belly Up". Gibbs has an innate ability to write very fun, almost slapstick-esque mysteries for the middle grade set. He creates very wacky, but memorable, characters caught in the middle of a crazy, madcap plot. For me, Gibbs brings to mind shades of Carl Hiaasen, the unequivocal master of loony, slightly manic mysteries with an environmental edge. Great reading for those in grades 3 - 8 who like mystery books and stories about animals.

This was a very enjoyable book for myself and my eight year old daughter to read together. It's about a child who gets wrongly accused and him solving the mystery to prove his innocence. It's a fun book that had some good lessons for my child. We used it to talk about bullying and about blaming people. The book read well and was fun. It was not as heavy and dark as so many of these books seem to be these days. I also liked that it was long - over 300 pages long - when so many kids books are really short and seem to go by so quick. It was good for her to read something longer, and of course it's a lot more value for your money. The writing was good. We both enjoyed it, and I'd recommend it.

My 11 year old son loved this book by Stuart Gibbs. It was a quick and engaging read. In this mystery, Vance strong arms classmate Teddy into a prank that goes awry. Teddy lives at a zoo and theme park that serves as the perfect place from the prank Vance has thought up. But when things go off plan, Teddy is left looking like the culprit. The story of how Teddy becomes the target in a missing koala caper is an interesting read that left my soon wanting more. He has moved on to other mysteries by Stuart Gibbs. Getting a kid interested in summer reading, automatically gets extra points!!!!

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