



GIRAFFE SALAD

“Can I feed the giraffes?” Jessie asked her parents.

“Me too?” Justin begged his mom and dad. Both families were near the giraffe area at the zoo.

“All right. Sounds fun!” their parents agreed.

The kids ran ahead of their parents and Justin’s sister, Ellie, to join the group of people clustered around the zookeeper.

“In the wild, giraffes use their long necks to reach the leaves on trees,” she said. “Today, you’ll be feeding them their favorite snack—lettuce!”

“I didn’t know giraffes liked lettuce!” Jessie looked at Justin.

“It’s giraffe salad,” Justin said seriously. Then he made a funny face, and Jessie giggled.

The zookeeper handed lettuce leaves to the crowd. “Hold it out past the fence where the giraffes can see it. Make sure you let go once the giraffe bites down!”

Justin and Jessie each took one piece of lettuce and found a spot along the fence.

“Here, giraffes! Come get a snack!” Jessie waved her lettuce toward the animals.

Justin watched as the giraffes started eating other people’s lettuce leaves. “We need one to come over here!”

“Let’s try holding your lettuce up higher.” Justin’s dad picked him up so he could dangle the lettuce over the top of the fence.

“One’s coming!” Justin yelled.

“Daddy, quick! Pick me up too!” said Jessie.

A tall giraffe loped toward Justin and leaned its long neck down toward his hand. Justin pushed his lettuce leaf toward the giraffe, and it bit the end of the leaf. Justin let go, and the lettuce disappeared into the giraffe’s mouth.

“I did it!” Justin announced.

“Want another piece?” Jessie asked the giraffe. She swished her lettuce back and forth.

The giraffe’s long tongue came out. *Shloop!*

“Eww! It slobbered on my hand!” Jessie squealed.

“Hey! Its tongue is purple!” Justin noticed as it came toward Jessie’s hand again.

“Ick!” Jessie dropped her lettuce before the giraffe’s rough tongue could lick her again. Everyone laughed.

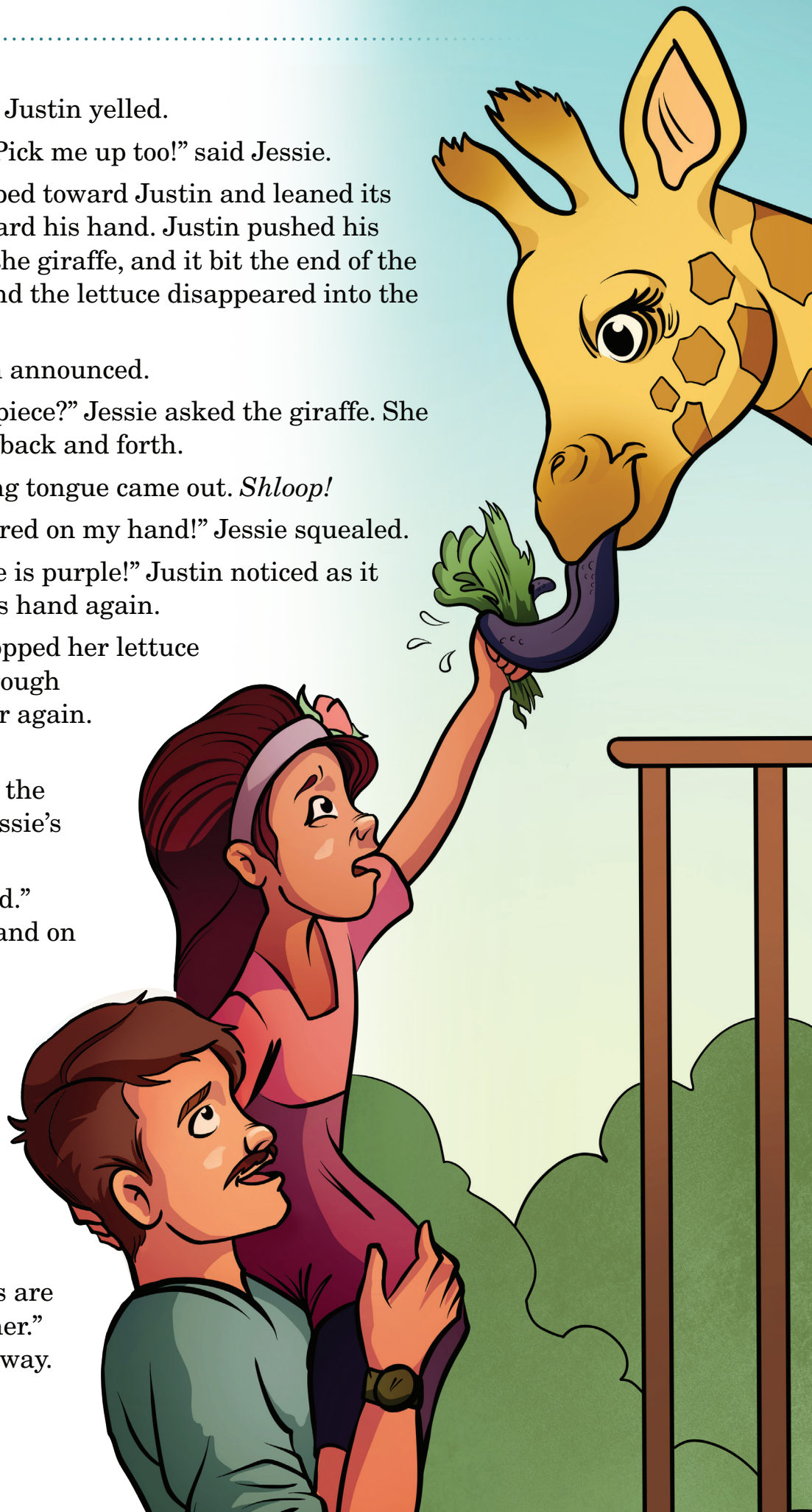
“Didn’t you like the giraffe’s tongue?” Jessie’s mom asked.

“No! It felt weird.” Jessie rubbed her hand on her clothes.

“I think we’ll need some extra handwashing before we eat lunch,” said her mom.

“Can we stop at the tigers before we eat?” Justin asked.

“Sure, the tigers are just around the corner.” Justin’s dad led the way.



“I see him! I see him!” Justin jumped up and down and pointed at a huge orange cat with black stripes.

The tiger gave a big yawn, showing his sharp teeth.

“Must be his nap time,” Justin’s dad joked.

“Kitty!” said Ellie.

“Yes, it’s a cat. But you can’t pet this kitty. He’s a tiger. Rarr!” said Justin.

“Rarr, rarr,” Ellie growled back.

After washing up, the two families sat around a picnic table to eat lunch.

“Wow! We must have seen a gazillion animals today,” said Jessie as she peeled her banana.

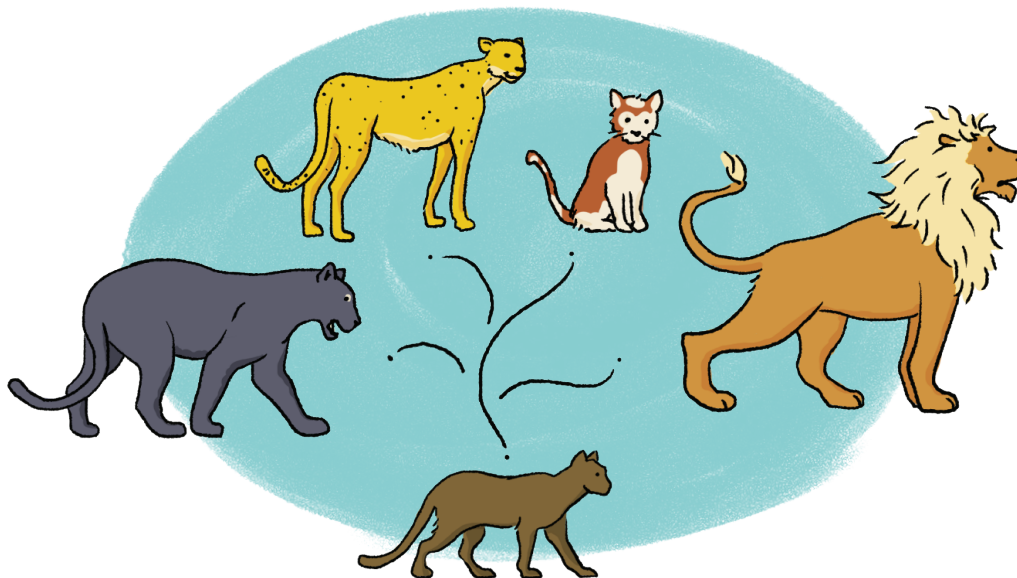
“We sure did,” said her dad, “but there are still a lot more to see.”

“You think this is a lot? There are even more animals in the world than there are in this zoo,” Justin’s dad added.

“But Dad,” said Justin, “if there are so many animals, how did Noah fit them all on the ark?”

His dad took another cookie from the package. “First of all, God only sent two of each animal and seven of some.”

“And Noah didn’t need to have every type of animal,” Justin’s mom added.



“Huh? What do you mean?” asked Jessie.

“God sent two of each *kind* of animal to the ark, like two of the bear kind, two of the elephant kind, and two of the cat kind,” Jessie’s mom replied.

Justin’s dad explained, “You see, Noah didn’t need to have all different types of cats like two tigers, two lions, two leopards, and two kitties like Jessie’s. Noah only needed two of the cat kind.”

“So there would’ve been room on the huge ark for two of each kind?” asked Justin.

“Yep,” Justin’s dad said.

“God is super smart to have Noah make the ark so big,” said Jessie.

“Speaking of big,” said Jessie’s dad, “we’ve only seen half of the zoo so far. We’ve got lots more to look at.”

Ellie pointed to the zebras nearby. “Let’s see da horsies!”

“Those are zebras, Ellie,” Justin corrected.

Justin’s dad grinned. “That’s true, but she got the animal kind right!”

LET’S TALK ABOUT IT!

1. What is your favorite animal at the zoo?
2. What did Justin and Jessie learn about the animals on Noah’s ark? *Noah only took two of each kind of animal (and seven of some) rather than every type, or species, of animal on the ark.*
3. Who or what did God tell Noah to bring into the ark? *(See Genesis 6:18–22.) Noah, his wife, his sons, and their wives. Birds, land animals, and creeping things, male and female of each sort (kind).*