They sound like the Bad Guys, they look like the Bad Guys . . . and they even smell like the Bad Guys. But Mr Wolf, Mr Piranha, Mr Snake and Mr Shark are about to change all of that—whether you want them to or not! Mr Wolf has a daring plan for the Bad Guys’ first good mission. The gang are going to break 200 dogs out of the Maximum Security City Dog Pound. Will Operation Dog Pound go smoothly? Will the Bad Guys become the Good Guys? And will Mr Snake please stop swallowing Mr Piranha?! Buckle up for the funniest, naughtiest and coolest book you’ll ever read from award-winning author Aaron Blabey!

TEACHER NOTES

- Discuss the layout of *The Bad Guys*. What sort of a book would you classify it as? Is it a graphic novel/comic book? Is it illustrated fiction? Is it a long picture book? As a class, talk about the categories we generally organise books into. What are the pros and cons of categorising books? Can the definitions of each category be seen as fluid or static?
Why do you think the book is called ‘Episode 1’ instead of ‘Book 1’? What does the word ‘episode’ bring to mind? Is The Bad Guys told like a television cartoon episode or short film? Why do you think this is?

In groups, choose a scene from The Bad Guys and make a video, either using live-action or animation software. Some factors you will need to consider include editing techniques and soundtrack to suit the story. Does the book easily lend itself to a filmed medium?

What sort of a soundtrack does The Bad Guys bring to mind? Explore musical elements such as dynamics, tone and tempo, and the ways music helps to tell a story. Use a variety of musical instruments to perform a class piece inspired by the themes of The Bad Guys.

Where does each of the Bad Guys come from? Reread the first few chapters of the story, paying particularly close attention to the rap sheets that introduce the four main characters. Make a WANTED poster for one or more of these characters:
- Mr Wolf
- Mr Snake
- Mr Piranha
- Mr Shark.

Why do you think the author has included rap sheets for his four main characters? To what effect are they included in the story? Create a fifth ‘bad guy’ character to include in the story and produce a rap sheet for him/her. What key role will they play in the story?

Why do you think Mr Wolf has decided to rehabilitate the image of the Bad Guys? Imagine you are interviewing Mr Wolf for a television news program like 60 Minutes. Write the transcript for this interview. What will you ask Mr Wolf about his motivations? What do you imagine his answers will be?

In groups, write and rehearse your script to perform to the class.

Why do you think Mr Wolf is the main character/narrator of the story? List all the stories you can think of in which the wolf is the antagonist of the story. Why do you think wolves are such a common villain?
• Turn to the spread in Chapter 4 where Mr. Wolf presents the specifications for his car. Imagine you’re a new crime-fighting super hero and design your own dream vehicle, and present the specifications like Mr. Wolf has done here. What will you call your new vehicle? Label your design.

• The Bad Guys want to free the dogs in the dog pound. How has the author represented the pound like a real-life prison?

• Visit a website for a local animal shelter, such as the RSPCA. Look at the types of animals that end up at the pound. How are they cared for? How is their care funded? Which animals are likely to get adopted first? Write a persuasive text on the topic of whether people should adopt an animal from the local shelter or buy from a pet store.

• The very last page of The Bad Guys is a written teaser of sorts for Episode Two of the series. Predict what you think will happen in the next book based on the clues given on this page. Creating a film trailer for Episode Two based on the information given on this page.

• Hold a formal debate on the topic of “Are the Bad Guys actually “bad” guys?”