**Lesson 7 Teacher's Guide**

**Cross-Country Cousins**

by Samantha Rabe

Fountas-Pinnell Level O  
Realistic Fiction

**Selection Summary**

Jessie lives in Vermont and Chris lives in southern California, but the cousins stay in touch with e-mails, describing the activities on their farms during the changing seasons. In late fall, the cousins finally meet, when Chris gets a surprise birthday visit from Jessie and her family.

## Characteristics of the Text

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Genre</strong></th>
<th>Realistic Fiction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Text Structure** | Combination of third-person narrative and first-person narratives  
Background events described on first four pages  
Events recounted chronologically on remaining pages |
| **Content** | Farm products and seasons in Vermont and southern California  
Cousins as friends  
E-mail correspondence |
| **Themes and Ideas** | Different regions have different climates and plants.  
Farm life follows seasonal cycles.  
Writing is a way to share information about personal activities. |
| **Language and Literary Features** | More than one point of view  
Descriptions of settings  
Friendly-letter elements shown with e-mails |
| **Sentence Complexity** | Variety in sentence complexity and length, with many sentences longer than 15 words  
Sentence with colon and appositive: It’s time for one of my favorite things: sugaring, or making maple syrup.  
One parenthetical statement: Okay, so I wasn’t just picking.  
Items in series: It will be a while before the tomatoes, squash, and blueberries are ripe. |
| **Vocabulary** | Many fruit and vegetable names, including citrus fruit, broccoli, asparagus, gourds  
Farming terms: crops, harvest, orchard, farm stand, ripe, root vegetables |
| **Words** | Words with varied syllable patterns, such as clubhouse, harvesting, grocery, southern |
| **Illustrations** | Illustrations support text. |

**Cross-Country Cousins** by Samantha Rabe

**Build Background**
Help children name foods that are grown on farms. Build interest by asking a question such as: Where have you seen farms? Read the title and author, and use the cover illustration to discuss what cross-country means. Tell children that this story is realistic fiction, so the characters will probably act like real people.

**Introduce the Text**
Guide children through the text, noting important ideas and helping with unfamiliar language and vocabulary so that they can read the text successfully. Here are some suggestions:

**Page 2:** Tell children that this story is about two cousins of the same age who live on farms in different parts of the United States.
**Suggested language:** Turn to page 2. Where does the girl, Jessie, live? Where does Chris live? They had met only three times, but Jessie said the first time didn’t count because they were babies then. Why do you think they haven’t seen each other more often?

**Pages 3–4:** Explain that these pages tell about Chris’s past visits to Jessie in Vermont. Look at the trees in the apple orchard. Would an orchard be a fun place for children? Why or why not?

**Pages 6–7:** Help children understand that a different typeface is used for the cousins’ e-mails. Then have them look at the pictures on both pages. What is different about the two farms in winter? On page 6, why do you think that tree has a spout in it? On page 7, what crop is Chris picking?

Now turn back to the beginning of the story and read to find out about the cousins who live on farms on opposite sides of the country.

---

**Expand Your Vocabulary**

- **barren** – fails to make fruit, p. 12
- **crops** – plants that are grown and harvested, p. 7
- **grove** – a group of trees, p. 6
- **harvest** – the gathering of a crop, p. 4
- **orchard** – a place where fruit or nut trees are grown, p. 3
- **spout** – n. a tube, pipe, or hole through which something flows, p. 6
- **sugaring** – to make maple syrup or maple sugar, p. 6
Read
Have children read *Cross-Country Cousins* silently while you listen to individual children read. Support their problem solving and fluency as needed.

Remind children to use the Analyze/Evaluate Strategy to think about how they feel about the story and why.

Discuss and Revisit the Text

Personal Response
Invite children to share their personal responses to the story.

*Suggested language:* *Do you think the two cousins do a good job of staying connected? Why or why not?*

Ways of Thinking
As you discuss the text, help children understand these points:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thinking Within the Text</th>
<th>Thinking Beyond the Text</th>
<th>Thinking About the Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Jessie and Chris are cousins who live on farms on opposite sides of the country.</td>
<td>• Farms raise different crops in different regions.</td>
<td>• The e-mails are an interesting way to tell a story.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• They send e-mails to each other and tell how their crops and activities change each season.</td>
<td>• As the seasons change, farm life changes.</td>
<td>• Descriptive words help readers picture the settings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Jessie makes a surprise visit to Chris for his birthday.</td>
<td>• You can write to share your experiences with someone far away.</td>
<td>• The author showed how two parts of the country are different.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Choices for Further Support

• **Fluency** Invite children to read an e-mail aloud. Remind them to use their voice to express the feelings of the character who has written the words.

• **Comprehension** Based on your observations of the children’s reading and discussion, revisit parts of the text to clarify or extend comprehension. Remind children to go back to the text to support their ideas.

• **Phonics/Word Work** Provide practice as needed with words and word parts, using examples from the text. Remind children that the same spelling can have different sounds. Use the spelling *ough* as an example. Have children find a word with *ough* on each page you name, copy the word, and tell the sound(s) for *ough*: page 2, *though;* page 3, *bought;* page 4, *through;* page 12, *tough.*
Writing about Reading

Critical Thinking
Have children complete the Critical Thinking questions on BLM 7.9.

Responding
Have children complete the activities at the back of the book. Use the instruction below as needed to reinforce or extend understanding of the comprehension skill.

Target Comprehension Skill
Conclusions **TARGET SKILL**
Tell children that readers can put together details to figure out new information that is not in the story. Model the skill, using a “Think Aloud” like the one below:

**Think Aloud**

On page 6, Jessie writes about making maple syrup from sugar maple trees. On page 7, Chris responds that there are no sugar maples in southern California. I can use those details to draw this conclusion: Some foods, like maple syrup, are made only in certain places.

Practice the Skill
Have children write two sentences with details from the text or the pictures to support this conclusion: Jessie and Chris both work hard on their farms.

Writing Prompt: Thinking Beyond the Text
Have children write a response to the prompt on page 6. Remind them that when they think beyond the text, they use what they know and their own experience to think about what happens in the story.

Assessment Prompts
- In the first paragraph on page 10, find the word that means almost the same as “felt sore.”
- What is Jessie’s e-mail on page 12 mainly about?
English Language Development

Reading Support Pair English-speaking and English language learners so that they can check their understanding about the crops mentioned in the story.

Idioms Point out the expression Let me know what’s going on with you! on page 10 and the closings Take care (page 12) and Talk to you soon (page 13). Explain that these are common ways for writers to end e-mails, greeting cards, or friendly letters.

Oral Language Development

Check children’s comprehension, using a dialogue that best matches their English proficiency level. Speaker 1 is the teacher, Speaker 2 is the child.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beginning/Early Intermediate</th>
<th>Intermediate</th>
<th>Early Advanced/ Advanced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speaker 1: Who are the cousins?</td>
<td>Speaker 1: Why don’t the cousins see each other often?</td>
<td>Speaker 1: What is the main difference between Jessie’s farms and Chris’ farm?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaker 2: Chris and Jessie</td>
<td>Speaker 2: Jessie lives in Vermont and Chris lives in southern California.</td>
<td>Speaker 2: Jessie’s farm is in Vermont. It is too cold there to grow anything in the winter. Chris’s farm is in southern California. It is warm there, so crops grow all year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaker 1: Do they live on farms or in cities?</td>
<td>Speaker 1: How are their lives alike?</td>
<td>Speaker 2: They both live on farms and help raise crops.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaker 2: They live on farms.</td>
<td>Speaker 2: maple syrup</td>
<td>Speaker 2: Jessie lives in Vermont and Chris lives in southern California.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Responding

Conclusions: How did Chris feel on his birthday? How do you know? Copy and complete the chart below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Detail: Chris brought out of bed.</th>
<th>Detail:</th>
<th>Detail:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Write About It

Jessie and Chris wrote to each other about the changing seasons. Write a summary paragraph about how the seasons were different for Jessie and Chris. Then explain how the seasons are where you live.

Think About It

Read and answer the questions.


2. Why do you think it’s muddy in spring in Vermont? Possible response: I think it’s muddy because it rains a lot in spring.

3. Chris and Jessie send each other birthday cards and e-mail each other. What are some other ways they could keep in touch? Possible response: They could call each other or write letters.

Making Connections Chris and Jessie both love the fall, but for different reasons. What is your favorite season? Why?

Write your answer in your Reader’s Notebook.
Cross-Country Cousins

Thinking Beyond the Text
Read the paragraph. Then write your e-mail on the lines below.

Imagine you are Chris. Write Jessie an e-mail after she has returned home from her surprise visit. Describe how you felt about her family’s visit on your birthday. Use details from the story in your e-mail.
Think About It

Read and answer the questions.

1. Where do Chris and Jessie live?

2. Why do you think it’s muddy in spring in Vermont?

3. Chris and Jessie send each other birthday cards and e-mail each other. What are some other ways they could keep in touch?

Making Connections    Chris and Jessie both love the fall, but for different reasons. What is your favorite season? Why?

Write your answer in your Reader’s Notebook.
Cross-Country Cousins • LEVEL 0

Cross-Country Cousins

Running Record Form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>page</th>
<th>Selection Text</th>
<th>Errors</th>
<th>Self-Corrections</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Jessie and Chris were cousins. They were good friends, too, even though they lived far apart. Jessie lived in Vermont, and Chris lived in southern California. They had met only three times, but Jessie said the first time didn’t count because they were babies then.</td>
<td>行为错误</td>
<td>自校正</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The second time they met, they were three years old. Chris and his parents came to Vermont to see the farm that Jessie’s parents had just bought. Chris and Jessie played in the apple orchard. They had fun running from tree to tree.</td>
<td>行为错误</td>
<td>自校正</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments:

Accuracy Rate
(# words read correctly/88 x 100)

Total Self-Corrections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Read word correctly</td>
<td>✅</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repeated word, sentence, or phrase</td>
<td>🎉</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omission</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Behavior

Code

Error

Substitution

cat

cat

1

Self-corrects

cat

cat

0

Insertion

cat

cat

1

Word told

cat

cat

1