

**Author Study**  
**Cynthia Rylant**  
**Language Arts: Grade 3 Unit 1**



Measured Goals (MSDE Indicators)

- 1.3.5.3 Relate prior knowledge and experiences to literal and/or inferential information found in text.
- 1.3.5.5 Ask clarifying questions and demonstrate comprehension by pinpointing answers in text.
- 2.3.4.2 Evaluate the appropriateness of a title.
- 2.3.2.6 Explain the connections between illustrations and text and how they support text.

Montgomery County Public Schools  
Rockville, Maryland  
Subject: Language Arts  
Grade: Third

***Contributors***

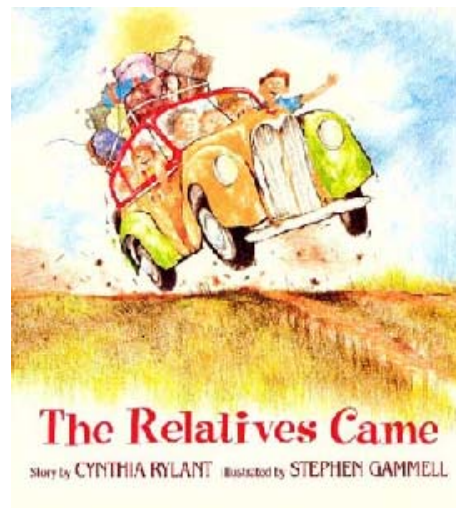
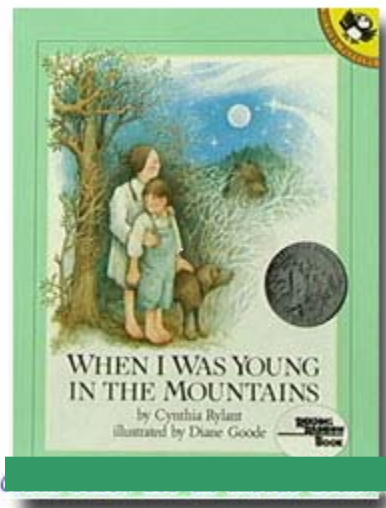
*A. Daphne Antzoulatos*

## Enduring Understandings:

- Knowing about the lives of published authors often serves to motivate students to read and write.
- Learning about the work of a published author improves skills, knowledge, and pleasure in both reading and writing.
- The craft of writing can be improved by studying the writing of published authors.
- Spoken language develops by listening to and talking about experiences, events, and books.

## Essential Questions:

1. What things in Cynthia Rylant's life influenced her writing? (How do the life experiences influence an author's writing?)
2. Where do writers get their ideas for writing?
3. How does knowing about an author's background help me understand her writing?
4. How do the illustrations in a book help me understand the story?



### Differentiated Instruction through Universal Design for Learning Solutions

<b>Curriculum Unit Methods and Materials</b>	<b>Challenges that these instructional methods and materials present to some students</b>	<b>UDL Solutions</b> <i>And instructional “accommodations” which enable students to succeed without changing the content or conceptual difficulty of the curriculum</i>
Printed book	<p>Student cannot decode at grade level.</p> <p>Student has difficulty comprehending vocabulary.</p>	<p>Scan book to convert the book to digitized text with text-to-speech reading software (Kurzweil) for students with print disabilities. Provide time for repeated readings using reading software. Assign student reading buddy to read together/choral read.</p> <p>Preview and reinforce new vocabulary with pictures, props, and use Kidspiration template that allows student to link words with pictures in electronic or hardcopy versions. Use picture walks to develop language student will need to understand text.</p>
Whole Class Presentation	<p>Student has difficult processing verbal information.</p> <p>Student has difficulty comprehending material content.</p>	<p>Use cueing gestures to alert student to key information and new directions. Use think-pair-share with partner/s to help process information. Use visuals-pictures, actions, and objects-to support meaning. Keep teacher talk as brief as possible. Show as you tell; refer to picture or word cues.</p> <p>Activate background knowledge. Use key words repeatedly, use visual aids (Powerpoint, interactive white boards graphics, pictures cues and/or props) to illustrate key points. Use proximity and speak slowly. Check often for understanding. Use a variety of question types. Repeat, rephrase, review, reread.</p>

Written Assignment	<p>Student has difficulty with written language.</p> <p>Student struggles with spelling.</p>	<p>Allow student to express concepts visually or in other non-verbal modalities.                      Use graphic organizers to organize writing.                      Provide opportunities for student to talk about information.                      Have student write with writing buddy.                      Use Kidspiration or Draftbuilder templates to organize ideas prior to writing.</p> <p>Use word processor with spell check.                      Use word processor with word prediction options like CoWriter.</p>
Organizational skills/work habits	<p>Student had difficulty understanding or sequencing tasks.                      Student is reluctant to ask for help.</p>	<p>Provide chart with sequence of tasks. Use numbers, picture cues, highlight key words.                      Pair with buddy.                      Assign peer coach.</p>

## References

### **Reference Materials:**

*Best Wishes* – An autobiography by Cynthia Rylant with wonderful photographs. She describes her life and writing process and how they are interwoven.

*The Bookshop Dog* –Martha Jane’s (the dog) owner falls ill and has to go to the hospital, the residents of her small town bicker over who will take care of the beloved dog.

*The Relatives Came* – The relatives (lots of them) come to visit (for weeks and weeks) from Virginia and everyone has a wonderful time.

*When I Was Young in the Mountains* - The inspiration for this book came from the author’s memories of her childhood when she lived with her grandparents in Appalachia.

## Internet Sites: websites that provide biographical information on Cynthia Rylant and lessons using her books.

[www.eduplace.com/kids/hmr/mtai/rylant.html](http://www.eduplace.com/kids/hmr/mtai/rylant.html) -Short easy reading level biography of the author. Great for students to access.

[www.kidsreads.com/authors/au-rylant-cynthia.asp](http://www.kidsreads.com/authors/au-rylant-cynthia.asp) - Letter from the author to students about her childhood and interest in writing. Great for students to access.

[www.childrensbooks.about.com/library/weekly/aa052001a.htm](http://www.childrensbooks.about.com/library/weekly/aa052001a.htm) - More detailed biography on the author at a more difficult reading level. Great for more proficient readers or for teacher.

[www.kckps.org/readalouds/relatives.html](http://www.kckps.org/readalouds/relatives.html) - Link to a lesson that integrates math with the book *The Relatives Came*.

<http://www.harcourtbooks.com/bookcatalogs/bookpage.asp?isbn=0152016058&option=teacher> Teacher guide to *Appalachia-The Voice of Sleeping Birds*

[http://www.kckps.org/readalouds/bookshop\\_dog.html](http://www.kckps.org/readalouds/bookshop_dog.html) - Link to a read aloud lesson for the book *The Bookshop Dog*.

<http://www.readwritethink.org/index.asp> - ReadWriteThink, established in April of 2002, is a partnership between the International Reading Association (IRA), the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), and the MarcoPolo Education Foundation. NCTE and IRA are working together to provide educators and students with access to the highest quality practices and resources in reading and language arts instruction through free, Internet-based content. OUTSTANDING SITE for lessons, web resources, and student materials K-12.

## Accessible Technology Resources:

### Accessible technology:

Kurzweil- [www.kurzweiled.com](http://www.kurzweiled.com). allows text to be digitized and read aloud; has built in features for learning and studying, including foreign language dictionaries.

Inspiration- [www.inspiration.com](http://www.inspiration.com)

Develops graphic concept maps that can convert to text-based outlines.

Kidspiration – [www.kidspiration.com](http://www.kidspiration.com)

Develops graphic organizers, concept maps, and has read-to feature.

Draft:Builder- [www.donjohnston.com](http://www.donjohnston.com)

Steps students through the writing process: outlining, idea generation using notes, and drafting