



# Reading Roundup



## The Relatives Came

Written by Cynthia Rylant  
Illustrated by Stephen Gammell

Reading Roundup  
Partners



### Introduction

Gather the students around you so that they are able to see the illustrations of the book. Most classrooms will have an area rug defining this space. Introduce yourself and tell the students that you are excited to share *The Relatives Came*, written by Cynthia Rylant and illustrated by Stephen Gammell.

### Before Reading

*All families are different, but if you've ever traveled to visit family or if you've ever had family visit you, there will be parts of this story that will bring back memories of summer family visits. As we read The Relatives Came, let's think about connections we can make to the relatives who came up from Virginia in a station wagon that smelled like a real car.*

## During Reading

- Begin reading the book by starting on the title page. Hold the book so that students are able to see the illustrations. Give plenty of time for students to “read” and think about the pictures. Continue to read through **page 7**.

- **Page 7 – T/T –** *We already know so much about the relatives. Think about the words the author uses, and don't forget to look closely at the illustration. Turn and talk to your partner about what you already know about the relatives.* (The relatives try to pack way too much in the station wagon. The car doesn't start and they have to try to fix it. The driver runs over the mailbox as they leave on their road trip at four o'clock in the morning.)

- **Page 17 – T/T –** *We are learning more and more about the relatives who came up from Virginia. Look at the illustration and think about the family. Turn and talk to your partner about how your family gatherings are similar and how they are different.* (Answers will vary.)

- **Page 21 – T/T –** *The relatives are good people. Turn and talk to your partner about how the author and illustrator show us that the relatives are good caring people. What are they doing? What do you think they might be saying to each other?* (The relatives are working hard to take care of the garden, fix things that are broken, and play with the children.)

- **Page 26 – P –** *The relatives still love to start their road trips early in the morning. The author writes, “...then we crawled back into our beds that felt too big and too quiet.” What does this tell us about how the family feels when the relatives leave?* (The family became comfortable with the relatives in their home. It didn't feel the same without them there. The family misses the relatives.)

## After Reading

Turn back to **page 9**. *As the relatives drove from Virginia, they thought about their home and felt a little homesick. But at the same time, they also thought about seeing their relatives and were excited to see them after a whole year.*

Turn to **page 28**. *As the relatives drove back to Virginia, they thought about their home waiting for them. But at the same time, they also thought about their family members who they missed very much.*

*You may have mixed feelings about going on a trip to see relatives. It's wonderful to see them, but it's also wonderful to come back home.*

## Vocabulary

**relatives** – family members – multiple pages

**station wagon** -automobile (pictured), p. 6

**bologna** – sausage meat, p.6

**tend** – take care of, p.19

