

Discussion Guide for Forever Cousins By: Laurel Goodluck

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FOREVER COUSINS



Laurel Goodluck Illustrated by Jonathan Nelson

Suggested Reading Level:

Preschool-Kindergarten (ages 4-7)

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About the Book:

Amanda and Kara are cousins and are best friends! They do everything together from playing and sharing toys to laughing and having fun. They always agree on the same things. They live in the city but Kara's family is moving to the Rez...

They are so sad to have to leave each other and are unsure how things are going to go when they live far apart. Tensions are high when they get to meet up again that next summer: wondering if they will still be forever cousins.

This is a great book to read to center Native American identities and stories. This book also includes family relationships and getting along with others. This can help students recognize how they should get along with others, especially family.



About the Author: Laurel Goodluck is the author of this book. She was raised in San Francisco (Bay Area) California, and comes from an intertribal background of Mandan and Hidatsa from the prairies of North Dakota, and Tsimshian from a rainforest in Alaska. Laurel received a BA in psychology as well as an MA in Community Counseling and Family studies from the University of New Mexico. Laurel writes picture books with modern Native themes, reflecting Native children's cultural experiences as well as everyday life. By doing this Laurel is able to provide Native children a very unique and powerful perspective. She is now married to her Navajo husband, and they have two children in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

More about the Author: <https://www.fullcircleliterary.com/laurel-goodluck/>

About the Illustrator: Jonathan Nelson is the illustrator of this book. He is a Navajo graphic designer, graphic artist, and illustrator. Jonathan was born and raised in New Mexico where his love and experience with art started. At the age of five he started to draw with wide-ruled paper on the kitchen table. Now, he holds a Master's Degree in visual communication from the University of Arizona and specializes as an illustrator, fine artist, and creative consultant.



Discussion Questions

- After reading the first few pages ask, what can we tell about these two characters?
 - Do they get along?
 - What things do they agree on?
 - What do they like to do?
- On page 8 ask, has there been a time in your life when you have had a “bumpy goodbye?”
- What do you predict how it will go for the two of them not living by each other anymore?
- How has this big event changed each of their lives?
 - What have they done without each other?
 - How have their moods changed?
- Now that the family reunion is coming up, what do you notice about these character’s feelings and emotions?
- What can we take away/learn from this book?
 - Family relationships?
 - Getting along with others?
- What is the importance of culture/traditions in this story and in your life?
- How did the illustrations throughout the book make you feel?

Extension Activities

Activities that teacher and families can use to engage their children more deeply with this book include:

Option 1: Have your student get a piece of paper and draft a letter to someone who they consider their best friend, someone they do everything together with. It can be a cousin, sibling, parent, grandparent, aunt/uncle, or simply just their best friend! In the letter explain why this person is so special to them, and how being apart from them for awhile would change their lives. BE CREATIVE. Draw pictures of you and this person, maybe at your guys favorite place. When completed, share the letters aloud with classmates and allow them to hear why this person is so special in their life.

Option 2: Create a poster drawing of someone who is very important in this students life, someone they couldn't live without. Around the drawing write special characteristics about why they love this person so much and things they love to do with this person. Present the poster drawing to the class allowing them to view the drawing and why this person is so special in this students life. Explain to the class how hard it would be to move away from this person for a long period of time.