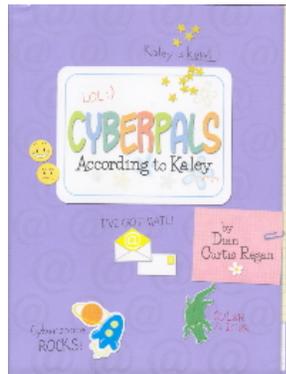


## CyberPals According to Kaley Teaching Guide



### Pre-reading:

Have you ever corresponded with a pen pal? What do you think a CyberPal is? How would writing by email be different from a traditional pen pal? Do you think it would be better or not? Why?

### Questions to consider:

1. Why does Lobo get irritated with Kaley's first message? Is this an easy mistake to make with someone from another country? What other things should you be careful of?
2. Lobo calls Kaley a "cluebie." Why? What other abbreviations does he teach her?
3. What nicknames does Kaley try out? Why don't each of them work for her?
4. Why does Kaley continue to write to new CyberPals? From which countries do each of them hail from?
5. Explain what it means to "google" someone. Why must Kaley google a dead person? What does she learn?
6. Why aren't Shanay and Kaley getting along very well? Why does Mr. Serrano tell her to "work things out?" What do adults mean when they say this?
7. What words confuses Kaley? Are there any words you find confusing? How do you figure out what people really mean?
8. What does Shanay post on her blog about Kaley? What is a blog? Do you think blogs are a good idea for kids? Why or why not?
9. Why can't Kaley's school mention any of the holidays--or even Santa? Is this a fair practice? Is it against your school's rules to mention any specific holidays?
10. What did Kaley learn through her experience as a CyberPal? Would you like to have your own CyberPal? Why or why not?

## Projects:

Language Arts: Teachers can sign up kids for CyberPals accounts like Mr. Serrano did, or with permission from a parent, students can create an individual account to begin writing a pen pal of a similar age. Like Kaley, write an essay (or journal entry) about what you learned by writing to a student from another country.



### Find your own CyberPal!

First the rules (says Mr. Serrano):

\*You **must get permission** from a parent before participating in any of the Cyberpal sites.

\*Never put your phone number, address, or the name of your school in an e-mail.

\*Use your first name or a nickname only. It's okay not to give your last name.

\*Never agree to meet anyone in person. Tell an adult if a CyberPal asks.

\*You can stop e-mailing at any time.

### Here are some cool CyberPal sites:

**A Girl's World** offers a way to find CyberPals without posting an email address. (Membership fee required) (<http://members.agirlsworld.com/>)

**KATE** stands for Kids Around The Earth. This is a free CyberPal site for kids 5 to 16. (<http://www.angelfire.com/pq/caitiskingdom/kate/index.html>)

**Kid's Media Club** offers penpals from 176 countries. (<http://kidsmc.com/penpal/index.html>)

Write a biography of a person who is known in your community, just as Kaley wrote a biography of Mildred Flutter. Look for plaques, monuments, buildings or streets that have odd names, and research how they got them. Be sure if you use the Internet, you do so with the permission and supervision of your parents and teachers.

**6+1 Writing:**

CyberPals According to Kaley is a perfect book to discuss writing conventions with your students. Show how Kaley’s understanding of Lobo’s email was almost incomprehensible because of the abbreviations that he used. Also discuss Kaley’s penchant for using too many parenthesis and exclamation points. Create rules for Netiquette which students must follow as they email.

**Math:**

Calculate how much money Kaley would have spent if she’d written all her letters and sent them through the post office. Find out the cost of postage to mail letters to various countries. Which CyberPal would Kaley have spent the most communicating with? Create a graph from most expensive to least expensive.

**Art:**

Create a collage inspired by the book. You can use magazines, your own drawings, stickers, etc. to bring the picture to life. On the back, explain your choices in a brief artist’s statement.

**Drama:**

With a partner, write a believable dialogue that might occur between Shanay and Kaley out on the playground or other location. The dialogue can be inspired from the beginning, middle, or end of the novel. Be sure to use standard conventions for dialogue and make them sound like the characters. Perform for your class.

**History:**

Research one of the countries mentioned in the novel or choose one that interests you. Create a poster or pamphlet about what you learned, but be sure to find out these facts: location (a simple map is a good idea), dominant language, flag, holidays they celebrate. Find out three additional facts from these areas: traditional foods, clothing or homes.

**Vocabulary:**

Kaley runs into a lot of new words as she becomes CyperPals with several students. As you read, fill in the chart below by sorting the words in the category that best applies. After reading the book, write a definition of three of the words you've learned and use them in a sentence that shows you understand the meaning.

unknown words	limited experience	recognize it	can use this word


**Music:**

Research traditional music from the country where your CyberPal comes from. Compare it to the type of music you like to listen to. How is it similar or different in these areas: instruments, rhythm, lyrics, and tempo?

This guide was created by Tracie Vaughn Zimmer, a reading specialist and author of *Reaching for Sun*. Visit her website to find over 200 guides to children's literature.