

Springboard^{into} Comprehension 4

Main Idea Fossil Fuels
 A Place in Space

Sequencing Black Rock
 The Best Holiday Ever

Compare and Contrast **From Me to You**
 Your Choice!

Fact and Opinion Community Views
 The Daily News

Cause and Effect Natural Disasters
 The Invaders

Bias and Prejudice Have Your Say!
 Save Our Skate Park

RA 8.5–9.5



From Me to You

Contents

Long-Distance Best Friends	2
Keeping in Touch	4
Christmas in Cat City.....	5
Christmas Back Home.....	7
Kuching Weather.....	10
Dad's Blog	12
Zara's Blog.....	18
A Surprise	23
Glossary and Index.....	24

Written by Judy Ling

Long-Distance Best Friends

Jasmine and Zara have been best friends for a long time. They both play basketball, and their families spend their Christmas holidays together in New Zealand. Zara's mum has taken up a new job as an engineer in Malaysia for a year, so their whole family is moving there.

Staying friends over a long distance can be tough, so the two friends will keep in touch by sending letters and e-mails. Zara's dad will create an online diary called a weblog, or **blog**, for short. In the blog, he will post photos and write updates for family and friends in New Zealand.



Keeping in Touch

Kuala Lumpur Airport
Malaysia

December 23, 2008

Dear Jas,

I miss you already! I'm in Kuala Lumpur. Soon, we'll be getting on a plane for Kuching. That's where we're going to live. It is the capital of Sarawak, a region in Malaysia. Kuching's nickname is "Cat City." Maybe there are a lot of cats there. I know Auckland is called "the city of sails" because there are so many boats.

This will be my first Christmas away from home. I feel sad, but excited.

By the time you get this letter, Christmas will be over. I hope you have a great time, even without me.

Your best friend,
Zara

Christmas in Cat City

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Subject: Christmas and cats

To: "Dan Smith" dsmith@friendsnz.co.nz

From: "Zara Smith" zsmith@friendsnz.co.nz

Hi Grandma and Grandad,

We're now in Kuching, or Cat City. I haven't noticed many live cats around; however, there are a number of cat statues and even a cat museum. Speaking of cats – how's Mog? Is he as greedy as ever?

I hope you had a great Christmas. I miss all of you so much. We're living in the hotel because of Mum's job. We had Christmas there. There was a HUGE Christmas tree like the ones we have in New Zealand, with blue and silver decorations on it. It was a lot bigger than our one at home.



Christmas Back Home

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Subject: Christmas and cats

To: "Dan Smith" dsmith@friendsnz.co.nz

From: "Zara Smith" zsmith@friendsnz.co.nz

Before Christmas, there was carol singing every night. The hotel staff all wore Santa hats. Dad did, too. He looked funny because his hat was way too small.

On Christmas Day, we had a very large lunch at the hotel. We had turkey and Christmas cake. There were a lot of other delicious new things to try, too. Malaysian food is yummy but it can be a bit spicy. My favourite is the chicken curry with peanut sauce. I like the stir-fried vegetables, too.

People here have different beliefs and customs that are handed down over generations, or **traditions**. In the evening, some friends invited us to their house. They told us that at every festival it is a Malaysian tradition to have a party where friends and family may visit and join the celebration, an **open house**. As you can imagine, the open house was a lot of fun.

There was so much delicious food! I love it here already. You know how much I love to eat! I miss your hugs, though (and Grandad's spaghetti bolognaise!).

Love,
Zara



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Subject: Christmas in NZ

To: "Zara Smith" zsmith@friendsnz.co.nz

From: "Dan Smith" dsmith@friendsnz.co.nz

Dear Zara,

Thanks for your e-mail. It was great to hear from you. We miss you, too!

Our Christmas was very different from yours. All the family went to the beach for Christmas. The weather was great. Your cousins had a lot of fun swimming and canoeing. Everyone played cricket. We had a huge Christmas lunch with sausages and steak on the barbecue. Your uncle made his famous potato salad. We had a big pavlova for dessert. There was so much left over that we had everyone over for lunch the next day.

Big hugs,
Grandad and Grandma



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