

*The Miraculous Journey of
Edward Tulane*

BY KATE DICAMILLO

ILLUSTRATED BY BAGRAM IBATOULLINE

ABOUT THE BOOK



*Once, oh marvelous once,
there was a rabbit who
found his way home.*

“ONCE, IN A HOUSE ON EGYPT STREET, there lived a rabbit who was made almost entirely of china.” So begins *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane*. That elegantly attired rabbit was a seventh birthday present to Abilene Tulane from her grandmother, Pellegrina. Every morning, Abilene, who is now ten, dresses Edward in one of his extraordinary handmade silk suits and hats and winds his gold pocket watch. She sits him at the dinner table each evening, and she tucks him into his own bed each night.

“I love you, Edward,” she tells him before going to sleep.

Edward never says anything in response, even though Abilene half expects him to, since of course he cannot speak. Nor does he particularly feel anything in response, since most of his thoughts and feelings center on himself. He never ceases to be amazed at his own fineness, considering himself to be “an exceptional specimen”; he is not much interested in what people have to say, including the devoted Abilene.

On Abilene’s eleventh birthday, her parents tell her the family will soon sail to London on the *Queen Mary*. That night Pellegrina tells Abilene and Edward a bedtime story about the terrible fate of a princess who loved no one. Edward, who prefers not to think unpleasant thoughts, is unmoved.

On the deck of the ocean liner, Edward receives admiring attention from many of the other passengers. However, two young brothers grab Edward off his deck chair, strip him of his clothing, and begin to play catch with him. When Abilene tries desperately to stop them, Edward goes overboard, into the ocean.

So commences Edward Tulane’s odyssey, from the bottom of the sea to rescue by a kind fisherman, and through a succession of caretakers. Though yearning for his old life on Egypt Street, Edward begins to experience life, love, and loss.

This guide will help you bring *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane* to your class in many different ways. There are lots of ideas and something for every classroom. Enjoy!



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DISCUSSION POINTS

Before Reading:

Examine the cover of the book with your students and discuss it. Who is the author? Has she written any other books with which you are familiar? What are they about?

Ask the questions below before you begin reading the book, and write down or make a chart of the children's predictions. Ask the same questions again when you finish the book, and compare the children's responses with those on the list or chart.

1. What do you think this book will be about?
2. Who is Edward Tulane?
3. What kind of journey could he be undertaking?
4. What might *miraculous* mean?
5. What do you think is happening on the cover?

While Reading:

1. How does Abilene feel about Edward? The day the maid misplaces Edward, Abilene runs from room to room, calling for him. Discuss why Abilene loves him so much. What emotion does Edward feel in return and why?

What kind of person is Abilene Tulane?

The story leaves Abilene on the deck of the *Queen Mary*, shouting to Edward, "Come back," as he tumbles into the ocean. Discuss what you think happens to Abilene that day.

2. How and why do all adults (except Abilene's sharp-eyed grandmother, Pellegrina) condescend, or talk down, to Edward?

What does it mean to have a condescending manner?

Have you ever experienced an adult or a person older than you who condescended to you? How can you tell? Why do you think that person acted that way?

How did you handle it?

3. Why does Pellegrina tell the story about a princess who loves no one and is turned into a warthog by a witch to Abilene and Edward?

Why is Abilene indignant at the end of the story?

What does Pellegrina mean when she says on page 34, "How can a story end happily if there is no love?"

What is Edward's reaction to the story?

Why does Pellegrina say to Edward, "You disappoint me"?

What does she expect of him?

4. Talking of his wife, Nellie, Lawrence says, "She's had her sadness, but she's an all-right girl" (page 61).

Why is Nellie sad?

Why does she confide in Edward, and how do they help each other?

5. When the old woman hangs Edward on a pole to scare away the crows in her garden, Edward thinks, "I am done with caring." He feels mocked by the stars, which seem to



say, “You are down there alone.” On page 113, he tells the stars, “I have been loved,” and they reply, “What difference does that make when you are all alone now?”

Does it make a difference?

Why does it matter to Edward that he has been loved?

Is there a difference between the love Edward receives from Abilene at the beginning of the book and the love he receives from Sarah Ruth?

How are his feelings toward Sarah Ruth different from anything he’s experienced before?

6. What are some of the life lessons Edward learns on his journey, through good times and bad?

What life lessons have you acquired in your life that you would like to pass on to someone else?

ESSAYS

1. Edward is repeatedly lost by those who love him. Have you ever lost something you treasured? How did you deal with it? Write an essay about what happened to it, and to you as a consequence, and draw or paint a picture of it.
2. This book is Edward’s story, but all of the people who take him in have their own stories, too. Write their memoirs or their autobiographies, told from their point of view. What might happen to their characters after Edward leaves? How does Edward change their lives?
3. How do you think Lawrence and Nellie find out that Edward is gone, and how might they react? Write a new chapter describing what you think might happen between Lolly and her parents after Edward disappears.
4. See how the old doll helps Edward change his attitude and open his heart again. She tells him, “If you have no intention of loving or being loved, then the whole journey is pointless” (page 189). What does she mean? Have you ever encountered someone who changed the way you thought or looked at the world? Write about your experience with this person.
5. What are some of the events and experiences that have shaped your life and changed you, for better or for worse? Write about one of your defining moments and how it shaped or affected you.

PAIR SHARES

Turn to a partner and discuss the questions based on the following passage (page 71):

“Life, for a very long time, was sweet. And then Lawrence and Nellie’s daughter came for a visit.”

1. How and why does Lolly react so strongly to Edward?
2. What kind of person is Lolly?
3. What does Edward think of her?
4. What do you think her own parents, Lawrence and Nellie, think of her?
5. What keeps Edward going and gives him hope when he is buried under the garbage at the dump?
6. How do his emotions change, and what does he learn about himself?
7. How and why does he come to understand Pellegrina’s story about the princess who is turned into a warthog?



The rabbit’s name was Edward Tulane, and he was tall. He measured almost three feet from the tip of his ears to the tip of his feet; his eyes were painted a penetrating and intelligent blue.





*At this point in her story,
Pellegrina stopped and
looked right at Edward.*

*She stared deep into
his painted-on eyes,
and again, Edward felt a
shiver go through him.*

QUICK WRITE PROJECTS

With a Quick Write, children write for a prescribed amount of time (usually from five to fifteen minutes) in response to a question and then share their responses. The purpose is to get their ideas down on paper, so it's not a time to focus on punctuation, grammar, or spelling.

1. Write about the loss of Edward from Abilene's point of view. How do you think Edward's disappearance changes her life?
2. In the doll store, Edward "prided himself on not hoping, on not allowing his heart to lift inside of him. He prided himself on keeping his heart silent, immobile, closed tight. I am done with hope, thought Edward Tulane" (page 184).

Why has Edward given up? If you were to visit Edward in the doll shop, what words of encouragement and support would you give him? Based on your knowledge, experiences, and understanding of the world, give Edward your best and most helpful advice to persuade him that he will be all right again.

CHARTS AND LISTS

1. Throughout Edward's journey, there are folks who are kind to Edward, some who love him, some who are indifferent, and others who are downright cruel. Make a chart of these characters and discuss their differences. How is each one indispensable to Edward's discovery of self?
2. Brainstorm a general list of emotions people feel at one time or another, and write them on a chart. Which emotions does Edward seem to be lacking?
3. Throughout his journey, Edward Tulane yearns to go home, which he considers to be Egypt Street. And yet he spends many happy years with people who take him in and give him new homes.

Make a list of things that mean home to you.

ART PROJECTS

1. Discuss how the full-color paintings and half-tone illustrations extend our understanding of the characters and of Edward's Tulane's journey.

What other scenes would you have liked to see illustrated and why?

Select one scene or image from the story and draw or paint your vision of it. Write the corresponding caption from the text.

2. Have each student choose a different character, major or minor, and draw his or her portrait. The cast of characters should include everyone from Edward to the crows in the garden. Label each drawing with a paragraph describing the character and his or her relationship to Edward.
3. Trace how both Edward's name and wardrobe change with each new person who takes him in. Which name and outfit best suits him? Design a new set of clothing that you think Edward would approve of wearing.

VOCABULARY FOR DISCUSSION

ennui (page 5)

cavalierly (page 19)

ferocity (page 87)

condescending manner (page 9)

inanimate (page 19)

exhilarated (page 88)

derogatory (page 16)

excruciatingly dull (page 23)

options (page 169)

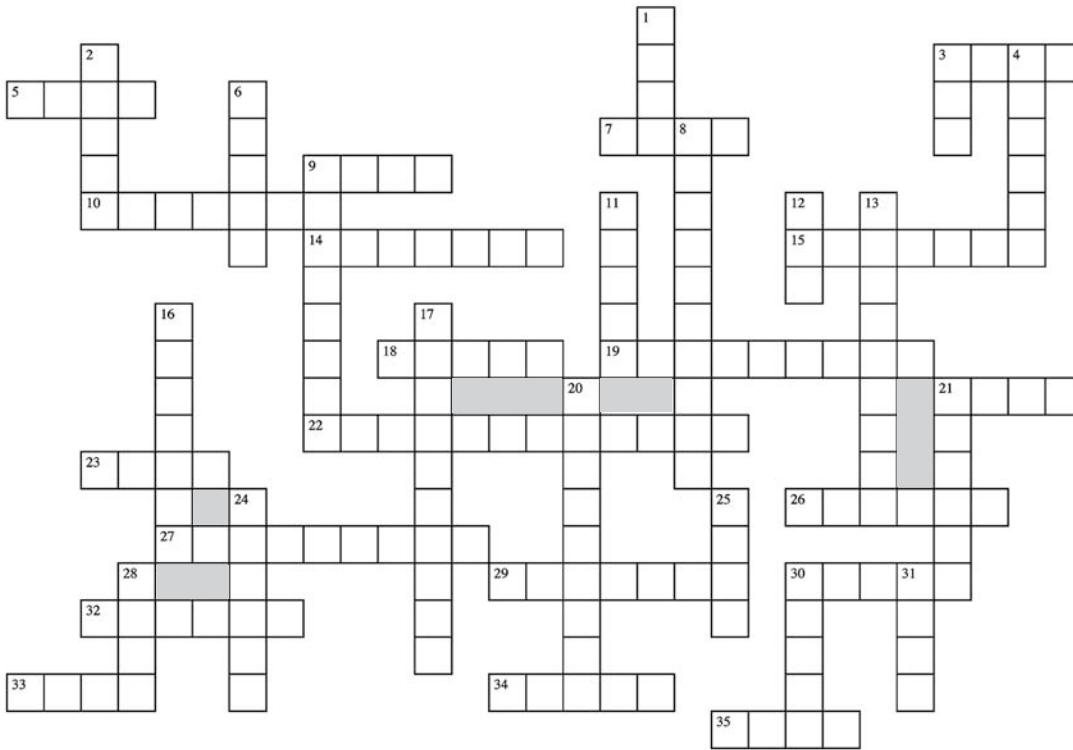
inconvenienced (page 18)

discerning (page 64)

vain (page 181)



CROSSWORD PUZZLE



Across

- 3 Where Lucy digs up Edward
- 5 Sarah ____
- 7 What the old doll helps Edward regain
- 9 Bull's dog
- 10 Nellie's name for Edward
- 14 The witch turns the princess into this.
- 15 Edward's first owner
- 18 Edward wishes he had these.
- 19 Bryce's instrument
- 21 "How can a story end happily if there is no ____?"
- 22 Abilene's elegant china rabbit
- 23 He says he is lost, and he names Edward Malone.
- 26 How Edward feels on the ocean floor
- 27 The old woman's use for Edward
- 29 City where Bryce and Edward play music and dance
- 30 What Edward wears at Nellie and Lawrence's house
- 32 Edward and Abilene's destination on the ocean liner
- 33 Mean diner owner
- 34 Street where Edward lives
- 35 Edward's ____ are made of real rabbit fur.

Down

- 1 Another name for Bull and his friends who ride the rails
- 2 Looking at these comforts Edward at night.
- 3 Lucy is one of these.
- 4 The little girl who comes for Edward
- 6 What Edward's head and body are made of
- 8 Abilene's grandmother
- 9 Fisherman who rescues Edward
- 11 Edward's is gold.
- 12 What the crows say to Edward
- 13 What Edward sits in at Nellie's table
- 16 Sarah Ruth's name for Edward
- 17 "You _____ me," say the witch, Pelligrina, and the old doll.
- 20 Ocean liner from which Edward goes overboard
- 21 Man who mends Edward's broken head
- 24 Bull's name for Edward
- 25 What Sarah Ruth makes when she sees a falling star
- 28 "You, my fine friend, have just entered ____ time."
- 30 Where Bryce can't pay the bill
- 31 Edward's fine suits are made of this fabric.



ANSWERS:

Across

3 dump, 5 Ruth, 7 hope, 9 Lucy, 10 Susanna, 14 warthog, 15 Abilene, 18 wings, 19 harmonica, 21 love, 22 EdwardTulane, 23 Bull, 26 afraid, 27 scarecrow, 29 Memphis, 30 dress, 32 London, 33 Neal, 34 Egypt, 35 ears

Down

1 hobo, 2 stars, 3 dog, 4 Maggie, 6 china, 8 Pelligrina, 9 Lawrence, 11 watch, 12 caw, 13 highchair, 16 jangles, 17 disappointing, 20 QueenMary, 21 Lucius, 24 Malone, 25 wish, 28 doll, 30 diner, 31 silk





RESEARCH QUESTIONS

What is a tramp or hobo? When were hoboes common in the U.S. and why? Why didn't these people have real homes?

Bull describes himself as "lost." What does he mean?

How do the reactions of the other hoboes change toward Edward and why?

Why is the man in the railroad yard so angry with Bull when he finds him and Lucy sleeping in an empty freight car?

INTERVIEWS

Stage interviews in which children assume the roles of the characters. Working in pairs, children can develop two or three pertinent and interesting questions to pose to each other's characters. You can set this up with a panel of questioners and responders facing each other. Or stage a talk show-style interview with an audience, a desk with the interviewer behind it, and a chair beside it for the guest. Pairs can come up and act out their interviews, with one being the questioner and the other the guest, and then switch places.

READERS' THEATER

In Chapter Twenty-two, Edward Tulane finds himself walking up to the front door of his old house on Egypt Street. This chapter is pictured on the cover illustration, and is a pivotal and climactic scene of the book.

After reading the chapter aloud, act it out as a Readers' Theater activity. You can get a Readers' Theater script, single sided, for each student at <http://www.edwardtulane.com>.

Discussion questions:

1. How is it that Edward can walk in this scene?
2. Why and how are all his friends waiting for him at the house on Egypt Street?
3. Where is Sarah Ruth?
4. Why isn't she there?
5. Why does Edward have wings?
6. Why do his friends try to stop him from using his new wings to fly to the stars to see her?
7. Why does Bull say to Edward, "You can't go yet"?
8. What would happen if he did fly to her?

COMPARE AND CONTRAST

*Compare and contrast *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane* with other books that explore similar themes, including journeys, survival, and dolls and toys who are real and/or beloved.*

Some suggested books:

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and *Alice Through the Looking-Glass* by Lewis Carroll, illustrated by Helen Oxenbury (Candlewick Press, 1999 and 2005, grade 3 and up). Both of the classic novels of Alice's fantastic journey, first published in 1865 and 1871, for a new generation of readers.

Pinocchio by Carlo Collodi, illustrated by Sara Fanelli (Candlewick Press, 2003, grade 2 and up). Originally published in 1882, this brilliant Italian serial is a "perils of Pauline" for backsliding children and puppets. New listeners will thrill to adventures in which puppet Pinocchio is made to be a watchdog, almost fried as a fish, turned into a donkey, and swallowed by a shark before he can understand the wisdom of work, study, truthfulness, and kindness. If you've only seen the Disney version, you're in for a delicious surprise.



The Doll People and *The Meanest Doll in the World* by Ann M. Martin and Laura Godwin, illustrated by Brian Selznick (Hyperion, 2000 and 2003, grades 3–5). Eight-year-old Annabelle Doll has lived in the dollhouse with her porcelain doll family for one hundred years, but when a plastic family of dolls moves in nearby, she becomes fast friends with Tiffany Funcraft. In two books of their adventures, they set out to find Annabelle’s Auntie Sarah, who disappeared forty–five years ago, and do battle with Mean Mimi, a bullying princess doll who reigns supreme over the toys in her domain.

The Scarecrow and His Servant by Philip Pullman, illustrated by Peter Bailey (Knopf, 2005, grades 4–6). On the night lightning strikes Mr. Pandolfo’s wheat field, the scarecrow, with its big solid turnip head, a broad crack for a mouth, two stones for eyes, and nothing in the way of brains, jolts to life. A small boy named Jack, sheltering in the barn, helps it down from its stick and, having nowhere else to go, accepts the post of the Scarecrow’s personal servant.

AN INTERVIEW WITH THE AUTHOR, KATE DICAMILLO

Kate DiCamillo published her first book with Candlewick Press, *Because of Winn-Dixie*, while she was working at a used bookstore in Minnesota. It was awarded a Newbery Honor. Her third book, *The Tale of Despereaux*, was the Newbery Medal winner.

The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane is the fifth book she has written for Candlewick Press.

Q. Where did you get the idea for writing a book about a large china rabbit?

A. A friend gave me a very elegant rabbit “doll” (sorry, Edward) for Christmas a couple of years ago. Not long after receiving the rabbit, I had this very clear image of him underwater, on the bottom of the sea, minus all of his finery, lost and alone.

Q. Abilene’s grandmother, Pellegrina, is not happy with Edward. “You disappoint me,” she tells him. What does she expect of Edward?

A. Edward is, in many ways, Pellegrina’s creation, and because of that her expectations for him are huge. She perceives, quite clearly, that he has failed at the simple and impossible task he was created for: loving Abilene as she loves him.

Q. Are there any other books that inspired you in the writing of this one?

A. I wasn’t thinking particularly of other books when I was writing Edward, but looking back, I can see that I was influenced by some pretty powerful stories: *The Mouse and His Child*, *Pinocchio*, *Winnie-the-Pooh*, *Alice in Wonderland*. I can see the influence of all of those masterpieces in my small story.

Q. Did any of this book come from your own childhood?

A. Everything that I write comes from my childhood in one way or another. I am forever drawing on the sense of mystery and wonder and possibility that pervaded that time of my life.

Q. What was a defining moment, good or bad, that shaped you as a child?

A. My father leaving the family certainly shaped who I was and how I looked at the world. By the same token, my father telling me fairy tales that he had made up shaped me profoundly, too. As did my mother reading to me.

Q. Do you have any suggestions for engaging and motivating young readers? Do you have any advice for classroom teachers or parents?

A. The best thing I know to tell parents and teachers about motivating young readers is that reading should not be presented to them as a chore, a duty. It should, instead, be offered as a gift: Look, I will help you unwrap this miraculous present. I will show you how to use it for your own satisfaction and education and deep, intense pleasure. It distresses me that parents insist that their children read or make them read. I think the best way for children to treasure reading is for them to see the adults in their lives reading for their own pleasure.



Edward rode in Bull's bedroll, slung over Bull's shoulder with only his head and ears sticking out.



AN INTERVIEW WITH THE ILLUSTRATOR, BAGRAM IBATOULLINE

Bagram Ibatoulline was born in Russia, graduated from the State Academic Institute of Arts in Moscow, and has worked in the fields of fine arts, graphic arts, mural design, and textile design.

The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane is the sixth book he has illustrated for Candlewick Press.

- Q.** You change your style dramatically with each children's book you illustrate, like an actor who never plays the same role twice. You've paid homage, always brilliantly, to Dutch masters, American realists, primitive folk art, Chinese scrolls, and more. Which style do you most enjoy using? What kind of research do you do for each book?
- A.** I enjoy any style—it is never my intention to copy a particular look or aesthetic. Instead I do a lot of groundwork and extensive research on the time period in order to come up with my own approach or style for a book that I can relate to and use naturally. I have a big reference library, and when that's not enough, I turn to public libraries and private sources, which was the case for *Edward*.
- Q.** Do you use models or photographs for the people in your painting? How about the rabbit—did you see Kate DiCamillo's big rabbit or invent your own?
- A.** Usually I create sketches and work off of them to create the final image. Sometimes I take inspiration from people and faces in old photographs or pictures of a specific time period in order to come up with an idea of what a certain character might look like. Although Kate sent me photos of her rabbit, I still had to sculpt my own model of Edward's head, since we see the rabbit from many angles throughout the book.
- Q.** Did you consider yourself an artist as a child? What kind of art training did you have?
- A.** Since the time I can remember myself, I was sculpting. When I was ten, with advice from my parents, I went to the Children's Art School. I studied there for five years. It was a basic art education—introduction to the world of art materials, history of art, basics of various crafts. Then I decided to continue my art education in the Art College of Kazan for four years. It was a time of the most intensive classic art training. After that I attended the State Art Institute in Moscow for five years. It was an important step for me, allowing me to understand and find myself as an artist.
- Q.** Each painting adds a rich and emotionally affecting dimension to Kate's text. How did you find the heart of each of the characters? What did you want your illustrations to add to the story?
- A.** It's not easy to explain how I found the heart of each character. Everything is in the text, as in "But first you must open your heart." I couldn't say it better.

You can find out more about Kate DiCamillo, Bagram Ibatoulline, and their books at the Candlewick Press website, www.candlewick.com.

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Her books include:

Books Kids Will Sit Still For: The Complete Read-Aloud Guide (Libraries Unlimited, 1990)

More Books Kids Will Sit Still For: A Read-Aloud Guide (Libraries Unlimited, 1995)

Books Kids Will Sit Still For 3: A Read-Aloud Guide (Libraries Unlimited, 2006)

