

The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane by Kate DiCamillo

Year 3 and 4

Reasons for selection and synopsis

Once in a house in Egypt Street, there lived a china rabbit named Edward Tulane. The rabbit was very pleased with himself, and for good reason: he was owned by a girl named Abilene, who treated him with the utmost care and adored him completely. And then, one day, he was lost.

This is a magical, moving story that follows Edward's heart breaking journey to self-discovery. The prose is lyrical and graceful and the story offers rich, well-drawn characters and moments of truth and sadness. Certainly a classic in the making!

Please note that the story deals with the death of a major character, which may upset some children and should therefore be dealt with carefully and sensitively.

Before reading...

Ask the children to look at the front cover. What do you think the book will be about? What things can you see on the front cover? Who is Edward Tulane? What journey might he go on?

Now read the blurb – where any of your predictions correct? How do the reviews on the back persuade you to read the book?

Now read and exam the extract from 'The Testing-Tree' by Stanley Kunitz in the front of the book. How might this link to the story? Does the extract give you any more insight into what might happen?

As a group, create a **semantic** map by noting down as many words that you can think of relating to the word 'miraculous' and then find common connections between them. Use a spider diagram to help you sort your ideas.

The following questions are designed as prompts only – allow the children to come up with their own questions and ideas. They will be much more engaged this way!

Chapters 1 and 2

Vocabulary	<p>Why do you think the author repeats the word 'china' in the opening paragraph of the story? What effect does it have?</p> <p>Explain these words and phrases from Chapter 1 and 2: jaunty, full of ennui, condescended, derogatory</p> <p>Look at the phrase 'like a flock of demented and unfriendly birds'. What does it suggest about the dolls?</p>
Infer	<p>What does the phrase 'unsavoury animal' suggest about Edward?</p> <p>What are your initial impressions of Edward?</p> <p>Why do you think Pellegrina is the only adult who treats Edward as an equal?</p> <p>When do you think this story is set?</p> <p>What impression do you get of the Tulane family?</p> <p>What might Edward be thinking and feeling when he is attacked by Rosie?</p>
Predict	<p>Read to the end of Chapter 1. What do you think will happen next?</p> <p>Look at the end of Chapter 2. What do you think 'the ship' might be? How might it affect Edward's life?</p>
Explain	<p>Do you think Edward is real? Explain your ideas.</p> <p>Look at the beginning of Chapter 2. How does the author show that Edward's life is monotonous?</p> <p>Which section of Chapter 2 was the most exciting/interesting?</p>
Retrieve	<p>Where does Edward live?</p> <p>What is Edward made of?</p> <p>The name of Edward's mistress is Abigail Tulane. True or false?</p>
Summarise	<p>Can you re-tell 'The Rosie Affair' from Edward's point of view? Perhaps you could write it as a diary?</p>

Chapters 3, 4 and 5

Vocabulary	<p>Find all the adjectives and phrases in Chapter 5 that describe Edward's appearance. What impression do they give?</p> <p>Can you use these words in a sentence of your own? <i>billowed, disregarding, frantic</i></p>
Infer	<p>Why do you think the Tulane family are travelling to London?</p> <p>How does Alibene feel about Edward?</p> <p>Why does Pellegrina tell the story about the princess?</p> <p>Look at the picture on page 37, of Abilene listening to Pellegrina's story. What might she be thinking and feeling as she listens?</p> <p>Why do you think Pellegrina is disappointed in Edward?</p> <p>Why do you think the boys began throwing Edward around on the ship?</p>
Predict	<p>Do you think Edward will change over the course of this story? How? Why?</p> <p>Do you think Edward will drown when he is thrown overboard? Explain your answer using evidence.</p>
Explain	<p>What do you think the moral of Pellegrina's story is?</p> <p>Can a story end happily if there is no love?</p>
Retrieve	<p>The Tulane family are sailing to New York. True or false?</p> <p>What did the princess swallow?</p> <p>The princess was turned into a parrot. True or false?</p>
Summarise	<p>What happened after the princess ran away?</p> <p>Imagine you are writing a Tweet, to summarise the main points in Chapter 3. You have 140 characters. What will you write?</p> <p>Can you summarise chapter 4 in one sentence?</p>

Chapters 6, 7, 8 and 9

Vocabulary	<p>What does the author mean when she says the boat 'sailed blithely on'?</p> <p>Find and copy all the words and phrases in Chapter 7 related to the storm. What effect do they have?</p> <p>The word 'umbrage' is closest in meaning to...</p>
Infer	<p>Is there anything odd about the third question at the beginning of Chapter 6?</p> <p>What might Edward be thinking and feeling when he is rescued by the fishermen?</p>
Predict	<p>Read to the end of Chapter 6. Do you think Edward will be rescued from the bottom of the sea? How?</p> <p>What do you think Nellie and Lawrence's daughter will do to Edward?</p>
Explain	<p>Abilene screams out, "Come back!" when Edward falls into the ocean. Discuss what you think happens to Abilene for the rest of that day.</p> <p>Do you agree with Edward that Pellegrina is to blame for him being thrown overboard?</p> <p>Edward thinks that the witch is solely to blame for the princesses' fate. Do you agree?</p> <p>Does anything comical occur in Chapter 8? Did anything make you laugh?</p> <p>How does Edward help Nellie?</p>
Retrieve	<p>Who rescues Edward from the bottom of the ocean?</p> <p>What are the names of the fisherman and his wife?</p> <p>Why is Nellie so sad?</p>
Summarise	<p>Can you re-tell Chapter 9 from Nellie's point of view?</p>

Chapters 10, 11, 12

Vocabulary	<p>Which keywords tell you about Lolly's character and personality?</p> <p>What do the words 'beautiful, buttery light' (page 91) suggest about the setting?</p>
Infer	<p>Look at page 83. Which word or phrase tells you that Lolly was dismissive of Edward and didn't look after him?</p> <p>Why do you think Lolly's lipstick is 'bright and bloody red', rather than a pale pink or soft red?</p> <p>Why do you think Lolly put Edward in the bin?</p> <p>How do you think Lolly's parents feel about her?</p> <p>What sort of voice might Lolly have?</p> <p>Why do you think Ernest visits the dump every day?</p>
Predict	<p>Read to the end of Chapter 11. Where do you think Edward will end up next?</p>
Explain	<p>Re-read Chapter 11. Can you explain how Edward is changing?</p> <p>What do you think Bull means when he says he is also 'lost'?</p>
Retrieve	<p>What keeps Edward going and gives him hope when he is buried in the dump?</p> <p>Who rescues Edward from the dump?</p> <p>What is the name of the tramp?</p> <p>What new name does he give to Edward?</p> <p>How and why does Edward come to understand Pellegrina's story?</p>
Summarise	<p>What happened after Lucy took Edward away from the dump?</p> <p>Can you re-tell Chapter 12 from Bull's point of view?</p>

Chapters 13 and 14

Vocabulary	<p>What does the word 'irony' (pg 101) mean?</p> <p>Look at page 102. Can you find a word which means the same as 'stars'?</p> <p>Which words or phrases tell you that Lucy is upset when Edward is kicked from the train?</p>
Infer	<p>Why do you think Bull is homeless? What might have happened to him in the past?</p> <p>How might Edward be feeling when the tramps whisper the names of their loved ones into his ear?</p> <p>Look at chapter 14. Who do you think the man on the empty freight car might be and why?</p>
Predict	<p>Read to the end of chapter 13. Do you think Edward will be happier now with his change of clothing?</p> <p>Read to the end of Chapter 14. What do you think will happen to Bull and Lucy next? What might happen to Edward?</p>
Explain	<p>Look at Chapter 13. Can you explain why Edward keeps repeating the names of all the people who have loved him?</p> <p>Explain what the author mean when she says that Edward's 'heart opened wide'.</p> <p>Can you tell a partner how you felt when Edward was kicked from the empty freight car and separated from Bull and Lucy?</p>
Retrieve	<p>What does Bull replace Edward's dress with?</p> <p>Where does Jack's family live?</p> <p>How long does Edward stay with Bull and Lucy?</p>
Summarise	<p>What was the first thing that happened in Chapter 13?</p> <p>What was the last thing that happened in Chapter 14?</p>

Chapters 15 and 16

Vocabulary	<p>Think of a synonym and antonym for the following words: ferocious, mocked, sharp, hollow</p> <p>Which keywords or phrases tell us about Bryce's character?</p>
Infer	<p>Look at the illustration on page 121. What might Edward be thinking and feeling?</p> <p>What sort of voice might the old woman have?</p> <p>Do you think the old woman and Bryce are related? Use evidence to support your ideas.</p> <p>What might Edward be thinking and feeling when Bryce comes to save him?</p>
Predict	<p>Read to the end of pg 117. What do you think the old woman will use Edward for?</p> <p>Read to the end of Chapter 15. Who might the boy be? What role might in play in the rest of the story?</p> <p>Read to the end of Chapter 16. Where do you think Bryce will take Edward?</p>
Explain	<p>What does the old lady in Chapter 15 mean when she says, 'There's a use for everything and everything has its use'?</p> <p>Edward says, 'I have been loved.' The stars reply, 'What difference does that make when you are all alone now?' Does it make a difference? Why do you think Edward struggled to answer them?</p> <p>Edward wonders what it would be like to have wings. How would Edward's journey have been different if he had had wings?</p>
Retrieve	<p>What does the old woman use Edward for?</p> <p>What does the old woman rename Edward?</p> <p>What is the boy's name?</p>
Summarise	<p>Can you re-tell Chapter 16 from Bryce's point of view?</p>

Chapters 17, 18 and 19

Vocabulary	<p>Find a word or phrase which suggests that Sarah Ruth is pleased when she is given Edward.</p> <p>Can you find and underline any keywords or phrases that describe the setting in Chapter 17?</p>
Infer	<p>Read page 131 at the beginning of Chapter 17. Who do you think the 'he' might be that Bryce is referring to?</p> <p>Edward made a wish on the falling star. What do you think he might have wished for?</p> <p>Why do you think Sarah Ruth's father cries when she dies? Did he love her?</p>
Predict	<p>Read to the end of Chapter 18. What do you think will happen to Sarah Ruth?</p>
Explain	<p>Throughout the story, Edward is lost by those who are looking after him. Have you ever lost anything? How did you feel? What happened?</p> <p>How is Edward's relationship with Sarah Ruth different to his relationship to the other people who have looked after him or found him?</p>
Retrieve	<p>Can you describe the house in which Bryce and Sarah Ruth live?</p> <p>Why can Sarah Ruth only say one word at a time?</p> <p>Where does Bryce take Edward at the end of Chapter 19?</p>
Summarise	<p>Can you number these events from the story so far from 1-5 in the order that they happened? <i>Bryce takes Edward to Memphis, Edward is taken home to Sarah Ruth, Bryce attached string to Edward so he can dance for Sarah Ruth, Bryce saves Edward from the old woman's garden, Sarah Ruth dies</i></p>

Chapters 20, 21 and 22

Vocabulary	<p>Explain the meaning of the following words: dusk, elegant, soared</p> <p>Use the word 'pointed' in two different sentences – once as a noun and once as a verb.</p>
Infer	<p>How might Edward be feeling when the lady in Memphis calls him 'dirty' and 'nasty'?</p> <p>Re-read Chapter 20. How can you tell that Edward has given up all hope?</p> <p>Why do you think Edward can walk in Chapter 22?</p>
Predict	<p>Read to the end of Chapter 20. Do you think Edward and Bryce will continue to try and make money on the streets?</p> <p>Read to the bottom of page 161. Do you think Bryce will be able to pay for his food order? What might happen?</p>
Explain	<p>Do you think Bryce is crying over the death of his sister or the fact that the people in Memphis have been cruel about his street act? Maybe he is crying over both? What do you think?</p> <p>Edward dreams of going home to Egypt Street. What does 'home' mean to you? Is there a difference between a 'house' and a 'home'?</p>
Retrieve	<p>Edward thinks he sees Abilene when he is dancing on the streets in Memphis. True or false?</p> <p>What is the name of the waitress in Neal's Diner?</p> <p>How does Neal react when Bryce tells him he can't pay for the food?</p>
Summarise	<p>In Chapter 22, Edward sees all the people who have looked after him and loved him so far in the story. Can you create a poster showing all the different names and outfits Edward has had so far? Can you design your own outfit for Edward that you think he would approve of?</p>

Chapters 23, 24, 25 and 26

Vocabulary	<p>Use a dictionary to find the meaning of the following words: humble, modesty, perceive</p> <p>Look at page 187. Find and copy a word which means the same as 'conceited'.</p> <p>Which keywords and phrases tell you about Lucius?</p>
Infer	<p>How might Bryce be feeling when he is told he must give Edward up in order for him to be fixed?</p> <p>What are your first impressions of Lucius?</p> <p>Why do you think the doll in the green satin dress is so mean to Edward?</p> <p>Why do you think Natalie chooses the old doll to take home with her?</p>
Predict	<p>Read to the end of Chapter 23. Do you think Bryce will return for Edward?</p> <p>Read to the end of Chapter 25. What role do you think the old doll will play in Edward's journey?</p>
Explain	<p>Bryce is given two options by Lucius. Which one would you choose and why?</p> <p>Can you explain how the old doll helps Edward? Has anyone ever helped you to change your attitude or opinion?</p> <p>The old doll tells Edward, 'You disappoint me.' Who does this remind you of?</p> <p>What do you think Edward has learned by the end of Chapter 26?</p>
Retrieve	<p>What is the name of the man who fixes Edward in Chapter 23?</p> <p>How many pieces had Edward's head smashed into?</p> <p>Bryce is given two options by Lucius. What are they?</p>
Summarise	<p>Re-tell Chapter 26 from the old doll's point of view.</p>

Chapters 27 and Coda

Vocabulary	<p>Find two things the author wrote about Edward at the beginning of the story that made him unlikeable.</p> <p>Find two things the author wrote about Edward at the end of the story that show he has changed.</p>
Infer	<p>How might Abilene be feeling when Maggie picks up Edward? What might Edward be thinking when Maggie picks him up?</p>
Predict	<p>Do you think Abilene and Maggie will lose Edward? Yes, no or maybe? Explain your answer using evidence from the text.</p>
Explain	<p>What life lessons has Edward learnt on his journey?</p> <p>Who do you think was the most important person in Edward's journey?</p> <p>How has Edward changed by the end of the story?</p> <p>Can you compare this story to Pinocchio by Carlo Collodi? How are the two stories similar? How are they different?</p> <p>Would you change any part of the story? How? Why?</p>
Retrieve	<p>Who finds Edward in Chapter 27?</p> <p>How did Edward recognise his old friend at the end of the story?</p> <p>a) By her pocket watch</p> <p>b) By her appearance</p> <p>c) By her voice</p> <p>d) By her locket</p>
Summarise	<p>In the Coda, the author summarises Edward's journey. Can you write your own summary of his miraculous journey?</p> <p>What was the first thing that happened in the story? What was the last?</p>