

# The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane

## Writing Snapshots

Identifying writing traits in a read-aloud or common reading title assists writers by providing models for their compositions. For example: identify words that help shape our perception of Edward and his personality. Sharing where authors get their ideas for a story helps the emerging writers identify their own experiences that could generate writing and so forth.

**Idea:** Where did the idea come from? The story was inspired by a Christmas gift, a very elegant rabbit. After a time DiCamillo had a very clear image of the rabbit underwater, lost and without all of his finery. The book is dedicated to the author's friend, Jane Resh Thomas "who gave me the rabbit and told me his name."

**Organization:** Episodic—The introductory section introduces readers to Abilene and Edward, especially Edward where we get to know him through his self-absorption and attitude.

- Episode 1: Edward falls from the ship and is rescued by Lawrence who takes him home to Nellie.
- Episode 2: Edward is dumped in the trash and rescued by Lucy (the dog). He spends the next seven years with Lucy and her master, Bull (the hobo).
- Episode 3: Edward is taken by a woman who mistreats him. His subsequent rescue puts him with Bryce as he cares for his sister, runs away to Memphis, and finally gives him up to a doll mender because he can not afford to pay to have Edward's broken head fixed.

The ending brings all of the episodes to a satisfying but predictable conclusion when Edward's journey comes to an end.

**Voice:** The storyteller is an unnamed narrator with an outsider's view but who also seems to be inside Edward's head as the narrator knows what Edward feels and thinks.

**Sentence Fluency:** Sentence lengths, beginnings, and transitions are varied and sentences vary

between complex and simple. Examples can be found throughout the chapters.

**Word Choice:** Choice of words and sentence phrases create visual images that show rather than tell—after the dog shook Edward, DiCamillo does not say that the rabbit is damaged, rather she says, "Edward's silk suit was stained with drool and his head ached for several days..." (p. 16). And later describing the way the maid vacuumed Edward, DiCamillo writes, "...sucked each of his long ears up the vacuum-cleaner hose. She pawed at his clothes and beat his tail" (p. 17). While establishing Edward's elegant and complicated personality, DiCamillo reflects Edward's thoughts with words such as, "diligence" (p. 16), "derogatory" (p. 16), "inexplicably" (p. 15), "singular" (p. 40). Short emphatic sentences convey resolve when Pellegrina says, "I will not go" (p. 23).

**Conventions:** Relies on conventional spelling to convey writer's message and uses punctuation to aid in building expression and readability within the text.

## Bibliography

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- *Children's Authors and Illustrators Too Good to Miss* by Sharron L. McElmeel. Libraries Unlimited, 2004.
- *Fly Away Home* by Eve Bunting, illustrated by Ronald Himler. Clarion Books, 1991.
- *The Goat Lady* by Jane Bregoli. Tilbury House Publishers, 2004.
- *Love to Mama: A Tribute to Mothers* edited by Pat Mora, illustrated by Paula Barragán. Lee & Low Books, 2001.
- *The Tale of Despereaux* by Kate DiCamillo. Candlewick Press, 2004.