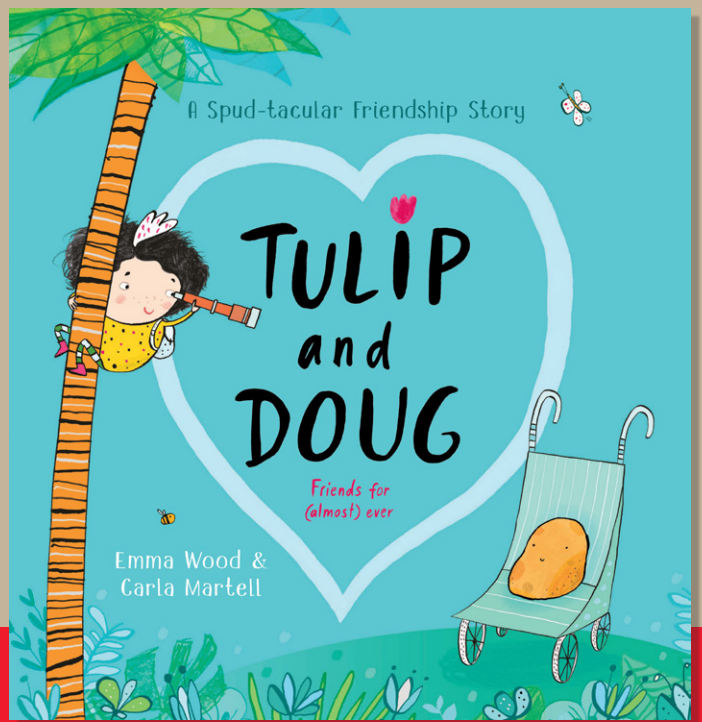


Tulip and Doug

By Emma Wood
Illustrated by Carla Martell

• Reading • Writing • Science • Thinking Skills •



Synopsis

Tulip was famous in her neighbourhood for two reasons. She was a fearless adventurer AND she went everywhere with a seriously strange sidekick – a potato, called Doug! Tulip draws a face on the potato and makes a bed, chair and stroller for it so the spud can join in on her missions. Sometimes kids laugh at her but she doesn't care, she's too busy organising special operations at their headquarters, or climbing through tunnels. Child and potato are inseparable until Tulip loses her best spuddy buddy. She's inconsolable, until she makes a new friend. A boy with a pet rock ... called Susan.

About the Author

Emma Wood worked for ten years as a radio journalist and broadcaster, as well as many years in communications in Dunedin. She is now the communications coordinator for Otago Polytechnic. Her skills are diverse, from penning scripts for national television advertising campaigns, pitching stories to the country's top news producers, voicing cinema advertisements and producing radio documentaries. This is Emma Wood's first book for children.

About the Illustrator

Carla Martell is an illustrator and designer based in Auckland. Ever since she can remember she's been drawing whimsical animals and people. All that doodling practice led her along a curly path to her current destination, illustrating children's books and creating cute characters that make people smile. She studied graphic design, illustration and animation at Wellington Polytechnic's School of Design, followed by post-graduate study in animation at Swinburne Institute of Technology. She has a Diploma in Multimedia Studies from Auckland University of Technology. Carla draws or paints all her designs by hand and assembles them digitally.

Writing and Illustration Style

Tulip and Doug is a heart-warming story of unlikely friendships, with a bit of a twist in the ending. It shows children that there are all sorts of friendships, and you don't have to be popular to be happy. Older readers might predict that when the potato is lost, it might be in the ground, and Tulip may find lots of young potatoes. But the author hasn't lost sight of the main theme of the story and instead introduces another character who also has an odd friend. Tulip, being true to herself, enables this other individual to share that he too has a quirky, inanimate friend. His reaching out to her enables her to deal with her grief at losing her spuddy buddy. Themes include friendship, independence, being your own self, loss, and acceptance. The story is written in the third person point of view, with a range of simple and complex sentences. Most of the text is prose, with dialogue only appearing when the main character meets a new friend her age at the end of the story.

Tulip and Doug is a 24-page picture book with colourful illustrations created with black ink outlines. The black font text is set against full-colour spreads, in cleverly placed white spaces, or on pages with mostly white space. The humans have large round heads, small eyes, and cute button noses. The illustrator has minimised detail on the faces, including the potato and rock, yet somehow manages to pack an incredible amount of expression into the faces.

Shared Learning and Discussion Points

During the shared sessions encourage students to ask questions to clarify their understanding of characters and events. Have them make predictions, inferences, and relate to their own experiences. Read the passages aloud and students read alongside or by themselves.

ASK YOUR STUDENTS:

Look at the cover and read the blurb.

- Who is the main character in the story?
- What do you think this story is about? Why do you think that?
- Students make a Text-to-Self observation: Have they ever had a friend that was an object or imaginary?
- Students make a Text-to-Text observation: Have they ever read about a child having such a friend in a book or in a film?
- Students make a Text-to-World observation: Do they think other people have imaginary friends? Would kids in other countries have them? Why?
- Share with a buddy if they've had an object for a friend and what was it like?

Comprehension questions

- Predict why Tulip is famous in her neighbourhood.
- Why do you think Tulip has made friends with a potato?
- What is so funny about the potato's name?
- Looking at the picture on page five, what do you think are Tulip's interests?
- How has Tulip made Doug part of the family?
- Why do you think other kids laughed at Tulip and Doug?
- When Tulip is busy on special operations, exploring jungles and Tunnel Mountain – what is she using? What does it say about her?
- What is happening to Doug? (pages 8-9)
- Why does Tulip's dad suggest Doug should go to the compost bin?
- What is a solo expedition?
- Looking at Tulip's expression on pages 10-11, how does she feel about her dad's suggestion?
- How has her father joined in with Tulip's game? (pages 12-13)
- What happened to Doug on pages 14-15?
- Predict what will happen next?
- How would you describe Tulip and her dad's relationship? Why? Give examples.
- How has the artist shown Tulip is sad?
- Who do you think Doug was a replacement for?
- How has the artist shown how lonely Tulip is on pages 20-21?
- Who do you think is saying, "Wait!"?
- How does the boy react when Tulip tells him her story?
- What is Susan? How can you tell?
- Why does Tulip smile on page 24?



Activities

ACTIVITY 1: MAKE A POTATO OR ROCK FRIEND!

Discuss with the class why Tulip had a potato for a friend and the boy had a rock for a friend. How did they treat them like a friend? How did they make them look like a person?

Ask students to find a smooth rock or pebble or potato and bring it to school. Students draw a face on their object and make some furniture for it. Give the students the task of looking after their friend as if it was a real friend, for a day or a week. At the end of the day/week ask them what it was like? Was there anything special they had to do for their rock/potato friend? What were other people's reactions to their new friend? How did they deal with that?

ACTIVITY 2: PLANT IT! (ALLOW 8 WEEKS)

Give each pair of students two potatoes. Ask the students what humans use potatoes for, and how do they grow? Give the students five pieces of paper. Ask them to cut them in half and staple them together on the left-hand side. They then write the title 'Potato Journal' and their names on the front cover. Next, they draw the potato in front of them for the cover, as they see it now. On the first inside page of their journal the students draw the potato again, write the date and describe what they can see on the potato, including its shape, colour, and anything growing on it. The students then place one of their potatoes on a paper plate and put it somewhere the students can easily see. The second potato they will put in a bucket of soil and water it.

Tell the students that they will observe the potatoes once a week and record the changes each goes through. One of the pair will record the changes to the potato on the plate, and the other will draw/write about the changes to the potato in the soil. Ask the students to predict what will happen to it on their first inside page (under the description of the potato). At the end of eight weeks, discuss the differences between the two potatoes. Ask them how they think the potato on the plate was able to grow. Discuss the importance of soil to plants. Ask them what else is important for plants to help them grow.

ACTIVITY 3: WHAT IF!

Ask the students, what if the story ended differently? What else could have happened? Students write and draw a new double spread with a different or slightly changed ending. Get each student to draft their story first, then read it aloud to a partner. The partner listens and says what they liked – giving an example – then says what could be improved. For example, "I think you could have used another word for rock instead of repeating it three times." Then swap: it is the other partner's turn to read aloud their story and have it critiqued.

Students then make changes to their story, checking their spelling and whether or not their sentences flow. They show it to a teacher for more feedback. Once they are happy with their story, they write it out in their best handwriting and draw a picture to go with it, using the style the illustrator of *Tulip and Doug* used.

Written by Maria Gill



teacher toolkit

 SCHOLASTIC