

## Because of the Rabbit

By Cynthia Lord

### Before Reading

Preview the book by looking at the cover, reading the title, then reading the back-cover copy. Think about the quote at the top of the back cover: "It's a powerful thing to rescue something. It changes both of you." How do you interpret this quote? Do you agree with it? How might it relate to an experience in your own life?

### While Reading

As you read, give yourself time to pause and think about the following questions:

The first time Emma plays Two Truths and a Lie at school, she lies! What does Emma lie about—and why does she do it? What happens that makes her afraid to tell the truth?

What does Emma want out of public school more than anything? How would you describe the different ways she tries to get it?

Owen gives Emma a rock to carry for good luck. On one side is written the word *Be*, and on the other, *Yourself*. Why might "be yourself" be good advice to give someone on their first day of school? What advice would you give to Emma for her first day of school?

Compare Emma's situation with Lapi's. What do they have in common? How does this affect Emma?

### After Reading

After reading, take time to reflect on the following questions:

Owen and Emma have an interesting way of talking to each other about their feelings. "Who's ahead? Excited or Scared?" Owen asks Emma the night before she's supposed to start school. Is there a situation in your life about which you have mixed feelings? What is it? How do you handle it? Whom do you talk to about it to sort out your feelings?

"Be the friend you want to have," Owen says to Emma. When she looks at her Best Friend Checklist, she realizes she hasn't been living up to her own standards. What's on your Best Friend Checklist? Do you have all those qualities yourself?

### Literacy Tip

Although this book is fiction, the author starts each chapter with real facts about rabbits. The real facts about the rabbits usually apply in some way to the characters in the story! It's a clever way to get readers to think about what's happening in the story on a deeper level.

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### Think About It!

In the Author's Note beginning on page 184, author Cynthia Lord explains where she got the idea for this book: from people, experiences, and feelings in her own life. She says, "My books always start from tiny seeds of real life. Then I water those seeds with my imagination until a story grows."

Lord provides a list of ideas for finding your own seeds. Using her ideas, make a seed list from your own life with people, experiences, and feelings that you might include in a story. Then water the seeds with your imagination. And when you're done, if you feel inspired, write the story!